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The Concept of Phantasy in Psychoanalysis: An Examination of the Place of Reality In the Freud-Klein Controversies

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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Abstract

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E. Neal Vorus

Advisor: Dr. Steven J. Ellman

In 1943-44, the British Psychoanalytic Society held the 'Controversial Discussions' in an attempt to address theoretical, clinical, and political disagreements between analysts aligned with Melanie Klein and those who supported the views of Anna Freud. This thesis examines the centrality of the concept of unconscious phantasy in these proceedings, highlighting the different epistemological assumptions implicit in contributions on this topic by the respective groups. Toward understanding these differences, a view of the evolution of the concept of phantasy in the writings of both Freud and Klein is offered, and the interrelation of their changing theories of phantasy with shifting epistemological stances (objectivist v. constructivist) is examined. In conclusion, the unique role of the Freud-Klein Controversies in containing and expressing an emerging incompatibility of old and new intellectual trends in Western philosophical and scientific thought is proposed.

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It is a daunting task to acknowledge all who inspired, encouraged, and assisted me in this project – the list would surely span many pages and reflect many years. However, those who most recently and substantially influenced this work come more easily to mind. They include first my dissertation advisor, Steven Ellman, whose contributions to my thinking about Freud and Klein far exceed any that I could include in footnotes and bibliography. I am particularly grateful for his encouraging me never to settle for established interpretation, but to always find my own way to psychoanalytic understanding. It was in that spirit that I set about in this work of understanding psychoanalysis.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Historical Overview

Introduction

Since shortly after its inception, the history of psychoanalysis has been characterized by periods of theoretical fragmentation followed, at times, by reintegration and synthesis (Arlow, 1993; Bergman, 1993; Rangell, 1975). Early disputes involving theoretical differences during Freud's lifetime often met a two-fold fate: aspects of divergence sparked accomodation of existing theory (e.g. Jung's influence on *Totem and Taboo;* Rank's influence on *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety*), while areas of clear incompatibility invited the threat of censure or expulsion (Wallerstein, 1988). As a result, psychoanalysis remained largely monolithic until Freud's death in 1939. After that point, however, many theoretical disagreements began to find a different outcome: neither real integration nor total expulsion, but rather an often uneasy, divisive coexistence of incompatible views within the institutions of psychoanalysis (Friedlander, 1993).

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the first post-Freudian theoretical division resulting in coexistent incompatibility, the "Controversial Discussions" that took place in the British Psychoanalytic Society from 1941 to 1945, between analysts who aligned themselves with Anna Freud and those who supported the views of Melanie Klein. These "discussions" were an institutional response to tensions between opposing groups within the British Psychoanalytic Society that threatened to fragment the institution. As I will describe below, these tensions resulted from a confluence of personal, political, and institutional factors, as well as from theoretical differences that began to crystalize in the mid 1930's as Klein developed some of her more distinctive ideas. This thesis will focus on theoretical controversy involving uncon-

scious phantasy, which I will argue was the most fundamental area of theoretical difference at the time of the Controverial Discussions, and one which continues to underlie divisions within psychoanalysis.

Background of Theoretical Controversies

By 1935 Melanie Klein had become a polarizing figure in the British Psychoanalytic Society. She had been a member of the Society since her immigration from Berlin in 1926, where her original ideas on child analysis had not been well-received (aside from the strong support of Karl Abraham before his death in 1925). Klein's ideas found fertile soil in London, where Ernest Jones and others shared her interest in pre-genital factors, the formative importance of hate and aggression, and the early development of female sexuality (Grosskurth, 1986). Also, the tradition of relative openness and tolerance characteristic of British culture gave room for the kind of theoretical innovation that Klein was deriving from her analytic work with children (Rayner, 1991). Klein's ideas assumed some prominence in the British Society by the end of the 1920's, but in 1933, with the rise of National Socialism in Germany, analysts from Berlin began filtering into Great Britain, bringing with them ambivalent attitudes toward Klein's innovations. However, overt opposition to her views did not appear until 1935, when a number of analysts found her concept of the depressive position (Klein, 1935) to have crossed the line into apostasy (King, 1991).

At this time differences in theory and technique between the British and Viennese Psychoanalytic Societies also became increasingly apparent. Many of these differences arose specifically from Klein's contributions to the British psychoanalysis, for example, her ideas on the early development of sexuality, especially in the female, the genesis of the superego and its relation

to the Oedipus complex, the technique of child analysis and the concept of the death instinct (Jones, 1935). Ernest Jones, who was then president of both the British Psychoanalytic Society and the International Psychoanalytic Association, thought differences over these issues arose because of insufficient contact between analysts in London and Vienna, and arranged for a series of 'Exchange Lectures' to ameliorate this mutual isolation. The British and Viennese presented two papers each to the others' institute in 1935-6; with Jones (1935) and Riviere (1936) representing London, and Waelder (1937) presenting papers for Vienna (Waelder's first exchange lecture, presented in 1935, remains unpublished, and no copy was found by the archivists of the British Society). According to King (1991), very little clarification or mutual understanding was achieved, in large part because the attention of Viennese analysts was taken up by the dangers posed by Hitler toward Austria. However, one can assume that these lectures served to alert both the Viennese and the British to the degree of difference that had evolved between them, and may have played a role in preparing the antagonism that followed.

While disputes over theoretical differences remained largely civil and subdued through most of the 1930's, the Nazi occupation of Vienna in 1938 set into motion a decisive series of events for both British and Viennese analysts. As it became apparent that the Freuds and their colleagues were in increasing danger, Jones, with the help of Princess Marie Bonaparte, helped secure the safe passage of the Freuds and their colleagues to London, where they were offered not only housing and financial security, but also full membership into the British Psychoanalytic Society (King, 1991). Freud, feeble and ailing with cancer, did not take part in the activities of the British Society, and died less than a year after arriving on British soil. However, Anna Freud quickly became an active participant in the affairs of the society (Young-

Bruehl, 1988). This undoubtedly contributed to the polarization of members of the society: both Anna Freud and Melanie Klein were pioneering firgures of child psychoanalysis, but they held sharply contrasting opinions on a variety of points regarding child development and the conduct of child treatment, and had been criticizing one another's views in published contributions to analytic journals since the 1920's (e.g. A. Freud, 1927; Klein, 1927). Now they and their followers occupied the same psychoanalytic institute.

Overt hostilities were delayed by the outbreak of the war, when many of the British analysts (including Klein) fled London in order to avoid air-raids. Those who remained were largely recent immigrants from Germany and Austria (i.e. Anna Freud's group). This led to the interesting situation of foreign immigrants, many of whom opposed the ideas of Melanie Klein, dominating meetings of the British Psychoanalytic Society for almost two years. In 1941 most of the indigenous members of the British Society, Klein included, returned to London and to active participation (King, 1989). Tensions, expressed privately and covertly between members prior to this point reached a peak and began to be openly, at times acrimoniously, expressed in a series of scientific and business meetings, beginning in November, 1941. Some of the friction took the form of complaints concerning internal political issues, such as the dominance of the Institute and Society by a few analysts who simultaneously held a number of offices for multiple terms (most notably, Edward Glover). However, one of the primary sources of tension came from the growing sense, among some of the Viennese Freudians, that the Kleinians were a subversive group secretly vying for power whose heretical, distorted ideas threatened to infiltrate the institutions of psychoanalysis and contaminate the Freudian legacy. The Viennese

Freudians began anxiously contemplating ways to expel the Kleinians, and the latter reacted by 'circling the wagons' and planning a unified response.

The Controversial Discussions

In July, 1942, after a series of "Extraordinary Business Meetings," the British Psychoanalytic Society managed to organize around this increasingly volatile situation. It was decided that political differences would be settled through theoretical debate: A series of scientific discussions were planned in order to determine the nature of theoretical differences between the groups, in an effort to clarify whether their views were truly incompatible, and, if so, whose were legitimately psychoanalytic.

The Controversial Discussions were these theoretical debates. They consisted of four papers presented by the Kleinians on phantasy, introjection and projection, regression, and the depressive position (authored by Susan Isaacs, Paula Heimann, Isaacs and Heimann, and Klein, respectively). Each paper was distributed ahead of time, then read aloud in a scientific meeting, followed by prepared and spontaneous discussion by members of the society. Much of this discussion centered on the extent to which Klein's views represented a legitimate extension of Freudian theory, or whether they diverged into an incompatible variant (King and Steiner, 1991).

While the new focus on theoretical issues provided a "welcome change from the backbiting of the Extraordinary Meetings the previous year"(Grosskurth, 1986; p. 319), the tone of debate remained polemical. As Baudry (1994) points out, real dialogue over points of difference was impossible because both sides refused to consider the validity of the opposing views, effectively magnifying differences and eliminating the possibility of finding common ground. Schafer (1994b) describes the "trial atmosphere" propogated

by both sides during the proceedings: the Viennese Freudians by their "inquisitorial tone" and insistence that their opponents *prove* (rather than merely present or argue) the correctness of their views, the Kleinians by their defensive emphasis on testifying to their allegiance to Freud, to the near exclusion of argument based on clinical evidence (with the exception of the final section in Isaacs'(1943) paper on phantasy). It was as if the Kleinians were "acknowledging the justice of their being put on trial, merely pleading innocent and putting the burden of proof on the prosecution" (Schafer, 1994b; p. 361). In this atmosphere, both sides eluded the possibility of open dialogue and exchange of ideas.

Thus, probably because the debates were fueled by tensions over power-sharing and primitive anxieties related to expulsion and invasion, neither side found points of commonality in theory or in possible rules for evaluating evidence. Instead, Freud's text became the common point of both reference and contention, with much argument focused on what constituted proper interpretation of Freud's writing. The Viennese Freudians accused the Kleinians of citing Freud out of context and using his words differently than originally intended, while the Kleinians found the Viennese too literal and limited in their interpretation of Freud (Steiner, 1991). This often legalistic focus on loyalty to the Freudian text did little to facilitate compromise and mutual understanding; however, it did yield some clarification of the differences between the groups in their use and understanding of Freudian concepts, and also pushed the Kleinian group to think through their theory more systematically than they had before (Baudry, 1994; Schafer, 1994b).

In addition, the Discussions provided a needed interlude during which the society could formulate institutional responses that served to contain anxieties related to power and authority brewing within the society. This resulted

in their settling on an arrangement in which the previously warring groups and their theoretical differences could coexist with the assurance of shared political power within the Society, an arrangement that continues to the present. (King and Steiner, 1991; Grosskurth, 1986).

Outcome of the Controversial Discussions

Writers on the Controversies agree on the basic outcome of these events: an unofficial "gentleman's agreement" (or "ladies agreement"; see King, 1989) establishing a tradition of equal representation of Kleinian, Freudian, and Independent analysts on Society and Institute Boards, as well as a tacit agreement to tolerate differences without resorting to attempts by either group to expel the other. However, there is some disagreement in the literature on the general tone of this post-Controversy coexistence. Steiner (1985) describes a clear shift on the part of the Viennese Freudians *during* the Controversies, from a dogmatic adherence to the reified (rather than fully symbolized) words of Freud along with attempts at splitting-off and expelling members for their differences, all reflecting primitive (paranoid-level) anxieties and defenses, to an attitude of "mutual acceptance" wherein the "values of the depressive position" contributed to a more symbolic use of language, acknowldgement of the temporal and changeable dimension of ideas, and toleration of ambivalence through the use of reparative rather than destructive mechanisms. In Steiner's view (obviously based on his sympathy with the Kleinian position and theoretical perspective), it was Klein's introduction of the idea of the depressive position that prevented the primitive anxieties fueling the Controversies from leading it into a schismatic catastrophe. Instead, as the "values of the depressive position" permeated discussion, the Controversies achieved a sort of progressive development toward a "*mini-*

mum code of reciprocal acceptance" reflecting "*the presence of ambivalent elements of the reparative type linked to the depressive position,* rather than to anxieties of the schizo-paranoid type" (Steiner, 1985; p. 59. Italics in original).

Other authors are less sanguine in their assessment. On the Kleinian side, Segal (1979) points out that "the discussions did not bring, as Jones had hoped, a better mutual understanding. On the contrary, they seem to have led to a still sharper polarization of views and sometimes degenerated into acrimony" (pp. 109-110). Harold Bridger, an analysand of Paula Heimann, became aware of the intense international revulsion toward Klein's ideas immediately after the controversies when he attended the International Conference in Zurick in 1949: "One had the feeling that it was far more than just personal antagonism. It was far more deeply seated in the sense of anxiety and fear about what these ideas would do." (Quoted in Grosskurth, 1986; p. 376). Petot (1990) and Caper (1988) both describe an intense, ongoing ambivalence in the analytic community toward Klein's work after the Controversies, characterized by a "conspiracy of silence" that prevented analysts from directly acknowledging Klein's contribution even as they employed aspects of her thinking to clinical work, particularly with more disturbed patients.

From the Freudian side, Joseph Sandler, who trained in the 'B' track (Anna Freudian group) during the decade following the Controversies, remembers "a lot of hostility between the groups" felt even among the candidates. This atmosphere allowed for only "uneasy" friendships, if these formed at all (Quoted in Grosskurth, 1986; p. 360). From the perspective of theory, Yorke (1994), another British Freudian, claims that the general outcome of the Controversies was the clear conclusion, shared by all, that the gulf between ideas was "unbridgeable," leading partisans to remain even more entrenched in their positions. Writers from a more independent position have similarly

described the post-Controversial British Psychoanalytic Society as characterized by clarified but emotionally embattled theoretical positions with little intermingling or intellectual interchange (Holland 1990; Limentani 1989; Young-Bruehl 1989). (However cf. Limentani's (1989) description of the "1952 club" for a small albeit notable early exception to this general tendency in the Society.)

The Centrality of the Concept of Phantasy

Steiner (1989) appears to be in the minority regarding his positive assessment of the immediate aftermath of the Controversial Discussions. However others might agree that his views do reflect faithfully *recent* developments in the British Psychoanalytic Society. Indeed Schafer (1994a) has argued that there has been some degree of rapprochement between Contemporary Kleinians and British Freudians in matters of clinical practice and implicitly in related theoretical matters as well (cf. also Yorke 1994). Schafer particularly notes the extent to which "Kleinian Freudians" (Schafer's term) have moved away from part object language and reconstruction of early experience toward a more acutely phenomenological here and now focus on the transference and countertransference with emphasis on anxiety and defense, working from the "surface to the depth," and disruptive effects of primitive phantasy and affect on *ego functions*. In these last two respects in particular, Schafer sees this group as implicitly adopting an ego psychology approach, albeit one that differs from American ego psychology in its conceptualizing the ego (and superego) as dynamic and personified, rather than structural and functional. For their part, "Standard Freudians" have moved closer to the Kleinians in their greater attention to preoedipal, dyadic factors and increased appreciation of the subtleties of transference phenomena and

the extent to which countertransference reactions can be induced by patients, even if Klein's concept of projective identification is not always used to describe this process (e.g. Sandler's (1976) concept of 'role responsiveness', Novick and Novick's (1970) concept of 'externalization'). (Cf. also introductory essays in Spillius (1988a and b) for a similar view on changes in Kleinian practice.)

However, as current theoretical and clinical debates indicate, Kleinians and contemporary Freudians continue to differ markedly in their understanding of the nature of unconscious phantasy (Sandler, 1983; Hayman, 1989). This central disagreement can be seen to relate to a number of other differences that continue to divide Kleinians and modern Freudians – divergent views of psychic structure, early object relations, and the functions of the ego, among other issues. For example, Sandler and Sandler (1994), in their discussion of continuing disagreements between contemporary British Freudians and Kleinians, claim that the latters' view of unconscious phantasy has expanded beyond Freud's original usage to "include practically every variety of unconscious mental content, both knowable and unknowable" (p. 388). In the Sandlers' view, this extension of the concept blurs important theoretical and clinical distinctions, such as the distinction between unconscious phantasies of the past ("past unconscious") which cannot be directly remembered and obey the laws of primary process, and current unconscious phantasies ("present unconscious") which patients can become aware of and that show a degree of secondary-process thinking and connection with external reality. While the past unconscious contains repressed wishful phantasies from the distant past that were originally formative, these are now inaccessible, and can only be reconstructed from a distance, based on the analyst's understanding of the patient's history and theory about early development. In contrast,

present unconscious phantasies, while partly formed from derivatives of the past unconscious, are governed by the "stabilizing function of unconscious phantasy" and always concern current objects. That is, rather than concerned with infantile instinctual wishes toward early objects, these are motivated primarily by the desire for safety in the context of current relationships. These phantasies can become accessible to consciousness with careful interpretation of resistance, and therefore can be addressed directly, rather then reconstructed hypothetically.

For the Sandlers, the use of an overarching term of "phantasy" to include both phenomena blurs these important distinctions, and leads Kleinians to mix genetic reconstructions and here-and-now interpretations, to fail to distinguish safety-maintaining from instinctual (i.e. sexual and aggressive) motivations in different forms of phantasy, and to neglect the distinction between different forms of mentation (i.e. primary v. secondary process, phantasying v. reality testing) involved in different forms of phantasy. (Yorke (1994) echoes this latter point in his commentary on the Controversial Discussions.)

In contrast, Segal (1994) sees a major contribution of the Kleinian approach in its development of Freud's interest in the *misconceptions* present in neurotic phenomena, particularly transference distortions. For Segal, the subtle dynamics of these experiences are best understood with a model that conceives of phantasy and reality, past and present, as constantly interpenetrating one another. The degree to which external reality can be firmly construed apart from the wishes of internal reality depends on the degree to which the gap between desire and its satisfaction can be tolerated, and this may vary depending on shifts in one's emotional life. When, for a variety of reasons, the frustration of this gap begins to generate excessive hatred, more

primitive forms of defense and modes of relating to internal objects make their appearance, resulting in the loss of differentiation between desire and satisfaction, aspects of self and other, and psychic symbols and what they symbolize. One's perceptual apparatus itself may become "mutilated" as it is defensively projected into objects, further diminishing the capacity to distinguish between internal and external reality. Importantly, for Segal and Contemporary Kleinians, frequent movement between the capacity to tolerate differentiation and judge reality effectively and the loss of these in more primitive modes is an ongoing dimension in the inner life of many people. The idea of firm, "structured" boundaries between different aspects of the psyche and its functions, or between reality and phantasy, or past and present, does not adhere to the clinical realities they confront. For the Kleinians, a broader definition of phantasy better accounts for various clinical phenomena and theoretical issues.

The contrast between these contemporary Freudians and Kleinians demonstrates that the difference in viewpoint over phantasy has clear implications for how one conceives of theoretical topics such as psychic structure, the relationship between phantasy and reality, the nature of internal object relations, the functions of the ego, as well as issues of technique. Importantly, the concept of phantasy was also the central theoretical arguing point of the Controversial Discussions – while it was the topic of the first of four papers presented by the Kleinians, debate on this issue occupied half of the total meetings, and was clearly the most emotionally charged point of disagreement among participants of the Discussions (Steiner, 1991; Hayman, 1994).

Susan Isaacs (1943) paper on phantasy, 'The nature and function of phantasy,' aimed to offer a scholarly explanation for the Kleinian extension of Freud's concept of phantasy while simultaneously demonstrating that it re-

mained rooted in the essence of Freud's thought, and in fact, integrated disparate aspects of his views on this topic in a new and useful way. It built on Freud's (1911a) notion of phantasy as a conscious or unconscious mode of imaginary gratification of frustrated libidinal strivings, by equating it with Freud's (1900, 1911a) model of the infant as originally hallucinating the breast before developing the means to gratify oral and self-preservative needs in more adaptive, reality-oriented ways. In so doing, phantasy is dated extremely early in developement (indeed, nearly from birth) and is equated with the first object relation involving the mother's breast. This equation also places object relations, albeit phantasied ones, very early in development, before any hypothesized purely autoerotic or narcissistic phase could have developed (in apparent contradiction with Freud's (1911b, 1913, 1914, 1915) statements implying that autoerotism and narcissistic phases only gradually give way to object relations).

Furthermore, Isaacs connects these ideas about phantasy, to Freud's (1925) notion about the development of reasoning, adumbrated in 'Negation,' in which he links primitive judgements about 'good' and 'bad' to the early processes of introjection and expulsion characteristic of the 'purified pleasure ego':

> Expressed in the language of the oldest, that is, of the oral, instinctual impulses, the alternative runs thus: "I should like to eat that, or I should like to spit it out"; or, carried a stage further: "I should like to take this into me and keep that out of me." (Freud, 1925; pp. 214-15).

Freud states that this early forerunner of judgement precedes and prepares the way for more objective appraisals of the reality ego. In her reading, Isaacs takes Freud to be referring to *phantasies* that the infant has of introjecting and expelling objects, thereby showing that Freud might have assumed

that even advanced cognitive processes have their root in early preverbal phantasy.

In connecting these (and other) ideas in Freud's writings, Isaacs develops a view of phantasy that equates it with psychic reality, conceives it as the bedrock of all psychological experience, and includes within it a variety of functions beyond the single one initially mentioned by Freud – gratification of frustrated wishes. Isaacs developed her definition in eight sections, here summarized:

> (a) Phantasies are mainly *unconscious*, the primary content of unconscious mental processes.
> (b) Phantasy is *psychic reality*, the mental representative and corollary of instinctual urges, which cannot operate in the mind without phantasy.
> (c) Freud's postulated *'hallucinatory wish-fulfillment'* and his *'primary introjection'* are the basis of phantasy life.
> (d) Phantasy is the *subjective interpretation of experience.*
> (e) Phantasies early become elaborated into *defences*, as well as wish-fulfillments.
> (f) Phantasies express the *specific content* and show the specific direction and purpose of an urge or a feeling or a defence.
> (g) Phantasies exert an *uninterrupted and omnipresent* influence throughout life, both in normal and neurotic people.
> (h) Individual and age differences lie in the *mode of elaboration* and expression of the phantasies (King and Steiner, 1991; pp. 313-14).

As Hayman's (1994) analysis of the Controversies demonstrates, many of today's disagreements about phantasy, voiced by the Sandlers and Segal, are clearly prefigured by differences that crystallized out of the debates of 1943 following Isaacs' presentation. At that time, the participants of the Discussions argued about a variety of dimensions of phantasy, including assumptions about early object relations, assumed forms of very early mentation, the proper use of inference in constructing theory, the relative predominance of aim and object in primitive forms of instinct, the proper definition of an in-

ternal object, the relation between ego functions (including thinking and defense mechanisms) and phantasy, the temporal relationship between phantasying and reality-proving, and (particularly) whether Freud was being interpreted correctly by various participants. Hayman highlights the emphasis placed on the degree to which Viennese Freudians argued that the new definition of phantasy obscured important structural-functional distinctions and collapsed the difference between perceptual/subjective and conceptual/ objective language for describing psychological phenomena. Along with Sandler (1983), Yorke (1994) and other contemporary Freudians, she sees this as a difference that continues to divide the groups and, in her view, that keeps the Kleinians from recognizing important subtleties of psychic functioning.

Dissertation Format

This thesis aims to illuminate the theoretical differences over phantasy voiced during the Controversial Discussions. It will critically compare these differences to Freud's thought, as well as examine reasons these differences led to the extreme polarization preceding the Controversies.

In Chapter 2 I begin this examination by tracing Klein's distinctive way of thinking about and developing her ideas of unconscious phantasy, as seen in her clinical and theoretical writings from 1921 to 1940. I focus particularly on the evolution of her concept of phantasy from her earliest views and examine the use of clinical observation in its development. I also discuss the place of unconscious phantasy in her overall theoretical framework, and highlight the functions it serves to provide coherence and explanatory support to other important ideas and findings.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the differences that emerged from Susan Isaacs' presentation of the Kleinian view of phantasy and the response of Anna

Freud's supporters. I show how arguments between the groups relate to differing understandings of Freud's views on phantasy and other topics, such as the relationship between instinct and phantasy, the place of phantasy in early object relations, the temporal and functional relationship between early phantasy and the beginnings of reality testing, and the extent to which subjectivity can be attributed to functional aspects of the psychic apparatus or ego.

In Chapters 4 and 5 I examine Freud's writings in each of these areas in an attempt to formulate his views of phantasy throughout the various phases of his thought. Chapter 4 focuses on the initial appearance of the concept of phantasy in Freuds writings in the 1890's and the particular function it serves in his struggles with the epistemological problem of the relation of the subjective mind to physical and external reality. Chapter 5 follows various changes in his views on phantasy in the context of shifting approaches to this basic epistemological problem. I argue there that Freud's view of phantasy is best viewed in light of this overarching philosophical struggle, which also points the way toward illuminating some of the underlying tensions of later controversies over phantasy.

In Chapter 6 I conclude with a discussion of these underlying tensions, placing them in the context of broader trends in the philosophy of science that have posed a challenge to the positivistic/empirical scientific tradition in this century.

Chapter 2: The Evolution of the Concept of Phantasy in Kleinian Thought

In this chapter I aim to show the evolution of Klein's theory of phantasy from it's beginnings in the early 1920's to the form it took in Susan Isaacs' presentation of 1943. In particular I intend to illuminate some of the clinical and theoretical issues that led Klein to expand the concept of unconscious phantasy in its meaning and scope, leading to its later formulation as the near-ubiquitous medium of all mental functioning.

In what follows I will proceed chronologically through Klein's major papers, from 1921 to 1940, stopping along the way to highlight her implicit and explicit views of phantasy as she presents them and examine the nodal points in her thinking, along with the clinical and theoretical issues that serve to catalyze these developments. For practical purposes I will conceive of these nodes as joints along which Klein's thought can be subdivided into four phases. While any such articulation of thinking as subtle and complex as Klein's is necessarily somewhat arbitrary, I have organized it in this way because, in my view, it clarifies the points at which Klein alters her way of thinking in a way that introduces some degree of discontinuity from what came before, either because of direct contradiction or through the addition of new elements that alter the meanings of previous concepts.

Further, in focusing on phases, I will try to also show the gradual building toward each point of transition in order to demonstrate the evolutionary nature of Klein's theory and the importance of clinical experience in shaping changes to her thinking. The present chapter is divided into four sections corresponding to each of the phases, which I refer to as: 1) Play technique and the clinical importance of phantasy; 2) Sublimation, symbol formation, and the

ubiquity of phantasy; 3) Introjection and early object phantasies; and 4) The internal world.

I. Play Technique and the Clinical Importance of Phantasy (1919-1921)

Two interrelated ideas remain a core of Klein's thinking throughout her writings: 1) progress in psychoanalytic treatment involves the liberation of the capacity to phantasize; and 2) all behavior and all psychological activity are the realization or expression of unconscious or preconscious phantasy (Petot, 1990). In this section I will examine the observations that led Klein to the first of these ideas, culled from her initial clinical work with children suffering from learning inhibitions. Briefly put, these observations led Klein to move from her initial view, that intellectual inhibition results from over-authoritarian upbringing which reinforces the child's innate belief in the 'omnipotence of thought' (at the expense of reality-testing), to a perspective in which the anxiety-arousing *contents of phantasies themselves* are responsible for inhibition of phantasy, play, and subsequent sublimations. As a result of this new view on inhibition, Klein adopts a technique that places primary importance on the expression and liberation of unconscious phantasy through imaginative play. As I will show, Klein's discovery of the connections between learning and play, on the one hand, and masturbation and unconscious phantasy, on the other, points her to her second basic idea – that all behavior and psychological activity are expressions of unconscious phantasy. I will also attempt to demonstrate how this idea serves as an ideological anchor for much of Klein's later, more controversial theoretical speculation that will occupy the later chapters of this work.

I will begin by examining the clinical evidence that led Klein to her earliest views, as presented in her first paper, entitled "Development of a child"

(1921). There she describes her first analytic experience, treating a 5-year-old boy with learning inhibitions, initially through the use of a psychoanalytically-informed pedagogical approach she refers to as "sexual enlightenment and relaxation of authority." The patient in her account is actually her son, Erich (Grosskurth, 1986), whom she refers to in the text as "Fritz," explaining that he is the "son of relations who live in my immediate neighborhood" whose mother "follows all my recommendations." The boy is described as "of normal but slow mental development," with onset of speech at age two, use of full sentences at three and a half, a lack of the kind of "remarkable sentences" observed in gifted children, and mastery of colors and the difference between yesterday, today, and tomorrow not appearing until after the age of four.

The paper itself is divided into two sections (the first originally presented in Budapest in 1919, the second delivered in Berlin in 1921), and when compared they reveal a dramatic shift in her thinking, from a view emphasizing environmental causal factors in neurosis and favoring pedagogical solutions, to one that implicitly recognizes the etiological primacy of unconscious phantasies and the therapeutic necessity of facilitating the emergence of such phantasies. Near the beginning of the paper she states her initial (environmental) position clearly:

> We can spare the child unnecessary repression by freeing – and first and foremost in ourselves – the whole wide sphere of sexuality from the dense veils of secrecy, falsehood, and danger spun by a hypocritical civilization upon an affective and uninformed foundation (Klein, 1921; p. 1).

In essence, Klein sees the repression of sexuality as inhibiting the free play of intellectual curiosity, and lays the blame for this repression on the effects of a "hypocritical civilization." It is from this perspective that Klein un-

dertakes the initial "psychoanalytic education" described in the first half of the paper, which began when, at age four and a half, Fritz showed an increase in mental development, an impulse to ask questions, and feelings of omnipotence (e.g. asserting of even the most difficult tasks, 'if I am shown how just once, I can do it quite well!'). Several months later questions concerning birth set in, and Klein responded as follows:

> Here I would remark that the questions put by the little fellow. . . were always answered absolutely truthfully and, when necessary, on a scientific basis suited to his understanding, but as briefly as possible. Questions once answered were never returned to again, neither was a new subject introduced unless he either repeated one or spontaneously started a new question (p. 3).

Initially Fritz responded to his mother's frank answers to questions about 'how is a person made' with "a certain pain, an unwillingness to accept" that led him to repeat the question again and again. Initial acceptance would be followed by rejection of these answers, and at one point Fritz angrily ran away from home, but then returned to ask more questions. Klein notes the gradually increased curiosity about matters related to human development as indicating the success of her approach. Fritz' discovery of parental fallibility, when receiving differing answers from mother and father to questions about the existence of God is seen as a highly effective, if inadvertent, therapeutic intervention. After this experience, Fritz' curiosity and questions, as well as his competence in making intellectual judgments blossomed in various directions, seeming to confirm Klein's idea that the authoritative imposition of pre-established ideas inhibits curiosity about sexual matters and leads to repressions, while frank answering of questions "safeguards thought from the tendency to repression," thereby facilitating the sublimation of instinctual energy toward other interests and activities.

For a time, Klein seems to have seen the effects of her "psychoanalytic upbringing" as satisfactory and complete. Fritz was now demonstrating a greatly improved "practical sense" in his relations with reality. His curiosity appeared uninhibited as he explored the workings of things "to the depths." He now could make independent judgments about whether something is real or "just a story," and began making deductions from his own experiences:

> After breakfast he said, 'When I stir the sugar in the tea it goes into my stomach.' I said, 'Is that certain?' – 'Yes, because it doesn't stay in the cup and it goes into my mouth.' (p.11).

Klein also noted a decline in Fritz' "omnipotence feeling" at this time. This was important in confirming for her the theoretical notions she had proposed about the conflict between the omnipotence of thought (characteristic of the pleasure principle) and the reality principle, and the relationship of this conflict to the tendency to repression. In her view, (based largely on ideas from Ferenczi (1913)), the mind of the young child is dominated by the pleasure principle, which leads to the "belief in the omnipotence of thought" (i.e., 'if I can think it, it is so'). This belief leads the child to attribute omnipotence to the environment as well, and therefore to parents and other authority figures, and this ultimately plays a part in the widely held belief in the existence of god. When the inevitable injuries to the child's own sense of omnipotence occurs, some of the pleasure intrinsic to this powerful state can be preserved by maintaining a belief in parental (or supernatural) omnipotence and omniscience. However, for an adequate establishment of the reality principle, a "timely fundamental correction of the omnipotence feeling by thought" is required, which optimally preserves some vestige of early omnipotence in the form of optimism, but clearly establishes the dominance of reality testing.

Thus, the danger of introducing the idea of God to children in whom the battle between omnipotence and reality wages is that it provides a "tremendous ally" to the former:

> This idea of god can so shatter the reality-sense that it dare not reject the incredible, the apparently unreal, and can so affect it that the recognition of the tangible, the near-at-hand, the so-called 'obvious' things in intellectual matters, is repressed together with the deeper processes of thinking (p. 24).

With the idea of god, both fear of and pleasure in authority join with the "innate tendency to repression" against the reality principle and the development of intellectual interests.

One important point should immediately be noted about this idea. While Klein alludes to the "innate tendency to repression" at several points in this paper, she does not describe the process of repression as activated by internal conflict between the instinctual and anti-instinctual components of personality, as would have been standard practice at that time (Cf. Freud, 1917-18). Instead, the idea of repression is most frequently discussed in relation to the dishonesty and hypocrisy of parents and authority, so that it begins to seem as though, for Klein, repression is merely a reflexive, "innate" response to authority, not a security measure taken in response to internal conflict. In fact, the only form of internal conflict Klein does describe in the first part of this paper, and which *is* associated with repression, is that between omnipotence of thought and the reality principle, described above. It is the continued dominance of the pleasure principle and omnipotence of thought that leads us to endow authority figures with the power to impose anti-free thinking dogma onto us, which then serves to reinforce the "innate tendency to repression." This situation locks us into a mindset that is simultaneously anti-reality and anti-instinctual. Importantly, this idea prefigures what will

become increasingly central for Kleinian thought: it is the liberation of the instinctual that eventually *leads to* relations with reality, both in early development and in the process of treatment.

Several points should be emphasized here. First, this conflict – between omnipotence and reality – is *the* basic internal struggle that Klein describes in the first section of her first paper (the conflict between authority and free thought is certainly given more emphasis, but this is an interpersonal rather than intrapsychic conflict, and its importance seems implicitly to rest on its interaction with an internal need to maintain some degree of omnipotence and omniscience in the world). Second, in her account of this Klein clearly implies that *relations with reality are not initially given*; children first experience as real the contents of their thoughts (i.e. phantasies), and must somehow work their way through difficulties in giving up the belief in the reality of their thoughts before they can begin to judge external reality with any degree of success (i.e. establish the reality principle). Third, defense and character development appear ultimately bound up with the fate of this tension between omnipotence of thought and the reality principle; while Klein initially stresses the opposition of the individual's intellectual freedom and dogmatic authority, by the beginning of the second section of this paper, her thinking has shifted toward an emphasis on understanding, both theoretically and clinically, events that take place *within* the child's omnipotence of thought. In each of these ideas we see seeds of Klein's mature theory of phantasy, to be developed in later sections.

The second part of Development of a Child Klein begins with the statement that even when "prophylactic measures" have been used in the upbringing of a child (i.e. frank answering of questions),

> we often only achieve a part of what was aimed at, but have often actually made use of a part of the requirements that our knowledge places at our disposition. For we learn from the analysis of neurotics that only a part of the injuries resulting form repression can be traced to wrong environmental or other prejudicial external conditions. Another and very important part is due to an attitude on the part of the child, present from the very tenderest years (p. 27).

We see evidence already of the important change in Klein's thinking from the views expressed in the first section, written two years previously. The emphasis now shifts from "external conditions" to an early "attitude on the part of the child" in the formation neurotic symptoms and inhibitions. In what follows, Klein describes the surprising clinical observations behind this change in viewpoint.

Klein returns to the case of Fritz, reminding us of the fact that, in her previously described sexual enlightenment of this child, the role of the father in the sexual act and birth process had been omitted, despite recurring questions about the ultimate origin of the fetus (e.g. 'Please, mamma, where do the little tummy and the little head and the rest come from?' (p. 27)). Because Fritz' intelligence and curiosity seemed to be blossoming through the effect of her interventions, described above, Klein assumed this curiosity would eventually lead him to ask about those aspects he had not yet directly inquired about, including the role of the father.

However, Fritz' intellectual growth and freedom began to wane after several months, with his questioning once again becoming stereotyped and speculative, and his impulse for the investigation of practical reality diminished.

> He would ask again and again what different things were made of and how they were made. For instance. 'What is the door made of?' – 'What is the bed made of?' – 'How is glass made?' – 'How is the chair made?' Some of the trifling questions were,

> 'How does all the earth get under the earth?' – 'Where do stones, where does water come from?' etc. There was no doubt that on the whole he had completely grasped the answer to these questions and that their recurrence had no intellectual basis (p. 28).

After almost two months of "increased brooding and superficial questions" there was a further change; Fritz became taciturn and uninterested in play, showed a lack of desire for the companionship of other children, and even seemed bored in the company of his mother. He now expressed a dislike for being told stories by her, and generally became absent-minded. At the same time, he seemed healthy, cheerful, friendly, although somewhat more naughty and clingier with his mother.

Klein was most particularly struck by Fritz' new disinclination for stories and questions, in marked contrast to his previous avid pleasure in both. She offered the following formulation:

> I became convinced that the child's very powerful impulse for investigation had come into conflict with his equally powerful tendency to repression, and that the latter in refusing the explanations desired by his unconscious had entirely obtained the upper hand (p. 29).

(The change in language from part one is noteworthy – Klein is increasingly formulating this situation in terms of internal conflict, although the 'tendency to repression' itself remains unexplained.)

After a brief consultation with Anton Freund, Klein came to the conclusion that her previous work with Fritz had only addressed the conscious dimension of his question, and that this had been insufficient. She then made an attempt to answer what she assumed had been asked unconsciously – the role of the father in the procreative process. However, her attempts at elucidating this missing element met only his absent-mindedness and inattentiveness: "He gave the distinct impression that he had entirely failed to com-

prehend this quite new piece of information and that he did not wish to comprehend it" (p. 30).

Klein's successful attempt at overcoming this impasse was a critical moment in the development of her therapeutic method and clinical theory. Klein recounts this crucial event as follows:

> [His mother/Klein] said as she gave him a sweetmeat that it had been waiting for him for a long time and made up a little story about it. He was greatly entertained at this and expressed the wish to have it repeated several times, and then listened with enjoyment to the story about the woman upon whose nose a sausage grew at her husband's wish. Then quite spontaneously he began to talk, and from then on he told longer or shorter phantastic stories, originating sometimes in ones he had been told but mostly entirely original and providing a mass of analytic material (Klein, 1921; p. 31).

This event seems not unlike Breuer's surprising discovery of Anna O's inner life through facilitating her capacity to narrate inner experience (Breuer and Freud, 1895). Klein began to appreciate the importance for the child in telling his/her own story in its natural childhood form – through phantastic stories and imaginative play. Here pedagogy gave way to analysis, as the focus shifted from how the child will be informed about reality to how an adult will begin to understand the child's phantasy (which, as Klein will later insist, *is* his reality). Interestingly, Klein entered the field of phantasy by offering a phantastic story of her own, to prime the pump, as it were. This seemed to signal to Fritz that she was open to the realm of the phantastic, and what follows was a profusion of rich, elaborated stories told with great zest.

The initial stories told by Fritz contain unmistakably Oedipal impulses. In his phantasies, two cows walk together, then one jumps on the back of the other and rides her. Fritz said to his mother one morning "I shall climb up on you; you are a mountain and I climb up you." (p. 31). He told his mother he

would like to see her naked in order to see the "picture" in her stomach, where he was before birth. A soldier insults a king in one play scenario, then is imprisoned and dies, but comes back to life and is merely arrested. Two small figures of dogs are his father and himself; one was dirty (father), the other beautiful (himself).

However, none of these phantasies contains a fully-developed Oedipal scenario, in which a triangular rivalrous situation exists. Also, Fritz "clung to" a birth theory that babies come from food and grow in the mother's stomach, then emerge as feces, despite being already informed about the sperm and egg, father's role, etc. It is as if he could not bear to put together the implications of his wishes and the knowledge that has been offered by his mother/analyst. It was only in finally entering Fritz' phantasy world that Klein could finally begin to understand the pain behind her child/patient's resistance to knowledge of the birth process and to offer a response that helped him integrate this difficult piece of reality.

This took place during an episode in which Fritz, sitting on the toilet, related a phantasy of "kaki's" staying in the balcony, refusing to come into the garden (toilet). To this Klein responded "These are the children then that grow in the stomach?" Fritz concurred, then accepted her explanation of the actual process of conception and birth, including the role of the father, albeit with tragically painful feelings, which suddenly bring to light the meanings behind his former resistance:

> Fritz listened with great interest and said, 'I would so like to see how a child is made inside like that.' I explain that this is impossible until he is big because it can't be done till then but that then he will do it himself. 'But then I would like to do it to mamma.' 'That can't be, mamma can't be your wife for she is the wife of your papa, and then papa would have no wife.' 'But we could both do it to her.' I say, 'No, that can't be. . . He (nearly in tears and with quivering lips), 'But shan't will live in the same house

> together with mamma? 'I, 'Certainly, and your mamma will always love you but she can't be your wife.' (p. 34).

Fritz then inquired about all the details of the procreative process and showed great interest in this, for the first time. From the material it is apparent that the implications of the Oedipal situation – loss of mother, rivalry with father – had been too painful for him to assimilate sexual information, despite a strong wish to know. Following Fritz's acceptance of this information, the full Oedipal situation entered the material, in both its positive and negative aspects.

At one point, not long after this shift toward oedipal material, Klein offered an interpretation in response to a dream involving a big motor, a small motor, and an electric car. She states:

> I explain that the big motor is his papa, the electric car his mamma and the little motor himself, and that he has put himself between papa and mamma because he would so much like to put papa away altogether and to remain alone with his mamma and do with her what only papa is allowed to do (Klein, 1921; p. 35).

This is Klein's first documented "deep interpretation," and it seems to have unlocked the free flowing of unconscious material contained in the dream into a fully elaborated conscious phantasy, involving open conflict between the child and father images, increasingly warlike adventures, and a mostly pleasurable, victorious ending for the child.

Following this intervention, Fritz' pleasure in play increased and became permanent, and showed a greater flexibility and variety. Klein explains this as follows:

> Thus while unconscious phantasies are usually ventilated in play-activities, in this case it seemed probable, as no doubt in other cases, that the inhibition of *phantasy* was the cause of play inhibition, both of which were simultaneously removed (p. 37; italics added).

Here, apparently for the first time, Klein focuses on phantasy itself, the inhibition of which is now seen as responsible for subsequent inhibitions in play, curiosity, and learning. Through the interventions with Fritz during this phase of his treatment (the only one so far that can begin to be called analytic), Klein is beginning to make *phantasy itself* the center of her concern: it is the source of internal motivation in play and, implicitly, in intellectual interests and curiosity, and therefore the liberation of phantasy is becoming the focal therapeutic concern. It should be particularly noted how this differs from her conceptualization in the first part of this paper: there external authority joins with one's internal needs for omnipotence in reinforcing the innate tendency to repression, which results in an inhibition of curiosity and intellectual development. Here phantasy itself is the operative variable, and in her clinical descriptions Klein is demonstrating the kinds of conflicts, taking place *within* phantasy, which lead to its inhibition.

This last point is made clear in the final period of analysis described in this paper, following a period of two months when Klein had taken ill. During this time Fritz became anxious, and Klein speculates this anxiety may have been long dormant, and only rendered conscious by the recent analytic work. He withdrew from friends, had difficulty falling asleep, and decreased his symbolic play and storytelling. At the same time he became "overzealous" in his reading, and was much naughtier and less cheerful.

As Klein returned to analyzing Fritz' dreams and phantasies after her illness and his return of inhibitions (and resistance to analysis), she discovered a new appearance of negative Oedipal material and anxieties related to conflictual fears and wishes of becoming penetrated. Fritz dreamed of soldiers with sticks, guns, and bayonets who might stick him. When Klein interpreted this as related to his "father's big wiwi," Fritz replied that "it seemed to him

sometimes as though the one man had stuck in the other and there was only one man!" (p. 40). Another phantasy involved a "room in the stomach" in which someone comes in, "lays his head on the table, and the whole house falls down" (p.41).

> To my question, 'Who is the someone and how did he get inside?' he answers, 'A little stick came through the wiwi into the belly and into the stomach that way.' In this instance he offered little resistance to my interpretation. I told him that he had imagined himself in his mamma's place and wished his papa might do with him what he does with her. But he is afraid (as he imagines his mamma to be too) that if this stick – papa's wiwi – gets into his wiwi he will be hurt and then inside his belly, in his belly, everything will be destroyed, too (p. 41).

This interpretation includes the clear recognition of conflict between wishes and fears associated with the negative Oedipal situation, thus demonstrating that Klein now sees the principal factors of repression and inhibition as stemming from the content of the phantasies themselves. Further, the *anxiety* comes from the content of phantasy – fear of destruction by the wished-for paternal penis. At this point (prior to Freud's (1926) reformulated theory of anxiety) Klein's view of anxiety is idiosyncratic; it was assumed at this time that anxiety resulted from dammed-up libido as a consequence of repression (Freud, 1915b); for Klein it comes from being frightened by the destructive *content* of one's own unconscious phantasies.

Klein states that this second phase of analysis, lasting approximately six weeks, brought with it the cessation of anxiety, improvement in sleep, return of play and sociability, and the eventual disappearance of a newly acquired phobia of "street children." However, it also resulted in a disinclination to analysis and aversion to telling stories and listening to fairy-tales. Klein concludes, therefore, that the analysis (or, as she prefers, "upbringing with ana-

lytic features") could not be considered a 'completed treatment,' and she recognized that further analytic measures might be required in the future.

Despite these reservations, it should be clear that this paper represents a tremendous step in the evolution of Kleinian view of phantasy. In particular, she has moved from seeing omnipotent phantasy as a childhood artifact that globally instigates inhibitions through overvaluation of external authority and interference with reality testing, to a perspective that implicitly recognizes the *content* of phantasy as the psychological location of conflict and source of anxiety and inhibition. This new clinical understanding of the critical link between phantasy and inhibition leads Klein to what can be seen as a corollary view; namely, that if inhibition of intellectual and other sublimatory activities results from the restriction of phantasy due to the anxiety aroused by its contents, sublimation must be the successful expression of unconscious phantasy. This idea occupies Klein's thinking for the next several years, and it is in working out the dynamics of phantasy, inhibition, and sublimation she develops what can be thought of as the first Kleinian theory, to be discussed below.

II. Sublimation, Symbol-Formation, and the Ubiquity of Phantasy (1921-1926)

Klein's writings during this period, particularly "The Role of the School in the Libidinal Development of the Child" (1923a) and "Early Analysis" (1923b) show Klein applying the lessons she learned in her treatment of Fritz to other children with inhibitions. At the same time, her clinical examples demonstrate a general expansion of her views. While Klein's earlier exploration of Fritz' learning difficulties demonstrated that conflictual phantasies can suppress sexual curiosity, leading to an inhibition in general curiosity, she now draws a much closer connection between specific abilities

and particular phantasies, as revealed by the further analysis of inhibitions. This step in Klein's thinking, taken first clinically and then theoretically, will prove an important one in her evolving view of phantasy as the ubiquitous element underlying all behavior and mental processes.

Of the two papers Klein published in 1923, "School" is the more clinical, and "Early Analysis" the more theoretical; they seem to have been written as companion pieces, as if to lay out first the evidence and then the theoretical elaboration of her views, which were just reaching an early watershed. Near the beginning of "School" Klein makes the following statement:

> The extremely important role played by the school is in general based upon the fact that school and learning are from the first *libidinally* determined for everyone, since by its demands school compels a child to sublimate his libidinal instinctual energies. The sublimation of genital activity, above all, has a decisive share in the learning of various subjects, which will be correspondingly inhibited, therefore, by the castration-fear (p. 59).

Through the examples that fill most of this paper, Klein makes it clear the extent to which interests and inhibitions in school activities are *specifically* determined, almost exclusively, by the particular details of unconscious phantasies, which mostly involve Oedipal and primal scene situations. Some examples demonstrate the intimate connection between bodily movement and unconscious phantasy: nine-year-old Grete, who sang first-voice in choir, developed a stammer that Klein traced to "the rise and fall of the voice and the movements of the tongue [that] represented coitus" (p. 62), related ultimately to screen memories of an infantile observation of coitus. Felix's dislike of school related to his thoughts about the school master falling down into the desk and hurting himself, "demonstrating the significance of the teacher as father, and of the desk as mother, and led to his sadistic conception of coitus" (p. 60). His preoccupation with wanting to "stand up" like a girl in

front of the schoolmaster related to both a feminine attitude to the father and "fear of castration which influenced his whole subsequent attitude towards school" (p. 60).

Libidinal phantasies also underlie the activities of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Fritz related to each letter according to it's particular meaning – i (with its stroke) and e (with its hole) are penis and vagina, while L represented feces. Fritz' difficulty with S's related to rivalrous phantasies about the father:

> The one 's' was himself, the other his father. They were to embark together on a motor-boat, for the pen was also the boat, the copy-book a lake. . . the part of the long 's' that was thus left out was for him 'as though one were to take away a person's nose'. this mistake proved to be determined by castration wishes against his father and disappeared after this interpretation. (p. 65).

Examples of phantasies involved in arithmetic interest and inhibition seem more aggressive: for Fritz division became problematic because of an underlying phantasy of dividing the mother:

> It now appeared also that he always confused the remainder with the quotient in division, and always wrote it in the wrong place, because in his mind it was bleeding pieces of flesh with which he was unconsciously dealing (p. 70).

For Lisa, too, division became equated with phantasies of dividing and mutilating the mother. Klein explains that for both of these, dividing represents *coitus* "at a sadistic cannibalistic stage of organization" (p. 71). While regressed to a more primitive, violent form, the meaning is still coitus, and therefore genital and in significance.

Klein also lists specific sports activities and artistic interests as determined by unconscious phantasies. Importantly, Klein makes clear that she does not see these cases as particularly aberrant; she does not view these

phantasies as *inappropriately* attached to activities, but instead is beginning to see the unconscious activity of libidinal phantasies behind *every* activity and interest, as part of a normal process of sublimation. Further, in her examples, Klein uniformly describes the phantasies behind these sublimations as involving the primal scene or an Oedipal scenario, while inhibitions always result from castration anxiety:

> Castration-fear interferes with ego-activities and interests because, besides other libidinal determinants, they always have fundamentally a genital symbolic, that is to say, a coitus significance (p. 73).

The necessity of this formulation for Klein may not be immediately apparent, particularly for those familiar with her later work and its emphasis on dyadic phantasies involving part-object relations with the mother/breast. However, her statements here concerning phantasy are perfectly consistent with the theoretical framework that she held at the time that assumed that all sublimations rested on Oedipal phantasies. The reason this assumption was necessary is provided in her subsequent paper, "Early Analysis."

In "Early Analysis" Klein provides her first attempt at constructing a systematic theory that integrates development, pathogenesis, and therapeutic action. Although this system will eventually be eclipsed by theoretical changes of 1926, 1932, and 1935, it provides an intellectual foundation to support her clinical approach and basic findings, and many elements are to remain in later theory in a somewhat altered form (Petot, 1990). In this system she is taking up not only the questions of inhibition and sublimation, but is also relating them to the basic developmental sequence through which infants move from an autoerotic, primarily narcissistic state to an object related existence through symbolization and sublimation.

One of the main catalysts of Klein's 1923 system seems to have been her need to account for the relationship between anxiety and inhibition, given the Freudian view of anxiety, which she accepted at the time. This view proposed that anxiety is the result of "dammed up libido" due to repression, and therefore must *follow*, rather than precede, defense (Freud, 1917-18). However, Klein's clinical experiences of 1919-1923 had shown her repeatedly the process whereby inhibition is reversed by the resolution of the anxiety (at this point, *always* castration anxiety) associated with the phantasy underlying the inhibited activity. Often the anxiety is not immediately apparent, but must first be brought to the surface; this was an important aspect of her process of 'liberating play' that began in her analysis of Fritz. From these observations she had concluded: "the fact that the removing of these inhibitions takes place by way of anxiety surely shows that anxiety is their source" (p. 78).

This presents several theoretical problems. First, if anxiety is the result of defense (repression), how can it be the "source" of a defense (inhibition)? Second, given that Freud (1915c) had denied the existence of unconscious affect, how could Klein reconcile her clinical observations with accepted theory?

Klein's solves these while simultaneously addressing the question of the fate of anxiety in "successful repression," wherein complete repression of a wish occurs without any outward sign of anxiety. Klein invokes the concept of sublimation to handle these issues, which she defines as the employment of "superfluous libido in a cathexis of ego-tendencies, " (p. 81) allowing for the discharge of excess libido along neutral pathways. She adds to this the idea that, when repression of an impulse follows it's early sublimation, the resultant anxiety can also find discharge through the newly sublimated activity. 'Discharge', in this case, could involve anything from mild discomfort to in-

tense anxiety associated with the activity; in either case leading to avoidance and inhibition. Thus, repression leads to anxiety, which binds to preestablished libidinal investments of activities and interests, and these are then avoided. Anxiety is thereby "bound" by the inhibition, which is a secondary defense against the anxiety generated by the primary defense of repression.

This formulation, clearly based on her clinical observations, leads Klein to speculate about the relationship of sublimation to the development of symbol formation and object relations. In considering the conditions under which initial sublimations take place, Klein recalls Freud's (1914) statement that during the narcissistic stage ego-instincts and sexual instincts are still united, and that part of the sexual instincts remain associated with ego-instincts throughout life, providing them with libidinal components. In considering Sperber's (1915) idea that sexual impulses have played an important role in the evolution of speech, thus implicitly in the process of symbol formation, Klein forms a link between sublimation and symbolism – both concepts describe a process whereby libidinal impulses become attached to non-libidinal objects or activities to endow the latter with unconscious motivation and meaning. This connection leads her to apply Ferenczi's (1912) and Jones' (1916) thoughts about symbolism to sublimation, in effect, equating the two processes, and relating these to the developmental progression from autoerotism to object love.

Klein describes the following developmental sequence. In the stage prior to symbolism, the infant is primarily narcissistic, finding interest and pleasure only in its own body. (Here Klein seems to be adhering to Freud's later view of primary narcissism as a "pre-object" state; her sequence provides a view of how reality and objects are discovered.) Primitive identifications occur as the infant "tries to rediscover its bodily organs and their activities in

every object which it encounters," (p. 85), starting with pleasurable equivalents between parts of the upper and lower body. In this way, parts of the body with a primary, *nonsexual* pleasure (i.e. early bodily movement and speech) are identified with erotogenic parts of the body, based on the pleasurable feelings they share in common; these identifications establish what Klein refers to as the "primary sublimations" – libidinal investment in speech and movement – which serve as the foundation for the extension of libidinally invested ego-activities involved in childhood play, then extending to school, sports, and eventually vocational interests.

In order for these more developed "secondary sublimations" to take place, Klein states that the intercession of the repression-barrier is required. Here she follows ideas about symbolism laid down by Ferenczi (1912) and Jones (1916). The first identifications between libidinal and non-libidinal body parts extend to other, non-pleasurable activities and objects after the advent of repression, which introduces a principle of differentiation into identification, requiring more elaborate, metaphoric channels of similarity for the transfer of libido. At the same time, these links, now properly symbolic, allow for more hidden and widely dispersed investment of meaning in symbols by their unconscious referents. And, because of the perpetual tension between desire and gratification, there exists a natural tendency to continually create new symbols and channels of sublimation in a never-ending quest for perfect gratification.

In this way, symbolic avenues of libidinal investment begin to extend far beyond immediate bodily pleasures. Initially the first external objects of interest are determined based on immediate resemblance to one's own body – mother's body, then external objects metaphorically similar to mother's body (e.g. school-room, black board, letter e, etc.), and so on. The wider this chain of symbolization, the greater the sublimatory potential, which provides prophy-

laxis against repression (well-disguised gratifications are less likely to create internal conflict), and voluminous distribution routes for anxiety if repression occurs.

Conversely, in neurosis, sublimations do not get far beyond primary sublimation (movement and speech). Optimally, an early repression barrier (the nature of which remains unexplained by Klein) creates some differentiation between symbol and symbolized after the first identifications have formed. Following this, secondary sublimations form, further removed from underlying libidinal impulses. Hysterical symptoms occur when these secondary sublimatory channels do not set in before the onset of further repression. Fixated phantasies retain their brute, sexualized form, and are prevented from further development along sublimatory lines. This can lead only to symptoms, as without more developed sublimation there is also little opportunity for the binding of the resultant anxiety through inhibition.

Klein offers Leonardo Da Vinci as an example of optimal sublimation. This example also gives a view to the important place phantasy is beginning to occupy in her theory of sublimation:

> In Leonardo's case not only was an identification established between nipple, penis, and bird's tail, but this identification became merged into an interest in the motion of this object. . . The pleasurable situations, actually experienced or *phantasied*, remained indeed unconscious and fixated, but they were given free play in an ego-tendency and thus could be discharged. When they receive this sort of representation the fixations are *divested of their sexual character*. . . When this happens they provide the ego-tendency with the sum of affect which acts as the stimulus and driving force of talent and, since the ego tendency affords them free scope to exercise themselves in a manner consonant with the ego, they allow *phantasy to unfold itself* without check and thus are themselves discharged (p. 88; italics added).

Two points should be made here. First, it is clear from this passage that, in Klein's view of sublimation, it is fixated *phantasies* that give form and en-

ergy to sublimated activities. While Freud never offered a coherent theory of sublimation, most of his statements on this topic focus on the economic or dynamic aspects, i.e. sublimation as "displacement of energy" or "modification of aim" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973). Klein's focus is on the unconscious concomitant of sublimation, which always includes phantasy that "unfold[s] itself without check" despite being "divested of [its] sexual character." What she appears to mean by this is that, while the unconscious phantasy may retain its sexual form, it has become attached to an activity that is consciously non-sexual.

This brings us to the second point. In linking sublimation inextricably to libidinal *phantasy*, Klein seems to be making sublimation a masturbatory equivalent. This is implied in the following passage:

> At the same time, the feet, the hands and the body, which carry out these activities and in consequence of early identification are equated with the penis, served to attract to themselves some of the phantasies which really had to do with the penis and the situation of gratification associated with that organ. The connecting link was probably pleasure in motion or rather organ-pleasure in itself. This is the point where sublimation diverges from hysterical symptom-formation, having hitherto run the same course (p. 86).

Here she states that fixated libidinal phantasies were originally associated with a "situation of gratification" involving the genitals. Because these pleasures became linked with other bodily pleasures (motion, organ pleasure) through identification, the accompanying phantasies are now linked to each. In sublimation, the original erotogenic bodily pleasure has been rendered unconscious, along with the phantasy, leaving only the non-sexual activity to consciousness. However, the non-sexual expression *always* remains linked to the original unconscious phantasy, which gets partially lived out through the sublimation.

Klein tells us that up to a certain point, sublimation and hysterical symptoms "run the same course," and refers to Freud's (1908a) paper on hysterical phantasies in this connection. This deserves some consideration. In charting her view of sublimation, Klein is using Freud's ideas about hysteria as a sort of analogue to guide her, but also departs from his view in an important way. In Freud's paper, entitled "Hysterical Phantasies and their relation to Bisexuality," he describes a sequence wherein phantasies and autoerotic activities are initially "welded together" for a time, then the practice of masturbation is given up, rendering the original (conscious) phantasies unconscious. If the person remains abstinent or does not succeed in redirecting his libido into sublimated activity, "the unconscious phantasy is restimulated, and . . . will achieve expression of at least part of its content in the form of a morbid symptom" (p. 147). The symptom, then, is a bodily expression of the unconscious phantasy, in lieu of the abandoned masturbation practice, just as for Klein sublimations are expressions of phantasies formerly associated with "situations of gratification."

However, there is an important difference here. While Freud sees sublimation and symptom-formation as alternative pathways after masturbation is given up, he sees the continuation (or return) of the associated *phantasies* as a condition of pathology – they are "restimulated" when sublimation fails to occur. For Klein, unconscious phantasy is a necessary, active component of *both* sublimation and hysteria, equally "restimulated" and specifically determining the characteristics of each.

In effect, while Klein is using the ideas of her psychoanalytic elders to guide her work – here Jones, Ferenczi, and most importantly Freud – she has a unique view of the role played by phantasy in every aspect of mental life, and it is in beginning to write about this view that she veers into an impor-

tant area of difference. In fact, although she did not acknowledge it at the time and no other writers seem to have noted it, Klein's ideas about the unconscious phantasy life underlying sublimation seem to be her first real difference from Freud, certainly prefiguring the bitter controversies over this concept in the 1940's.

As to the fate of Klein's first system of 1923, it seems to have been unable ultimately to carry the burden of her particular view of the mind, which was becoming increasingly focused on the inner phantasy life of the child. Even in her papers of 1923 a certain stress can be seen in the fabric of her ideas, particularly with respect to the question of early Oedipal and primal scene phantasies. As mentioned above, Klein placed a special emphasis on these; her clinical examples are replete with play interpreted along Oedipal lines, and at several points she insists that even the earliest primal sublimations, speech and motion, "have always a libidinal cathexis which is also of a *genital*-symbolic nature" (p. 104; italics added). However, given her description of the developmental sequence of sublimation, these earliest sublimations would correspond to a period when the most basic identifications with external objects were being formed, prior to any sense of differentiation. This would correspond to that early period Freud (1915a) referred to as the "purified pleasure ego" when pleasurable aspects of the mother are experienced as extensions of the all-good self. There is as yet no interest in or awareness of the object *qua* object. And yet, Klein is assuming genital, Oedipal and primal-scene phantasy fixations at this very early period. Indeed, in her view, this would be necessarily so, given that the repressions of hysteria occur around the time of the primary sublimations, before secondary sublimations can form. And, because of her stated allegiance to the principle uniformly held at

the time that repressions only occur after the beginning of the Oedipus complex, Klein needs to assume it very early, for the sake of consistency.

A second and related point involves her view of anxiety, which she sees as following repression, presupposing (again) the priority of the Oedipus complex. When Klein writes about the *pavor nocturnus* of children younger than two, it is clear she assumes this is the result of the Oedipus Complex (e.g. Klein, 1923b; p. 82). Again, sophisticated phantasies of differentiated objects are assumed for very young children. Clearly, both of these areas of difficulty indicate gathering tension between Klein's clinical thinking, with its emphasis on the appearance of very early unconscious phantasies of objects in Oedipal configuration, and a theoretical scaffolding that assumes a gradual coming into relationship with objects from an autoerotic beginning; it makes no sense to think of the child locked in triangular rivalry at the moment it barely begins to apprehend some differentiation from the mother. Klein's model could account for the relationships between anxiety, inhibition, symptom formation, and sublimation, and in particular for the manner in which the newly developing play technique facilitated transformations between these. But it could not account well for the sophisticated, object-oriented early phantasy life of the child which she increasingly insisted upon.

III. Introjection and Early Object Phantasies (1926-1932)

Beginning in 1926 Klein's thinking underwent a slow transformation that did not become complete until the publication of her book, *The Psychoanalysis of Children*, in 1932. As noted above, Klein's 1923 theory of sublimation and symbol formation showed signs of stress from the beginning. Despite it's usefulness in providing theoretical support for the devel-

opment of her play technique, the theory could not adequately account for the elaborate internal phantasy life of children that was becoming increasingly important in her view, not only of pathogenesis and treatment, but of the process of development itself and of general psychological functioning. Specifically, the 1923 theory, based on a developmental sequence in which the infant only gradually moved beyond a phase of objectless autoerotism and primary narcissism, could not account for very early and sophisticated phantasies involving objects in Oedipal and primal scene interactions. Also, the theory was centered on pathways of libido through which activities become sublimated, repressed, or inhibited, and anxiety distributed or discharged. The idea of the "discharge of phantasies," an often-used phrase by Klein during this period, seems an awkward graphing of terms, as if she felt a need to force experiential descriptions into economic language. It remained vague exactly how phantasy fit into her theoretical schema, although it became increasingly clear that, from a clinical standpoint, phantasy involving interacting objects occupied a position of utmost importance in her thinking at the time.

It is in Klein's 1926 paper, "The Psychological Principles of Early Analysis,"[1] that she introduces certain clinical concepts which will transform her theoretical vision into one that accommodates more successfully her evolving view of phantasy. These concepts are: the idea of an infantile Oedipus Complex; frustrations and gratifications in object relations as primary catalysts in psychological development; introjected objects of the archaic superego viewed as created through childhood phantasy; and guilt and *anxiety* understood as resulting from phantasied situations involving the archaic superego (rather than from economic conditions, i.e. repressed libido).

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[1]According to Petot (1990), this is the first paper Klein wrote after she had fully worked out her analytic technique with children, the results of which she recounts in the paper. In a sense, this contribution provides us with the first fruit of true Kleinian analysis.

Of particular concern in this paper is the relation between reality and phantasy. Klein begins by restating her view (soon to be discarded) that children only begin to relate to the world gradually, after a period of narcissism, and that relations with the world take place as libidinal interest in the body is transferred to external objects that provide pleasure. Thus, pleasure leads the child to reality. However, Klein shortly offers another, seemingly contradictory idea, that "children become acquainted with reality through the deprivations which it imposes on them" (p. 128), particularly those deprivations of the Oedipal situation, which Klein had found in her patients as early as the beginning of the second year. Further, the "repudiation of reality," found in neurosis, results from difficulty tolerating those deprivations inherent in the Oedipal situation.

Thus, despite the beginning paragraphs, which harken to Klein's earlier view of the evolution of reality-relating based on primary identifications made on the basis of pleasure-tone similitude of body parts and external objects, Klein quickly begins emphasizing the *deprivations* that lead the child to both relate to and repudiate reality, and these deprivations occur in the context of the Oedipus Complex, which we know from Freud (1924a) to be a phantasied situation which is inherently frustrating. In short, it is really the frustration emanating from a phantasy that leads us to relate to reality.

Klein offers a further idea, albeit more tentatively: it is the deprivation of weaning that initiates the Oedipal situation. For girls, it leads them to turn from mother to father as love object; for boys, it "compels them to change their libido position and to desire the mother as a genital love-object" (p. 129). In both sexes, "children at first conceive of, and desire, coitus as an oral act" (p. 129); apparently the Oedipal triangle is entered into as a compensatory move in order to cope with the oral frustrations of weaning. Therefore the

early Oedipus situation is at first dominated by oral aggressive impulses; it is more about hatred toward the depriving mother than sexual excitement involving the opposite-sex parent, as illustrated by material from Trude's analysis:

> At that time she had already wished to rob her mother, who was pregnant, of her children, to kill her and to take her place in coitus with the father. These tendencies to hate and aggression were the cause of her fixation to her mother (which, at the age of two years was becoming particularly strong), as well as of her feelings of anxiety and guilt (p. 131).

In the case of Rita, Klein begins to get a clearer understanding of the nature of early Oedipal anxiety and guilt. Similar to Trude, this child suffers excessive guilt. She is hypersensitive to blame, and for a time insisted that she could not be the mother of her babydoll, which Klein interprets as repudiation of a wish to take the baby brother from the mother during pregnancy. However, the prohibition of this wish emanates, *not* from the real mother,

> but from an *introjected* mother, whose role she enacted for me in many ways and who exercised a harsher and more cruel influence upon her than her real mother had ever done (p. 132; italics added).

This marks Klein's first use of the idea of an introjected object, as well as her first discussion of the superego or any other aspect of Freud's (1923) structural theory. The importance of her integrating this concept cannot be overstated; it provides a way to integrate certain key clinical ideas into a more compatible theoretical structure. First, it provides a solution to her inherent (though unacknowledged) difficulties with the Freudian concept of anxiety. While she had, since her earliest writings, included clinical descriptions of anxiety experienced as emanating from the content of phantasied aggressive interactions with objects (e.g. 1921, p. 44; 1923b, p. 95), her theory, until now,

could only account for anxiety as the result of repression.[2] With the concept of the superego, anxiety and guilt are now explicitly seen as retaliatory responses by the introjected mother to attacks made in phantasy; the concept of the superego at last provides her with the beginning of a theoretical framework consistent with her clinical observations. (It should be pointed out that, while Freud also changed his theory of anxiety in the same year, Klein does not discuss his new theory until she finally explicitly addresses the changes in her own, in 1932.)

Second, and perhaps more important for our purposes, the idea of the archaic superego at last provides Klein with the necessary ingredient to begin to construct a theory that grants conceptual primacy to phantasies about relationships with objects. As described above, anxiety and guilt emanate from the content of phantasy itself; there is no longer need to interpose a more primary causal element, such as repression. This is true even of the superego itself; the introjected objects comprising the superego are harsh, not as a reflection of external reality, but because the child imagines hateful attacks on it, and in phantasy the introjected object is felt as reacting as the child herself would if attacked: in a retaliatory way. Thus, the superego is both a constituent and a creation of phantasy. (As I will discuss in the next section, even the process of introjection itself will eventually become simply one more manifestation of phantasy)

Thus, it seems that Klein is taking initial steps toward a new model of the mind that finds a place for the primacy of phantasy by integrating aspects of Freud's structural theory, albeit in her own particular way, free of Freud's economic terminology. For example, her view of guilt as an internal drama of

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[2]As Klein began to focus on specific forms of anxiety, such as castration anxiety, her theorizing became particularly tortured in an effort to maintain consistency; cf. 1923b, p. 81.

attack and retaliation clearly does not derive from Freud's (1923) speculations, in *The Ego and the Id*, that self-directed aggression results from the defusion of instincts occurring when identifications that make up the superego produce desexualized libido, with vestiges of the death instinct remaining as a byproduct. (Freud finally adopts aspects of Klein's view in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930).)

Further, Klein seems to eschew Freud's (1923) sometimes static, functional language; the superego is not a "differentiation within the ego" or a "precipitate in the ego," but is portrayed more as an impassioned internal relationship. Instead of a form of energy to be "discharged," phantasy has become an inner presence to be "expelled." The following passage illustrates well Klein's changed language about phantasy in this paper, and also points to implicit changes in her view of play:

> A fundamental and universal mechanism in the game of acting a part serves to separate those different identifications at work in the child which are tending to form a single whole. By the division of roles the child succeeds in expelling the father and mother whom, in the elaboration of the Oedipus Complex, it has absorbed into itself and who are now tormenting it inwardly by their severity. The result of this expulsion is a sensation of relief, which contributes in great measure to the pleasure derived from the game (p. 133).

Thus, play serves as a "universal mechanism" by which children temporarily divide up and expel superego aspects that are too cruel to tolerate, and which threaten to overwhelm the ego with their severity. Analysis can serve the important function of modifying these superego elements, which will strengthen the ego to face the "demands of reality." With this implicit shift of the theory of anxiety from repressed libido to cruel superego, ameliorating the severity of phantasied introjects will become the path to resolving inhibitions and symptoms and restoring sublimation.

It should be noted that in this paper Klein's idea of play as phantasy expulsion of superego aspects is presented alongside, and does not replace, her earlier view of play as derived from symbolism. While these models appear quite different (perhaps contradictory in some respects), she is clearly not yet suggesting that one replace the other.

However, in at least one sense I would suggest that Klein's new use of the superego concept does begin to replace her earlier model of the mind that centered on symbolism, and that is in the perspective it offers on the child's evolving relationship with reality. Remember that her earlier system of 1923 Klein saw pleasure as leading to reality, while here she suggests also that deprivation leads to reality, and that the response to this deprivation can interfere with one's relationship to reality. With the introduction of the idea of the primitive superego these contradictory ideas become clearer. Klein seems to suggest that while pleasure initially leads in the general direction of 'reality', in the form of the mother, it is the deprivation of weaning that serves to widen the child's world (and therefore sense of reality) as it turns to the father in a compensatory move. This marks the beginning of the Oedipus Complex, which Klein sees as also the time of the initial development of the superego – that is, of the archaic introjected mother.

Because the initial introjection takes place in a state of frustration (from weaning), the early introjected mother will be experienced as an attacked and attacking inner presence, and, we can assume, the greater the sense of deprivation, the more intense the hatred and aggression in this phantasy, and the greater the need to defend against an unbearable internal state. With the build-up of the phantasied internal situation, the child now has a frightening inner reality that opposes outer reality. Thus, while Klein's earlier view saw repression of libido as preventing the child from establishing the ef-

fective relations with reality normally obtained through the proliferation of symbolization and sublimation, her focus now seems to be on the failure to modify aggressive internal phantasy relationships in order that they more closely resemble external relationships.

In effect, it is the resolution of hatred and guilt that facilitates good relations with reality, as Klein suggests near the end of this paper in her discussion of the effects of interpretive analytic work on children:

> For instance, children begin to distinguish between the 'pretence' mother and the real mother and between the wooden baby-doll and the live baby brother. They then firmly insist that they wanted to do this or that injury to the toy-baby only – the real baby, they say, of course they love. Only when very powerful and longstanding resistances have been overcome do children realize that their aggressive acts were directed against the *real* objects. When this admission is made, however, the result, even in quite little children, is generally a notable step forward in adaptation to reality (p. 137; italics in original).

Here we see signs of where Klein will be headed in both her clinical work and theoretical writing – toward a focus on the fate of relationships of the ego with internal phantasy objects, and the impact of the quality of those relationships on adaptation to external reality. While the idea that the child gradually emerges *into* a relationship to reality was clearly present from Klein's first paper (as discussed above), she is beginning to specify how the process occurs and it is the quality of the introjects of the superego (rather than functions of the ego) that is becoming most important in this development.

Klein wrote a series of remarkable papers from 1927-1931, each of which built on and elaborated the new insights in "The Psychological Principles of Early Analysis," particularly the importance of aggression as it relates to pregenital development, the phantasy world of the child and the formation of the superego. Ultimately these considerations will lead Klein

toward a radical view of the relationship between phantasy and reality, wherein elaborate phantasied relationships with objects precede any degree of veridical relationship with reality; object relations and reality relations become conceptually separated, with the former determining the outcome of the latter. Below I will examine each of these views as they unfold in Klein's writings during this period.

If Klein's theory prior to 1926 could be thought of as "ultraFreudian," for the ubiquity of its Oedipal formulations for every conceivable symptom or behavior (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983), one might think of Klein's theory during the period under consideration here as "neo-Abrahamian." With her increased awareness of the importance of aggression after 1926, Klein seems to have gravitated to Abraham's writings on preoedipal development for theoretical support.[3] One of the primary concerns during this phase of her writing is with understanding the extreme severity of the early superego in the patients in her care – this had become a clinical focus beginning with her 1926 paper. There she had speculated that the Oedipus Complex begins with weaning, and the archaic superego bears the emotional imprint of the frustrating emotional experiences that characterize both it's beginnings in oral deprivation and the frustrations inherent in "training in cleanliness" that follow, both of which she refers to as "traumas." Thus, she seemed to imply, at least briefly, that pregenital sources of aggression grow out of actual interpersonal experiences.

However, despite these initial speculations about pregenitality, it is still the rivalry with the same-sex parent that offers the most conspicuous source of aggression:

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[3]Clearly, the fact that Abraham had been Klein's analyst for 15 months prior to his death in 1925 was also a significant factor.

> At that time she had already wished to rob her mother, who was pregnant, of her children, to kill her and to take her place in coitus with the father. These tendencies to hate and aggression were he cause of her fixation to her mother . . . as well as of her feelings of anxiety and guilt (1926; p. 131).

In the two papers published the following year a new trend appears in Klein's thinking. She begins emphasizing the innate sadism of the pregenital stages that interact with Oedipal rivalry in producing the highly phantastic, persecutory superego phenomena she saw clinically. In all of the papers from 1926-1932 Klein seems particularly concerned with understanding the unrealistic nature of the young child's cruel superego (a distinction she made initially with the case of Rita in 1926 and quoted above), and the connection between the severely persecuting superego and the child's sense of reality. For example, in "Symposium on Child Analysis" (1927a) Klein opposes Anna Freud's view of the superego as reflecting the realistic attributes of the love objects, insisting instead that:

> in children of three, four or five years old we encounter a super-ego of a severity which is often in the sharpest contradiction to the real love-objects, the parents. . . On account of the well-known formula which prevails in the Ucs this child anticipates, by reason of his own cannibalistic and sadistic impulses, such punishments as castration, being cut to pieces, eaten up, etc., and lives in perpetual dread of them. The contrast between his tender and loving mother and the punishment threatened by the child's super-ego is actually grotesque and is an illustration of the fact that we must on no account identify the real objects with those which children introject (p. 155).

It should be particularly noted that the 'grotesque' distortion that characterizes the early superego is due to the child's own 'cannibalistic and sadistic impulses' and a natural fear of vengeance from the attacked introjected objects.

In "Criminal Tendencies in Normal Children" (1927b) Klein offers her first systematic treatment of the pregenital sources of this distorting aggression and its interaction with Oedipal phantasies and superego formation:

> When the Oedipus Complex sets in, which, according to the results of my work, happens at the end of the first or the commencement of the second year, the early stages I mentioned – the oral-sadistic and the anal-sadistic – are fully at work. They become connected with the Oedipus tendencies, and are directed toward the objects around which the Oedipus Complex develops: the parents. The little boy, who hates the father as a rival for the love of the mother, will do this with the hate, the aggression and the phantasies derived from his oral -sadistic and anal-sadistic fixations (p. 171).

With this passage Klein is offering a new view of this early situation: while the Oedipus Complex gives form to the emotional situation involving the parents (the little boy hates the father as rival for mother), pregenital fixations determine the "hate, the aggression and the phantasies", in keeping with Abraham's (1924) views on oral and anal sadism. With the increased attention Klein is paying to the severe early Oedipal situation and persecutory superego due to pregenital aggression, one can see an important shift of emphasis here, from love to hate, libido to death. This will ultimately lead to her integration of the death instinct as the 'prime mover' of mental life in 1932.

In the context of Klein's views on phantasy, this change in theory is important for another reason. Until this point, Klein seems to have implicitly held to the position on early object finding she set forward in "Early Analysis" (1923b), where she described a process by which the child constructs an image of the object on a narcissistic basis, in which the object is gradually discovered through identification with pleasurable aspects of the self. (Indeed, Klein had reaffirmed her continued agreement with this position the previous year, in "Psychological Principles of Early Analysis." However, as noted in the above

discussion of that paper, Klein wavered on whether pleasure or deprivation led the child to the object, and to reality).

With this paper, however, Klein is moving toward a view in which images of objects are shaped by sadistic phantasies, so that the first experiences of objects, and reality, are grossly distorted, with reality only gradually apprehended through overcoming the anxieties associated with these early imagos. However, it should be noted that, until 1930, Klein will waver on this point. In this paper her description of the impact of sadistic pregenital stages seems specific to the formation of sexual theories and phantasies, and does not yet explicitly apply to object relationships and reality in a more general sense:

> But the situation is still more complicated through the fact that the child's love-tendencies are coloured by sexual theories and phantasies typical of the pre-genital stages, just as its negative feelings are (p. 174).

She adds to this the idea that these phantasies are derived, not from real experiences, but from phylogenetically acquired knowledge and the innate emotional coloring of pregenital stages:

> The sexual theories are the basis of a variety of most sadistic and primitive fixations. We know from Freud that there is some unconscious knowledge which the child obtains, apparently in a phylogenetic way. To this belongs the knowledge about parental intercourse, birth of children, etc.; but it is of a rather vague and confused nature. According to the oral- and anal-sadistic stage which he is going through himself, intercourse comes to mean to the child a performance in which eating, cooking, exchange of faeces and sadistic acts of every kind . . . play the principle part (pp 175-76).

This passage seems important in laying out what will remain an important idea for Klein: that early phantasy has an alternative source of input to reality in innate, phylogenetically given knowledge.

Klein continues to address this issue in the following paper, "Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict" (1928). There she specifies the exact nature of

pregenital sadistic phantasies, with a particular focus on their formative influence on the early superego. Klein begins by reiterating her view that the Oedipus tendencies are "released" by the frustration of weaning, and are further reinforced through anal frustration, then shaped by the discovery of the anatomical differences between the sexes. The severity and form of the early superego, however, are due to the child's own impulses:

> The child himself desires to destroy the libidinal object by biting, devouring and cutting it, which leads to anxiety, since awakening of the Oedipus tendencies is followed by introjection of the object, which then becomes one from which punishment is to be expected. The child then dreads a punishment corresponding to the offense: the superego becomes something which bites, devours, and cuts (p. 187; italics added).

This passage makes clear that the superego becomes aggressive and frightening in equal proportion to the child's own sadistic phantasies. However, the passage also presents an interesting quandary: It appears that the terrifying image of parents takes place as a consequence of introjection: sadistic attack leads to anxiety because "awakening of the Oedipus tendencies is followed by introjection of the object." One assumes from this that the distortion of the object that forms the early superego is not a direct consequence of the attack, but rather of the introjection, a process that Klein does not describe theoretically until 1932, despite her frequent references to it from 1926 on.

This leads to a second question, one which seems to have occupied Klein a good deal from 1928-31 – if the object only becomes distorted as a consequence of introjection, does this mean that initial relations to objects are realistic and undistorted by phantasy? In this paper, as in the preceding one, Klein seems to leave room for distinguishing these 'imago's' and 'introjects' from the perceptual experience of objects and reality that developed according

to the process of identification and differentiation in symbol formation she described in 1923. However, she is not explicit on this point.

In "Personification in the Play of Children" (1929), Klein returns to the process of personification that she had described in her 1926 paper, a process whereby relief is sought from the tension created by incompatible superego identifications by expelling or projecting aspects of self onto external objects. In taking up this subject, Klein is also returning to the questions raised in the previous paper about the process by which early superego aspects become distorted, and the relationship between unrealistic introjects and the child's general reality sense. In the following passage she offers a developmental framework that seems to clarify some of these matters:

> My experience is that at the onset of the Oedipus conflict and the start of its formation the super-ego is of a tyrannical character, formed on the pattern of the pregenital stages, which are then in the ascendant. The influence of the genital has already begun to make itself felt, but at first it is hardly perceptible. The further evolution of the super-ego towards genitality depends ultimately upon whether the prevailing oral fixation has taken the form of sucking or biting. *The primacy of the genital phase in relation both to sexuality and to the super-ego requires a sufficiently strong fixation to the oral-sucking phase.* The further from the pregenital levels both the development of the superego and the libidinal development progress towards the genital level, the more closely to the figures of the real parents will the phantastic, wish-fulfilling identifications. . . approximate (p. 204; italics in original).

Klein is making two related theoretical statements here. The first is that genital dominance in sexuality and the character of the superego depends upon a "strong fixation to the oral-sucking phase." The second is that the veridicality of the "phantastic, wish-fulfilling identifications" comprising the superego is directly related to degree of genital dominance. This is the first time that either of these ideas appear in her writing, and they seem, for the moment, to provide a developmental solution to at least one of the questions

that had begun to preoccupy her concerning the unrealistic nature of the early superego. At the same time, they present fresh problems that will lead her to an alternative solution one year later.

In essence, Klein is here describing a parabolic relation between development and reality sense, by placing the oral sucking phase and the later genital phase in the register of realistic identifications, and the intervening oral sadistic and anal sadistic phases in the register of distorted identifications. In this conceptualization, distortion seems to be attributed exclusively to the effect of aggression; insofar as oral sucking is pre-ambivalent and genital is post-ambivalent (here Klein is keeping with Abraham's (1924) developmental scheme), they are in the domain of the undistorted. Degree of distortion maximizes as sadism reaches its zenith, which Klein will alternatively place at either the late oral phase (1929b; p. 212) or as encompassing both the late oral and early anal phases (1930; p. 219). Following this scheme, the dominant feeling toward the parent at the time of introjection determines the degree to which the imago will be distorted (bad, sadistic) or undistorted (good, benevolent), and this feeling is a function largely of the phase of libidinal development.

One point of ambiguity in this is whether undistorted object imagos form during the oral sucking phase, or whether the effect of fixations during this stage merely acts as a predisposing factor toward genital dominance and the more realistic imagos that might emerge later. Klein seems to suggest both ideas in various parts of this paper. For example, in considering the phantastic but *good* imagos she sees represented in the play of some children, Klein writes:

> These figures represent intermediate stages between the terrible menacing super-ego, which is wholly divorced from reality and the identifications which approximate more closely to reality.

> These intermediate figures, whose gradual evolution into the maternal and paternal helpers (who are nearer again to reality) may constantly be observed in play analyses . . . (p. 203).

This passage seems to represent a linear progression from sadistic and less realistic to benevolent and gradually more realistic, with the phantastic helpers in an intermediate position. At this point Klein does not seem to conceptualize early good imagos that either predate or coexist with the early sadistic introjects. However, in a passage toward the end of the paper Klein seems to be entertaining the alternative possibility:

> My experience has convinced me that with the help of play-technique it is possible to analyse the early phases of super-ego-formation in little children and in older ones. Analysis of these strata diminishes the most intense and overwhelming anxiety and thus opens out the way for developments of the *kindly imagos, which originate on the oral-sucking level,* and therewith for attainment of genital primacy in sexuality and super-ego-formation (p. 209; italics added).

It is ambiguous exactly what Klein means here. While she clearly refers to "kindly imagos which originate on the oral-sucking level," she also seems to be stating that these only begin to develop after the reduction of anxiety of imagos from the sadistic phases. Thus, she presents a picture wherein imagos from oral sucking either form out of sequence, which seems unlikely, or they begin to form initially during the early oral phase but lie dormant until after the reduction of sadism and anxiety that follows. While the latter idea might make sense of the above passage, in conflicts with one of Klein's central ideas about the formation of the superego – that introjection only takes place with the start of the Oedipus Complex, which has its origin in the deprivations of weaning and the sadism of late orality. From 1926, Klein had been consistent in her affirmation of the notion of the coevolution of the Oedipus Complex and superego in a sadistic phase: this leaves no room for the formation of a superego imago in a preambivalent stage. It also leaves no possibility for early

realistic introjects, insofar as the sadism of late orality and early anality uniformly creates highly distorted introjects.

Klein also addresses in this paper the issue of the relationship between the characteristics of early introjects and the child's general relation to reality. This issue had become a primary concern for Klein during this period largely because she had begun to treat psychotic children in 1927, and begins to write about those treatment in the present paper (Petot, 1990). Klein is clearly following the practice of Freud and Abraham in assigning psychosis to an early fixation point, however she departs from their thinking in attributing the disturbance to the severity of the superego.

In considering psychosis, Klein comes to the following conclusions. First, severely psychotic children are incapable of play, instead they engage in repetitive motions whose function is the negation of reality and inhibition of phantasy. Second, the therapeutic goal in these cases is the freeing up of phantasy, which will ultimately lead the child toward reality, and to do so the primary therapeutic task is to ameliorate the extreme destructiveness of the psychotic child's superego that keeps phantasy activity frozen in place. With the genetic concepts she has introduced here, the therapeutic process is characterized as a movement from a superego made up of unrealistic pregenital identifications to one made up of realistic genital (and oral-sucking) identifications. Thus, Klein has now directly linked relations with reality to quality of superego introjects.

With this integration of her ideas about the early superego and reality relations, Klein introduces a new way of conceptualizing the genetic relations between different forms of psychopathology, which maintains the standard relationship between genetic primacy and severity of pathology, but recasts this in terms of superego development and reality relations, rather than libid-

inal dynamics. Thus, Klein places psychosis at the earlier end of the continuum, with its extensive repression of phantasy and withdrawal from reality; this corresponds to the most frightening and sadistic superego. She places paranoia slightly later, stating that its "relation to reality is subordinated to the lively workings of phantasy, the balance between the two weighted on the side of *unreality*"(p. 207; italics in original). With neurosis a 'compromise' is reached, wherein some degree of reality is recognized and the rest is denied, while there is extensive (but not total) repression of masturbation phantasies, leading to the inhibition in play and learning characteristic of neurotic children. For Klein, each level of pathology corresponds to a different gradient of pregenital sadism and distorted superego identifications.

In the case of normal children, "their play shows that they have more power to influence and live out reality in conformity with their phantasies," and this is due to a "stronger and more lasting influence of identifications originating on the genital level. In proportion as the imagos approximate to the real objects a good relation to reality (characteristic of normal people) becomes more marked" (p. 207).

Klein returns to the process of personification, which she originally described in 1926, in the context of its function of relieving the tension caused by incompatible identifications in the superego through expulsion of introjects into external objects during play. In her return to this mechanism, Klein seems most interested in its relevance for relations with reality:

> This failure [of synthesis of superego identifications] manifests itself in the ambivalence, the tendency to anxiety, the lack of stability or the readiness with which this is overthrown, and the defective relation to reality characteristic of neurotic children. . . I believe these mechanisms (splitting-up and projection) are a principal factor in the tendency to personification in play. . . The pleasure gained thereby is increased when the ego discovers that this displacement into the external world affords it various

> proofs that the psychic process, with their cathexis of anxiety and guilt, may have a favourable issue and anxiety be greatly reduced (p. 205).

In this last statement, Klein indicates a 'favorable issue,' following the splitting-off and projection out of a superego component, may lead to reduced anxiety. Although it is ambiguously worded, this might be referring to a kind of reality testing of superego components that will be a mainstay of Klein's post-1932 description of the introjective-projective cycle characterizing the progressive development of internal objects under optimal conditions. Its appearance here, albeit in somewhat ambiguous form, seems to indicate that Klein was beginning to consider the introjective-projective process as a component of development from more distorted to more realistic object relations.

As stated above, with this new way of conceptualizing pathology, Klein is clearly correlating the child's general relations to reality to the degree to which superego components realistically reflect the actual love objects. However, it remains unclear what the operative link is between the domain of realistic phantasy (i.e. superego introjects) and realistic perception. To be more specific, it is not yet clear whether the unrealistic, highly distorted phantasy experience of objects that characterizes the early superego is initially a split-off, unconscious experience, accompanying the early Oedipus Complex, that only colors perception secondarily, through the mechanisms of personification (splitting and projection), or whether, alternatively, perception itself is initially indistinguishable from phantasy, perhaps even subordinated to phantasy, and becomes realistic through some combination of libidinal maturation and the testing of reality of imagos described in the process of personification. In the latter case, the reality testing function of personification is emphasized, while in the former it is the reality distorting function that stands out. In any event, Klein seems, in 1929, uncertain about this relationship, but

will begin to clarify it over the next several years in ways that will carry tremendous importance for the development of her view of phantasy toward the form it assumes in the Controversies of the 1940's.

In 1930, Klein's paper "The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego" condenses many of the views put forward since 1926 and offers some important clarifications of the issues discussed above. She begins by stating succinctly an idea that began to appear in 1928 but is only explicitly stated in her 1929b paper, "Infantile Anxiety-Situations Reflected in a Work of Art and in the Creative Impulse": that there is an early stage of development when sadism "reaches its height," corresponding to the late oral stage and passing away with the earlier anal stage. In this stage, "the subject's dominant aim is to possess himself of the contents of the mother's body and to destroy her by means of every weapon which sadism can command" (p. 219). This developmental period corresponds with the beginning of the Oedipus Complex and, in that the father's penis is imagined to be one of the contents of the mother's body the child wishes to appropriate and destroy, both parents are involved in the attacks, as both recipients and retaliators. This paves the way for the earliest superego anxieties:

> The attacks give rise to anxiety lest the subject should be punished by the united parents, and this anxiety also becomes internalized in consequence of the *oral-sadistic introjection* of the objects and is thus already directed towards the early superego (p. 219; italics added).

This passage begins to offer a solution to one of the puzzles that had occupied Klein since she introduced the idea of introjection into her thinking in 1926; that is, what is the relationship of the distortion of the imago to the process of introjection? Here she says, for the first time, that the anxiety of retaliation occurs as a consequence of 'oral-sadistic introjection,' which would

seem to imply that introjection itself is part of the attack. Here the mechanism of introjection becomes indistinguishable from the phantasy of attack and retaliation, and this turn in Klein's theory will have tremendous implications for her developing theory of phantasy, in that phantasy is beginning to subsume the 'mechanisms' of the ego – the mechanism of introjection *is* the phantasy of attack.

In Klein's description of the ego's earliest defenses against sadism this trend becomes even clearer. After quoting Freud's (1926) recently stated idea that some forms of defense predate repression, Klein suggests that the earlier defenses militate against two primal dangers: the subject's own aggression and the object which has been attacked. The defenses against these are, respectively, expulsion and destruction. Although she will not define these further for another two years, Klein seems to imply here the meaning they will ultimately hold: that both are ways in which danger is dealt with through an action taking place within the realm of phantasy. 'Expulsion' is a defense in which one's own aggression is deposited into the image of the object, while in 'destruction' the image of that object is attacked. This paper represents Klein's first formal mention of defenses predating repression (although she had discussed projection and splitting at some length in 1926 and 1929, she did not discuss their relation to repression), and, as with introjection, her description of these as actions as taking place *within* phantasy broadens her conceptualization of the latter in ways that will have important implications in the debates of the 1940's.

However, perhaps even more important is Klein's restatement of her view of the development of early relations with reality. Here she rearticulates her ideas about symbol formation (originally presented in "Early Analysis" (1923b)) in light of her new views about the phase of sadism at its height and

the early superego. After reviewing her earlier position, which attributed the widening object world to the formation of identification based on pleasurable similitude, Klein revises this conceptualization in light of her new appreciation of the importance of aggression:

> I can now add to what I said then (1923) and state that, side by side with the libidinal interest, it is the anxiety arising in the phase that I have described [sadism at its height] which sets going the mechanism of identification. Since the child desires to destroy the organs (penis, vagina, breasts) which stand for the objects, he conceives a dread of the latter. This anxiety contributes to make him equate the organs in question with other things; owing to this equation these in their turn become objects of anxiety, and so he is impelled constantly to make other and new equations, which form the basis of his interest in the new objects and of symbolism (p. 220).

Klein seems to want to downplay the importance of this revision in her beginning sentence ("side by side with the libidinal interest. . . "). She has done nothing less, however, than revise the view of initial object finding from one based on a gradual expansion out of a narcissistic state through identifications based on pleasure, to one in which the hatred of the object (initially, the part-object) is primary; this now places hatred and destructiveness in the position of the primary motivational force in the development of early object relations. In addition, there is another, perhaps even more important implication for Klein's view of the relationship between phantasy and reality, which she quickly makes explicit:

> Thus, not only does symbolism come to be the foundation of all phantasy and sublimation but, more than that, it is the basis of the subject's relation to the outside world and to reality in general . . . The sadistic phantasies directed against the inside of [the mother's] body constitute the first and basic relation to the outside world and to reality. Upon the degree of success with which the subject passes through this phase will depend the extent to which he can subsequently acquire an external world corresponding to reality. We see then that the *child's earliest reality is wholly phantastic* . . . As the ego develops, a true relation to real-

> ity is gradually established out of this unreal reality (p. 221; italics added).

Here, for the first time, Klein is clear about her view of the early relation between phantasy and reality: "the child's earliest reality is wholly phantastic," in that the first object relation is with the inside of the mother's body, which is largely a highly distorted phantasy creation, much of which derives from phylogenetic sources (as discussed in the context of Klein's 1928 paper). Further, an external world corresponding to reality will only be 'acquired' to the extent that the anxieties of this earliest period can be mastered in a way that strengthens the ego: "as the ego develops, a true relation to reality is gradually established out of this unreal reality."

Klein's decisiveness about this issue is remarkable, given the ambiguity in even her most recent writings. This paper is clearly one of the most significant turning point for her theory of phantasy, perhaps second in importance only to "Development of a Child" (1921), when the clinical significance of phantasy first became clear. Here she is stating categorically that phantasy precedes reality in the subjective world of the child, and that real relations with the external world must evolve from an initially phantastic existence. Remember that in Klein's previous paper she seemed to be leaving room for two alternative views of the child's early development of relations with reality, which I termed the parabolic and the linear models. In the parabolic model an initial reality phase, corresponding with the oral-sucking period, involved both accurate perceptions of reality and realistic superego introjects. This gave way to a phase dominated by phantasy, as the projections of highly sadistic superego introjects distorted external reality until genital dominance was reached, which signified also the return to the good reality relations of oral-sucking. In the linear model, superego identifications were first intro-

jected during the height of sadism, therefore began highly distorted, only becoming more realistic through optimal developmental experiences. As noted above, the characteristics (realistic v. distorted) of the pre-superego perceptual experience of the external world remained ambiguous in the linear model.

It seems important to note, in deciding firmly in favor of a linear model of relations with reality (both perceptual and in the quality of introjects), Klein seems to leave out the oral-sucking phase entirely. Although she briefly refers clinically to the disturbances undergone by her patient, Dick, when he was a "sucking infant" in the first several months, she does not refer to an 'oral-sucking phase' in her theoretical discussion. In that she has not explicitly altered her developmental scheme, it is as if she now implies either that experience only begins with the attacks on the mother at the height of sadism (i.e. children only become subjective beings at weaning, when the Oedipus Complex begins), and therefore our earliest 'experiences' begin at that point, and for that reason are completely shaped by sadistic phantasies; or, alternatively, sadistic phantasy predominates much earlier than she had heretofore described, and we start out, nct in a blissful oral-sucking period, but in a highly orally-sadistic phase from the beginning of life. Clearly, in resolving one issue Klein has left ambiguity in another, and, as will be discussed below, this ambiguity will remain unresolved for several more years until her theoretical reformulations of 1935.

Before moving on, it would be useful to consider the nature of these changes and the experiences that might have led Klein to alter her thinking. We should recall that as early as Klein's first published paper (1921), she had maintained, as a clinical fact, that reestablishment of the child's capacity to phantasize would restore and improve reality testing. While Fritz was not psychotically withdrawn from reality, he had some difficulties with reality

testing and with accepting aspects of reality (specifically, the father's role in conception) that were presented to him. In Klein's more psychoanalytic attempts at treatment, following the failure of her initial educative efforts, she made the important discovery that when she could alleviate the anxiety aroused by his own aggressively-charged sexual phantasies, the repression preventing some interchange between phantasy and reality was lifted, and this facilitated renewed curiosity about and assimilation of aspects of reality, as well as modification of phantasy, particularly the tendency toward 'omnipotence of thought.'

These observations led to Klein's first system of 1923, which seemed to generalize from these clinical experiences by supposing that relations to reality in general develop in the manner they had been facilitated in Fritz: by phantasy leading to reality, unless blocked by repression. However, rather than describing this theoretically in terms of phantasy, she relied on an economical model whereby libido leads to expanded object- and reality-relations through identification and symbol formation. The function and nature of phantasy in this system remained ambiguous; was it epiphenomenal to the more basic libidinal cathexes of zones and the objects with which they were in identification? If this were the case, one could argue that the perceptual experiences, completely veridical in and of themselves, provided the primary ingredients for both the initial identifications and the unconscious phantasy activity. On the other hand, it was possible that the identifications themselves were somehow mediated by phantasy, with veridical reality experience only arrived at secondarily. While her clinical descriptions continued to emphasize the phantasy activity involved in *all* sublimations (cf. especially 1923a), the place of phantasy in her theoretical system, and therefore its relation to initial reality relations, remained ambiguous.

With the introduction of the concept of the superego and introjection, Klein now had theoretical terms that were closer to the domain of phantasy that had long been her clinical focus. This seemed to move her from economic terms and into theoretical language much closer to her clinical language. At the same time, the clinical issues she began to face, with much more disturbed (after 1927, psychotic) patients, focused her attention toward both the highly sadistic superego and gross distortions in relations with reality. She saw these were related clinically, but seemed uncertain about the implications for the initial relationship between reality and phantasy until the 1930 paper. In a sense, one can see the 1930 paper as the moment of decision for Klein about a deeply philosophical issue that had lingered ambiguously in her writings from the very beginning. While one can detect from the beginning leanings in the direction she ultimately takes, counter-leanings are also evident at every step of the way, as I have tried to show.

IV. The Internal World (1932-1940)

The Psychoanalysis of Children, written in 1932, is at once a synthesis and a transition. In this book Klein integrates the theoretical and clinical advances that had preoccupied her since 1926, and introduces into her thought, for the first time, Freud's dual instinct theory. While at moments this new metapsychology seems to provide greater coherence (particularly in accounting for the connection between aggression and anxiety), it also leaves some ambiguity, as if Klein is now juxtaposing two incompatible systems. This incompatibility is especially evident in the views she presents of the early development of object relations and the nature of the first introjects, subjects that directly involve her views of phantasy. As I will attempt to show, this book serves as a theoretical springboard for the distinctive Kleinian theory

she will introduce three years later in her classic (then controversial) paper, "A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive states" (1935). That later work can be seen, among other ways, as both an integration of themes and a resolution of difficulties in her thinking about the nature of the child's first phantasied object relations and their evolving connection to external reality, as I will describe after examining the precursors in *Psychoanalysis of Children*.

Although Klein seemed to have dispensed with the idea of the oral sucking phase with her recent (1930) declaration that the earliest object relations are wholly phantastic and sadistic in character, she reaffirms *both* oral phases in her first mention of the dual instinct theory:

> Their [lazy feeders'] inability to obtain satisfaction from sucking is, I think, the consequence of an internal frustration and is derived, in my experience, from an abnormally increased oral sadism. To all appearances these phenomena of early development are already the expression of the polarity between the life-instincts and the death-instincts. We may regard the force of the child's fixation at the oral-sucking level as an expression of the force of its libido, and, similarly, the early and powerful emergence of its oral sadism is a sign that its destructive instinctual components tip the balance (p. 124).

Here she clearly continues to adhere to Abraham's (1924) sequence, wherein an initial pre-ambivalent sucking stage developmentally precedes the appearance of sadism. As discussed above, to the extent that the distortion of the early object was assumed to result from the inherent sadism of the oral phase, this sequence leaves room for an original undistorted apprehension of the object, contradicting Klein's statement of 1930 that the first experiences of the object and of reality are wholly phantastic and sadistic.

However, with this text a new possibility opens up. Here Klein is placing the sucking and biting phases in the registers of the life and death instincts, respectively, and is not explicitly connecting these to relations with re-

ality. Since 1929, Klein had mentioned, almost in passing, the presence of imagos with "phantastically good and phantastically bad characteristics" (1929b; p. 203), without yet being able to account for the former, as her view of the phantasical nature of early objects rested completely on the operation of sadism and introjection in some combination. Thus, it seems that clinically Klein is beginning to see the presence of good but distorted internal objects but is not yet able to account for this in a theory that attributes all distortion to sadistic attack, so one can speculate that, in assigning the two opposing instincts to the two oral phases, Klein is implicitly offering a metapsychological foundation for the good phantastic object. Thus, the oral sucking phase does not necessarily contradict the idea of original object relations as "wholly phantastic".

However, in the account that follows of the formation of the earliest object relations Klein makes no mention of this possibility. Instead, objects are first introjected as a defense against anxiety – which Klein now speculates results from the internal presence of the death instinct. First, she establishes the connection between anxiety and destructiveness, often emphasized in her clinical writings, by aligning it with both the death instinct and Freud's (1926) revised view of anxiety as a response by the ego to "danger situations:"

> It is difficult to say at what time the fusion of the destructive and libidinal instincts occurs. There is a good deal of evidence for the view that it has existed from birth and that the tension caused by need merely serves to strengthen the sadistic instincts of the infant. We know, however, that the destructive instinct is directed against the organism itself and must therefore be regarded by the ego as a danger. I believe it is this danger which is felt by the individual as anxiety. Therefore, anxiety would originate from aggression (p. 126).

It should be noted from this passage that Klein assumes the presence of the death instinct from *birth*, not from the middle of the first year, when the

biting period is assumed to occur; thus, these are primal events and, as she will describe, aggression is mobilizing development from the very start.

Klein adds to Freud's (1924b) account of the ego's ways of protecting itself from the original internal presence of the death instinct – directing it outward as aggression and binding it with libido in the form of primal erotogenic masochism – by introducing the idea that destructive instinct is turned against itself internally through the mediation of the first incorporated object:

> It seems to me that the ego has yet another means of mastering those destructive impulses which still remain in the organism. It can mobilize one part of them as a defence against the other part. In this way the id will undergo a split which is, I think, the first step in the formation of instinctual inhibitions and of the super-ego and which may be the same thing as primal repression. We may suppose that a split of this sort is rendered possible by the fact that, as soon as the process of incorporation has begun, the incorporated object becomes the vehicle of defence against the destructive impulses within the organism (p. 127).

Here the mechanism of introjection and phantasy of bodily incorporation are implicitly equated for the first time: the introjected object is also the object imagined to be taken in orally to then exist internally within the body (she will articulate this in more detail in 1935). Further, this phantasy process is responsible for structural changes – splitting the id and establishing the superego – and for initiating the first defenses. In terms of the place of phantasy in Klein's thought, this passage is a singular moment of tremendous expansion of its theoretical domain – the phantasy of introjection is now seen as 'structure building.'

At the same time, this passage describes a process that can only meaningfully be seen as taking place quite early in development, even though, in Klein's thought, sadistic introjection belongs to the period of oral-biting, after around six months. Indeed, Klein seems to reiterate her familiar view several pages later, when she states:

> the objects which have been introjected in the *oral-sadistic* phase – the first object cathexes and identifications – form the beginnings of the early super-ego. Moreover, what initiates the formation of the super-ego and governs its earliest stages are the destructive impulses and the anxiety they arouse (p. 136).

Here Klein is also clearly saying that there are no object cathexes or identifications *until* the oral-sadistic phase. To clarify Klein's apparent view here: the infant only becomes a psychological being, with awareness of or interest in objects, once sadism begins to predominate. In relating this to her adoption of the dual-instinct theory, Klein must be assuming that sadism is a late arrival, only appearing on the scene during the middle of the first year. However, this seems to contradict Klein's earlier statement that "there is a good deal of evidence . . . that [the fusion of the destructive and libidinal instincts] has existed from birth" (p. 126). At this point it is unclear whether this represents a contradiction, or whether the death instinct is intrinsically weaker at the beginning of life, or if Klein has some other idea in mind. However, it does seem clear, from all of the above passages, that Klein does not envision cathexis, identification, or introjection/incorporation before the sadistic period sets it, and that these each operates in the service of defense against the death instinct.

In later passages, however, this becomes murkier. Klein refers to oral-sadistic phantasies as a "link between the oral-sucking and oral-biting stages," suggesting phantasy prior to oral-biting. In a discussion of the girl's early relationship with the mother, Klein states:

> the first objects that she introjects are her 'good' mother and her 'bad' one, as represented by the breast. . . If her primary attitude to her mother has been dominated by the oral-sucking position, so that it contains strong positive and hopeful elements, she will be able to take shelter to some extent behind her 'good' mother-imago against her 'bad' mother-imago. . . (pp. 206-207).

In a footnote to this, Klein adds:

> In Chapter VII we saw how the 'good' breast becomes turned into a 'bad' one in consequence of the child's imaginary attacks upon it, for the child directs all the resources of its sadism in the first instance against the breast for not giving it enough satisfaction so that a primary introjection of both a good and a bad mother-imago takes place before any other imagos are formed (p. 206*n*).

This presents us with a quandary. Thus far, Klein has only really accounted for a process whereby the object is originally found through deflection onto it of destructiveness, then incorporated orally to become the bad internal object that will be the core of the superego that opposes the id (or becomes a split in the id) from within, and that is then projected outward, leading to new object finding, and so forth. While mention of *good* phantastic objects had begun to appear in 1929, these have not yet been accounted for theoretically; instead, Klein had only left room for the presence of early sadistic distorted objects which later develop into more benign and realistic objects. For the first time (she does *not* explain this in chapter VII, as she claims in the above passage), Klein now describes 'good' objects that *precede* 'bad' objects, and that themselves only turn bad later, after attacks have been launched against them, the opposite of her usual sequence.

It should be clear from all of this that, by 1932, Klein had run into difficulty with internal objects at the very moment she clarified the process of their formation, and this difficulty seems to stem from the clash of two contradictory ideas she held simultaneously. The first is her adaptation of Abraham's developmental sequence, which (in her rendering) locates the beginning of the Oedipus Complex both at weaning and at the beginning of oral sadism. In this view, the Oedipus Complex is seen as the adaptation to excess aggression from both internal and external precipitants that leads to both in-

ternalization and expanded relations with the external world. This view posits a foreshortened preoedipal period that seems utopian, in contrast to the hatred and turmoil that follows, and leaves room for reality to enter the mind undisturbed until the introjections of the Oedipal period. Klein's second view shows the impact of Freud's (1920) later theorizing, and is, at the same time, more distinctly hers. This view is most clearly represented in her 1930 paper; it posits an initial psychological existence that is completely phantastic and sadistic, and places introjection and phantasy firmly before the capacity for relations with reality. Indeed, it makes relations with reality an eventual consequence of introjection and projection; in this model, reality is interpenetrated with phantasy and only gradually emerges out of the interplay of these processes and distinguishes itself.

The third ingredient in this unstable mix is Klein's dawning clinical awareness of 'good' early introjects, equally phantastic to the 'bad' introjects she had described previously. As discussed above, neither model adequately accounts for these. In the 1932 text, however, Klein is clearly trying to explain these objects with the concept of the life instinct, while also sketching an intrinsic connection between good objects and the evolution of relations with reality, as demonstrated by the following passage:

> His belief in the existence of kindly and helpful figures – a belief which is founded upon the efficacy of his libido – enables his reality-objects to emerge ever more powerfully and his phantastic imagos to recede into the background (p. 148).

By the end of this book, one is left with the sense that Klein is groping toward a 'phantasy first' view, but one that also leaves room for the early good phantasy object, which (as the above passage demonstrates) she had already begun to see clinically as essential in the development toward normalcy. To integrate these views Klein will need to jettison a good part of the

structure of thought bequeathed to her by Abraham, and to finally reformulate her views in a way that becomes her distinct theoretical vision. She will do just that in "The Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States."

Before discussing the reformulation of that paper, it seems important to consider the particular usage Klein made of Abraham's developmental sequence between 1927 and 1932 and the reasons it was finally abandoned. As discussed above, Klein had added to Abraham's (1924) biphasic sequence of each pregenital stage (oral erotism and sadism, anal erotism and sadism) the clinical observation of considerable overlap of zonal characteristics throughout early development, along with the finding that even genital impulses can be observed during the first year, at the beginning of the Oedipus Complex. In 1929 Klein began describing the 'phase of the height of sadism,' during which the object is attacked in phantasy by 'all the weapons which sadism can command;' this described a period of massive overlap of oral, urethral, and anal sadistic impulses and phantasies. This sadistic, frightening phase, during which introjected objects threatened internal vengeance corresponding to the attacks suffered by the ego, became a 'vicious circle' in which defensive ejection and other destructive attacks, made as a primitive defense, only heightened the fear of retaliation. The process by which the child emerges from this terrifying predicament remained vague from 1929-1931, finally getting fully worked out in the 1932 text (she offers an even more succinct, developed version of this in her 1933 paper, "Development of Conscience in the Child"). Klein's solution relies on the constant dynamic tension between the life and death instincts throughout early development, and places the vicious circle within the context of this struggle:

> But the vicious circle dominated by the death-instinct, in which aggression gives rise to anxiety and anxiety reinforces aggression can be broken by the libidinal forces when these have gained in

> strength; in the early stages of development, the life instinct has to exert its power to the utmost in order to maintain itself against the death instinct (1932, p. 150).

A tension gradient is now superimposed onto the developmental sequence as distinctions between the stages have become blurred. At one end, where the death instinct is ascendant and eros minimal, lies the height of sadism (as mentioned above, oral sucking is becoming marginalized in Klein's thinking at this point), at the other end is genital dominance and concern for the object, with eros ascendant and death instinct minimal. The only point in Abraham's psychosexual sequence that now seems clearly demarcated is what Klein refers to as "the boundary between the earlier and later anal stage"(p. 155). This can be thought of as the point of equilibrium in the tension gradient. Prior to this dividing line is the height of sadism, extreme anxiety and anal ejection and attack of the internal object, and reality is distorted in proportion to the dominance of aggression. After the dividing line, the ego attempts to handle anxiety by recognizing and attempting to come to terms with the superego. This leads to greater recognition of external reality, the beginning of suppressing rather than ejecting defenses (i.e. the start of repression), and a tendency to "shield" the object. The ego attempts to placate the object through "restitution" (later, "reparation") of damage done to the object and an attitude of pity. Before the dividing line, anxiety and fear of the object predominate, after the dividing line, guilt and concern for the object are paramount. Fixation points for psychosis lie to the left of the line, while those for neurosis are on the right.

With the introduction of the dual instinct theory in 1932, this bifurcation of quality of affect, type of defense, and attitude toward the object far outweighs any importance attached to distinctions between particular stages or substages. As Petot (1990) points out, while Klein at least describes the con-

tributions from each sadistic stage to the general onslaught on the object, the post-dividing line anal and genital stages are barely discussed, and no distinctions are offered concerning their respective contributions, aside from a general reference to benign objects as 'genital' (even though these appear in late anality).

Thus, looking back we already see the particular psychosexual stages becoming superfluous in Klein's writing, as the quality of relationship to internal objects, on a continuum from attacking to repairing, with division at the point at which hatred and anxiety are outweighed by love and guilt, becomes the predominant framework within which Klein is beginning to view development, and is a clear precursor to the idea of 'positions' that she introduces in 1935. As I will try to show more fully in my discussion of that text, Klein's resolution of certain ambiguities concerning the status of the internal phantasy object – its relation to perception and experience of real external objects, its psychological 'location,' and its role in motivation and development – constitute an essential part of the dramatic turn her thinking takes after 1934. Further, it is only after her 1935 paper that Klein offers an explicit theory of phantasy itself.

It seems important to note that it is only after Klein's revolutionary paper of 1935, "A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States," that she can begin to explicitly address the issue of the nature of phantasy itself, even though close attention to phantasy had long been of central importance in her clinical work. This fact begins to make sense when the 1935 text is examined in light of the previous implicit ambiguities and contradictions involving phantasy in her earlier work. In this text, Klein makes an unmistakable shift in her perspective on the developing mind of the young child. The Freud/Abraham psychosexual sequence that figured so promi-

nently in her writings before this point is nearly absent, its place now occupied by the developing relations of ego to object, from part to whole, unintegrated to integrated. Whereas before the central developmental task involved traversing the mid-anal boundary line from pregenital hate to genital love, with interacting effects on the nature of the superego, relations with reality, defenses, etc., Klein now sees the primary developmental achievement as the integration of aspects of the object and successful introjection of a whole object in the context of abundant aggression and hatred. Her view has shifted from one where the primary axis of concern was economic and instinctual (love v. hate, pregenital v. genital) to one where the basic developmental issue centers on the growing coherence of phantasied images of self and other. Achievement of integrated, whole objects in phantasy is now the determining factor of personality makeup and psychological health.[4]

A number of writers have speculated on the motivations for Klein's drastic shift in perspective, both in terms of issues in Klein's personal life (Grosskurth, 1986; Segal, 1980) and the clinical challenges she faced at the time (Petot, 1991; Frank and Weiß, 1996). For our purposes I will examine the meaning and impact of these changes only in the context of Klein's views of phantasy, which, as I have described, were often ambiguous and contradictory before this point. I have focused in particular on two issues with which Klein struggled: the question of the developmental priority of reality perception v. primal phantasy, and the determining factors of the phantastical nature of the object (i.e. by what process does the object become represented in distorted form in phantasy). I will consider each of these issues below and show how

[4]Klein does return to a preoccupation with economic issues again after 1952, however that later period will not be discussed in this context.

Klein's new views provide a parsimonious solution to both of these difficulties.

As discussed above, while Klein emphasized the phantastic nature of early objects from her beginning use of structural concepts in 1926, her adaptation of Abraham's developmental sequence seemed to leave open the possibility that distortion of reality by phantasy was a secondary phenomenon, following an initial oral-sucking period relatively undisturbed by sadism. (For the most part, Klein had attributed distortion to aggression prior to 1935). While Klein seemed to have settled in 1930 on a definitive view that the earliest experiences of objects and reality where "wholly phantastic," in 1932 she described early *good* objects coexisting with bad, again attributing the presence of these to oral-sucking fixations. In that Klein frequently referred to 'good' and 'realistic' interchangeably, this left considerable confusion, because of the implication that realistic objects coexisted with early bad distorted phantasy objects. In the present work Klein has shifted her attention from the degree of sadism to the relative intactness of the early object, and this provides a new way of conceptualizing the phantastic nature of the early object:

> According to Edward Glover[5] (1932), the ego, at first but loosely organized, consists of a considerable number of ego-nuclei. . . In this very early phase . . . the ego's power of identifying itself with its objects is as yet small, partly because it is itself still uncoordinated and partly because the introjected objects are still mainly partial objects, which it equates with faeces . . . As the ego becomes more fully organized, the internalized imagos will approximate more closely to reality and the ego will identify itself more fully with 'good' objects (p. 264).

The notion that the earliest objects are part objects had appeared several times in her 1932 book (p. 136 and p. 206) and in one place as early as 1930 (p. 219). However, this departed from the view she held as recently in 1928,

[5]Ironically, Klein is here invoking Glover's ideas in making the alterations in her theory over which he will shortly become her chief antagonist.

where Klein clearly saw the earliest phantasies as concerned with the contents of the mother's body, itself conceived as a whole container. By the present work this kind of phantasy would be seen as preceded by earlier phantasies of part-objects (breasts and feces) initially unrelated to one another. The progression from part to whole object here becomes a fundamental developmental principle, the basis of which is the *perceptual immaturity* of the infant. The following passage, near the end of the paper, makes this point clear:

> From this relation to part-objects, and from their equation with faeces, springs at this stage the phantastic and unrealistic nature of the child's relation to all objects; to parts of its own body, people and things around it, which are *at first but dimly perceived* (p. 285; italics added).

This point, by itself, would seem to settle the question of the priority of phantasy in the early experience of the infant – objects are inherently 'distorted' in comparison to adult perception because they are initially "dimly perceived." However, two other factors play a further role in the form of early experiences of objects: the process of introjection and the vicissitudes of aggression. While these have become familiar concepts for Klein, in the present paper she clarifies and specifies their respective functions in new ways.

As discussed earlier, from 1926 to 1928 Klein had seemed to refer to distortion by aggression and distortion by the process of introjection interchangeably. From 1928 to 1932 these were considered separately, with the primary emphasis on the former (aggression), which Klein began to link more closely to projection than to introjection. It wasn't until 1932 that Klein returned to a consideration of the process of introjection itself, which she began to conceive of as synonymous with oral incorporation. In the 1935 paper Klein is able to distinguish the contributing effects of each factor in the form taken by early phantasy:

> From the beginning the ego introjects objects 'good' and 'bad', for both of which the mother's breast is the prototype . . . But it is because the baby projects its own aggression on to these objects that it feels them to be 'bad' and not only in that they frustrate its desires: the child conceives of them as actually dangerous – persecutors who it fears will devour it, scoop out the inside of its body, cut it to pieces, poison it . . . These imagos, which are a phantastically distorted picture of the real objects upon which they are based, become installed not only in the outside world but, by the process of incorporation, also within the ego (p. 262).

Although Klein clearly sees both 'good' and 'bad' part objects as "phantastical," the greater weight of distortion is granted to the latter, because of the distinctive impact of aggressive projections. When the breast is frustrating it becomes bad, not only because of the aggression directed against it but also because of the feared retaliation against the ego and attacks on the good object due to projected aggression. In this conceptualization, objects are already good or bad phantasies "installed in the outside world," which become internalized due to the process of introjection experienced as oral incorporation. The bad object can then menace the subject from within the body, and endangers the internal good objects as well.

In effect, Klein has here made distinctions between 3 different sources of phantasy distortion: 1) perceptual immaturity, 2) projection of aggression, 3) phantasied incorporation. With the addition of the third, Klein is implying also a distinction between imagoes (or, object representations), which are distorted but can be experienced as either internal and external; and introjects, which are those particular imagoes experienced (at least unconsciously) as living within the body. These latter are even more prone to phantasy distortion, as they are further removed from perceptual awareness and eventual reality testing.

In Klein's new developmental perspective, the interaction of processes in each of these areas – perceptual maturation, aggression, and introjection –

account for movement from the paranoid to the depressive position. In short, in the paranoid position objects are unintegrated, and attacks are carried out on the frustrating breasts, which are made bad projectively, then feared internally because they are orally incorporated. Both internal and external objects are unintegrated, and experienced as either all-gratifying or all-frustrating. A change takes place after 4 or 5 months, when two simultaneous events occur: one is that sadism reaches its peak, in the way Klein had been describing since 1929 (albeit now conceived of as occurring earlier); the second is that "the child perceives more and more of the whole person of the mother" (p. 285). At this point anxiety is geometrically increased; the ego fears not only internal and external persecution, but also damage to or loss of the object, with whom it has begun to identify. This is the earliest point of the depressive position, when concern for the good object is primarily narcissistic; this gradually gives way to more mature forms in which the object is valued for itself, and guilt is felt as the ego recognizes itself as a source of the attacks.

Between these two points – the early depressive position, with its primarily narcissistic concern and predominantly persecutory anxiety, and later depressive experience, characterized by genuine concern and guilt – the ego takes up a variety of important defenses for managing these tremendous anxieties and facilitating developmental progression. Importantly, each of these defenses – manic defenses, introjection of the good object, splitting, and particularly the various forms of reparation – are described by Klein in terms of their activity within the field of phantasy. This is a shift from even her thinking in the 1932 book, which clearly prefigured much of her thinking here. In that writing Klein also had begun to think of development biphasically, albeit with the important dividing line during mid-anality rather than at 4-5 months. As with the distinction between the paranoid and depressive posi-

tions, the anal dividing-line distinguished between neurotic and psychotic anxieties and fixation points, between egotistical and object-related anxieties, and between primitive defenses and more developed, reparative ones. However, the means for traversing this line were quite different; in the 1932 view, the primary psychological task was to emerge from the vicious circle of primitive anxiety, primarily through the kind of reality testing that takes place when introjection and projection of sadistic phantasy meet with benign external conditions. Even more primary than this, however, was the basic maturational shift whereby genital impulses assume dominance over pregenital ones so long as early anxieties are not severe enough to interfere with development, and an "oral-sucking fixation" is present.

In the present conceptualization, while the initial movement into the depressive crisis is precipitated by "innate" conditions (maturation of the perceptual apparatus), mastery of depressive anxiety is almost completely given over to the psychological processes taking place *within phantasy*, with the desired outcome no longer "genital dominance," per se, but rather "secure introjection of the good object." It is this that is endangered by the initial realization of unity between different parts, good and bad, some of which had been previous objects of attack. Recourse to expulsive defenses (characteristic of the paranoid position) no longer feels safe, as one fears ejecting the good along with the bad. Introjection increases, in order to both reassure oneself about the internal presence of the good object and also to protect it there; however, this fails too, because the ego becomes aware of its own incapacity to fully protect the good object against both bad objects and the id. Depressive splitting[6] sets in so that the ego can maintain a "well-marked cleavage" between good and bad in order that reparation can be carried out on the former.

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[6]This should be distinguished from schizoid splitting, which Klein introduces in 1946.

Because the ego is initially weak and feels incapable of successfully carrying through reparation, several more primitive forms take precedence, beginning with the manic phase of reparation, in which denial (of both the danger to and importance of good objects) and omnipotence predominate. The ego feels itself omnipotently capable of mastering all internal objects, killing them and bringing them back to life. This facilitates initial forms of reparation by bolstering the ego's sense of its own restorative capacities.

With a greater sense of having successfully carried out reparation of the good object, and related strengthening and integration of the ego, comes a greater tolerance of ambivalence, and, consequently, of experiencing the whole, real object:

> Ambivalence, carried out in a splitting of the imagos, enables the young child to gain more trust and belief in its real objects and thus in its internalized ones – to love them more and to carry out in an increasing degree its phantasies of restoration of the loved object. . . the unification of external and internal, loved and hated, real and imaginary objects is carried out in such a way that each step in the unification leads again to a renewed splitting of the imagos. But, as the adaptation to the external world increases, this splitting is carried out on planes which gradually become increasingly nearer and nearer to reality (pp. 287-288).

In essence, movement from a primarily phantastic existence (both in terms of the internal and external worlds) takes place by the dialectic of maturational integration followed by defensive splitting and increasingly strengthening phantasy reparation followed by renewed integration of split aspects of the object. As the object can be increasingly experienced as a unity, it begins to more closely resemble objects in external reality; thus, the "whole, good object" also becomes the real object. The development of reality relations, in this view, is coterminous with the resolution of depressive anxieties.

The importance of this for Klein's theory of phantasy is that here actions by the ego toward phantasy objects, and their response to those actions,

assume primacy in her view of development, largely displacing economic considerations in Klein's thinking. In effect, Klein implies that it is the success of depressive splitting and reparative phantasies that will mitigate the severity of sadism, more than (or, at least as much as) the innate maturational increase in genital impulses.[7] One could say that phantasy becomes all-encompassing in Klein's theory at the same time that she clarifies its status as all-encompassing in the experience of the young infant. Initially the infant lives in a phantasy world because of perceptual immaturity. The height of sadism accompanies perceptual maturation, thus prolonging this phantastical existence by an additional distorting factor. Incorporative phantasies increase defensively during this period, and lead to an inner experience of taking in the entire world orally and containing it within the body. The path to external reality can only be traversed through the ego's successful accomplishment of certain tasks within the inner phantasy world of incorporated objects: good and bad must be separated, more good must be taken in, protected, and repaired; finally, the good must be strengthened enough that it can be enthroned eternally, despite increasing awareness of the ego's actual weakness and badness.

At this point, this essential developmental scenario is described almost exclusively in terms of the content of the phantasies themselves. While Klein has previously (1932) grounded her thinking in the idea of interacting life and death instincts, she stays close here to the (largely inferred) unconscious experience of the individual, in effect giving the phantasy world a life of its own. Rather than libido and the death instinct, Klein begins to refer to 'love and

[7]In "Mourning and its Relation to Manic-Depressive States," Klein will state explicitly: "At every juncture the child's feelings, fears, and defences are linked up with his libidinal wishes and fixations, and the outcome of his sexual development in childhood is always interdependent with the processes I am describing in this paper" (1940, p. 347-8).

hate' repeatedly in this paper, and this usage increases through the mid-1940's where these terms are clearly used to describe the states of the internal objects as well as those of the ego. In effect, Klein is beginning to think of the phantasy world of the child as constituted by internal relationships, which she describes in richly emotional terms. For her the crucial events in development are now conceived of in terms of those emotional relationships; while previous economic ideas are not explicitly denied or altered, they have nearly vanished from the field of her text. In essence, theoretical explanation and clinical description here become unified; the language of phantasy experience also serves as the terminology of defense, structure, and unconscious dynamics.

Interestingly, it is only after this point, when phantasy has become ubiquitous in Klein's theorizing, that she offers an explicit definition of phantasy itself, in a paper entitled "Weaning," originally delivered as a lecture to a lay audience:

> Analytic work has shown that babies of a few months of age certainly indulge in phantasy-building. I believe that this is the most primitive mental activity and that phantasies are in the mind of the infant almost from birth. It would seem that every stimulus the child receives is immediately responded to by phantasies, the unpleasant stimuli, including mere frustration, by phantasies of an aggressive kind, the gratifying stimuli by those focusing on pleasure (1936; p. 290).

This passage contains two important elements: phantasy is present from birth, and phantasy is a form of interpretation, or construction, of experiences in the external world. As discussed above, the first of these points had remained ambiguous for some time, but can now be stated explicitly given the new perspective on mental development Klein introduced in 1935. The second point carries with it an important new connotation regarding phantasy – the essence of this phenomenon is no longer construed of as *distorting*, but is rather seen as *constructing* a view of reality ("phantasy-building").

While the 1935 text emphasized at the outset the 'distorted' nature of phantasy objects, Klein had also made statements in that paper that suggested the view of phantasy as 'constructed' from internal and external sources. For example, she states: "From the very beginning of psychic development there is a constant correlation of real objects with those installed in the ego"(1935, p. 266), which leads the child to experience the absence of the external mother as a loss of the internal good object as well (here the emphasis is on phantasy as a form of representation, not distortion). In "Weaning," the idea of constant interaction between the internal and external worlds is given significantly more emphasis, perhaps because this paper aims to apply Klein's new ideas to a practical issue in mothering, i.e. how the actual event of weaning affects the internal world of the infant. Klein clearly wants to make the point that the mother's behavior during this crucial event matters, that real experiences affect internal phantasy. More important for our purposes, however, is a philosophical point also implied in these ideas, namely that human experience is fundamentally a subjective construction made up from both instinctual and sensory input from the beginning, with no 'objective' relation to reality held up as a standard from which phantasy is viewed as a 'distortion'. Thus, phantasy is no longer antithetical to reality, it is itself a process of forming a coherent reality from available information. In a way, Klein seems no longer to implicitly view psychic reality as less real than material reality – a change of view with extremely important implications for the Controversies of the 1940's, as we will discuss in Chapter 3.

In Klein's 1940 paper, "Mourning and its Relation to Manic-Depressive States," she extends this line of thought, and it leads her to a somewhat altered way of thinking about internal reality and the internal phantasy world. Again, whereas earlier her emphasis had been on the distorted imagoes that

make up internal reality, and the necessity of their being modified in order to become more 'realistic,' here she lays much more emphasis on the child's successfully constructing an "internal world" of introjects that live together in harmony, irrespective of their concurrence with external reality. In effect, in contrast to earlier writings, Klein is no longer focusing exclusively on the importance of correcting the distortions that characterize internal phantasy objects relative to their external counterparts (although this emphasis still appears at times in her writing). She now also recognizes the positive dimension of the internal phantasy world, as a realm where emotional experiences become embodied and represented in internal relationships. The crucial question for her now concerns more the nature of those relationships themselves than the extent of their accurately reflecting external reality.

This way of thinking about internal reality is signaled by Klein's usage of the term, the *internal world.*[8] This concept appears near the beginning of "Mourning," where Klein explains the initial building up of the internal world:

> The baby, having incorporated his parents, feels them to be live people inside his body in the concrete way in which deep unconscious phantasies are experienced – they are, in his mind, 'internal' or 'inner' objects, as I have termed them. Thus an *inner world* is being built up in the child's unconscious mind, corresponding to his actual experiences and the impressions he gains from people and the external world, and yet altered by his own phantasies and impulses. If it is a world of peopled predominantly at peace with each other and with the ego, inner harmony, security and integration ensue (p. 346; italics added).

One clearly senses the importance of the relationships carried on by these objects *with one another,* as well as with the ego, in successive discus-

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[8]Petot (1991) points out that, while Klein used this phrase sporadically in 1931 and 1932, it dropped from her usage from 1933 until 1940, when it first takes on the status as a concept distinct from the more general 'internal reality.'

sions of this idea throughout the paper. With the possible exception of Klein's earlier discussion of the "internal parents united in intercourse" found in many of her clinical descriptions after 1927, the focus on internal harmony seems a relatively new idea with this paper. At the same time, it seems quite central to her way of conceptualizing the difficulties of mourning, as well as to her new view of the internal phantasy world itself:

> This inner world consists of innumerable objects taken into the ego, corresponding partly to the multitude of varying aspects, good and bad, in which the parents (and other people) appeared to the child's unconscious mind throughout various stages of his development. Further, they also represent all the real people who are continually becoming internalized in a variety of situations provided by the multitude of ever-changing external experiences as well as phantasied ones. In addition, all these objects are in the inner world in an infinitely complex relation both with each other and with the self (pp. 362-363).

Klein makes it clear, with this paper, that, in addition to the task of securely internalizing a good whole object, which she emphasized in her 1935 paper, the successful outcome of the infantile depressive position (as well as of experiences of mourning later in life) is the establishment, or reestablishment of a sense of internal harmony among the objects within the inner world.

In the case of mourning, loss of a loved object precipitates an unconscious phantasy of having lost internal good objects as well, and this leads one to feel that "internal 'bad' objects predominate and his inner world is in danger of *disruption*" (p. 353). Thus, it is no longer just fear for the safety of the good object or the ego threatened by the bad object, but the overall integrity and harmony of the inner world itself is now a concern. The pain of mourning, which Klein reminds us Freud (1917) found difficult to account for, is explained by her as follows:

> The pain experienced in the slow process of testing reality in the work of mourning thus seems to be partly due to the necessity, not only to renew the links to the external world and thus to continuously reexperience the loss, but at the same time and by means of this to rebuild with anguish the inner world, which is felt to be in danger of deteriorating and collapsing (p. 354).

For a time, these painful feelings may be mitigated by manic reparation and accompanying feelings of triumph, which themselves threaten to increase persecutory anxiety and complicate the work of mourning due to the intrinsic link to hatred and aggression. If the mourner can retain a belief in the 'goodness' of himself and others (partly through experiences in the external world), the 'hardened' manic defenses eventually soften, and real sorrow about the actual loss can be experienced. In terms of the internal phantasy world, the tears of grief serve an important function:

> Through tears, the mourner not only expresses his feelings and thus eases tension, but, since in the unconscious they are equated with excrements, he also expels his 'bad' objects, and this adds to the relief obtained through crying. This greater freedom in the inner world implies that the internalized objects, being less controlled by the ego, are also allowed more freedom: that these objects themselves are allowed in particular, greater freedom of feeling. In the mourner's state of mind, the *feelings of his internal objects are also sorrowful.* In his mind, they share his grief, in the same way as actual kind parents would (p. 359; italics added).

With the symbolic expulsion of bad objects through crying, the good objects of the internal world are free to feel grief and sadness *with* the mourner. Here these objects are indeed felt as having their own reality. Just as phantasy is seen to interpenetrate reality, so is reality here interpenetrating phantasy: phantasy has its own reality, its own independent impact on the ego. Klein's movement away from the dichotomy of phantasy and reality that began in 1935 seems to have freed her here to conceive of internal objects as possessing their own actuality in the internal world.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed Klein's evolving concept of phantasy from 1921 to 1940, paying particular attention to developments in her view on the relation of phantasy to reality. From the beginning Klein seemed to assume (following Ferenczi's (1913) particular view of narcissism) that the child's own thoughts are initially his/her *only* reality, and are only gradually and painfully supplanted by perception of reality. In some ways this basic idea can be seen as a constant for Klein, despite ambiguity about this point in the late 1920's. In fact, one could argue that a significant aspect of Klein's work involves the elaboration of the particularities of this developmental pathway, and finally following it to a radical conclusion regarding the ultimate relation of phantasy to reality.

As described above, there are several significant moments in Klein's thinking throughout the course of her writing on this subject. The first was her clinical awareness that intellectual inhibitions loosen when phantasy can be freely expressed. This finding, along with her careful observations of the relationship between specific aspects of inhibitions and their corresponding phantasies, led her to the view that unconscious phantasy is a constant underlayer of *all* activities, and that difficulties in functioning result from conflictual situations taking place *within* those underlying phantasies (not *between* phantasies and other structures or processes). This observation, which followed from the effectiveness of interventions aimed exclusively at the inner content of phantasies themselves, led Klein eventually to view defenses, ego functions, and structure as all comprised by phantasy.

The second significant moment was Klein's particular adoption of the concept of the superego in a way consistent with her clinical understanding of

phantasy. Prior to the use of this structural concept Klein's clinical view of phantasy conflicted with aspects of her theoretical model, which rested on an economical view of symbol formation. The first years of Klein's use of the concept of the superego show her struggling to apply it in her own distinctive way, in an effort to account for very early phemonena and to show the interaction of the superego with the child's first experience of objects and evolving relationship to reality. In effect, the idea of the early superego provided her the means to fit Ferenczi's (1913) ideas about the child's initial "omnipotence of thought" with her own evolving view of the *object relations* involved in that omnipotence. The result was a view that equated the first object relations with the earliest form of the superego, and saw the evolution toward reality perception as taking place through the modification of the aggressive distortion of those early phantasy objects until they gradually approximated external objects.

The third moment in this progression occurred when Klein adopted Freud's (1920) dual instinct theory. This led her to shift away from a view of early objects as 'distorted' by aggression to one in which all early objects and experiences are 'constructed' in phantasy through the interaction of life and death instincts with sensory experiences. This shift from phantasy as distortion to phantasy as construction or interpretation followed in two steps – the first involved her conception of early superego introjects as *both* 'phantastically good' and 'phantastically bad' (as opposed 'good' being realistic and 'bad' being distorted) – this because of the initially unintegrated impulses cathecting sensory experiences with separate valences and thereby constructing correspondingly opposed phantasy objects. The second step involved her applying the idea of the integrating v. disintegrating tendencies implied in the polarity of eros and the death instinct to the notion of the

evolving integration of the object in the infant's experience from part to whole (i.e. the movement toward the depressive position). Thus, emotional valence and integration v. disintegration interact with sensory experience in constructing a psychological world under conditions mutually created by instinct and sensation.

At the end of this third moment (which marks the beginning of the period of the Controversies) Klein has reached a point in her thinking that seems largely to leave behind concern over the relative *accuracy* of introjects (and thereby, of perception), as her focus has become the relative integration and harmony of the internal world, *now conceived as a reality in its own right*. In effect, Klein has reached a point in her thinking where phantasy is no longer antithetical to reality. This clearly has significant epistemological implications – Klein can be seen to undercut, at it's base, the idea of a privileged, objective perspective; from her point of view, "realistic thinking" always evolves out of, and ultimately rests upon an ephemeral ground of phantasy. As I will discuss in the following chapter, this fundamental notion, implied but never really announced in Klein's writings, may have had a significant impact on the emotional equilibrium of those analysts already experiencing some unsteadiness (namely, the immigrants to London during the war) and may well have unconsciously potentiated the attacks against Klein leading up to the Controversial Discussions.

Chapter 3: Phantasy in the Controversial Discussions

The First Scientific Meeting in the Series of Discussions on Controversial Issues was held on January 27th, 1943, at the British Psychoanalytic Society. The topic was a paper by Susan Isaacs, entitled "The Nature and Function of Phantasy," which had been distributed to members ahead of time. Discussion of this paper would come to occupy half of the meetings allotted to the four papers presented by the Kleinians, a fact that reflected the fundamental place this topic held in the theoretical disputes that had divided the groups (see Chapter 1). In her prefatory remarks, Isaacs states that articulating the foundations of disagreement was one of the primary aims of the paper: "We cannot start at the *end-state* of divergence, but need to consider the point of theory (or fact) where they take their rise" (Isaacs, 1943; p. 265). Indeed, it was for the purpose of getting to the bedrock that she altered the topic of her paper from that which had originally been requested by the program comittee, "The role of introjection and projection of objects in the early years of development." (This would be the topic of the subsequent paper by Paula Heimann, presented and discussed on October 20, 1943).

Isaacs' paper discusses the notion of "unconscious phantasy." The spelling of this term, using 'ph' to differentiate it from 'fantasy,' served to distinguish the unconscious character of phantasy from its conscious form, a usage which had its origins when Freud's works were translated from German to English in the 1920's. In an acknowledged extension of Freud's application of the term, Isaacs states in her paper that unconscious phantasies make up the basic content of the mind, and exist from birth on. They are seen by her as the psychic representatives of the life and death instincts, and to underlie, on an unconscious level, all mental activities and experiences. Isaacs' strategy in

her paper is to state these notions as basic postulates, from which the characteristically Kleinian ideas regarding internal objects, introjection and projection, and the paranoid and depressive positions would follow. Because ideas about phantasy are regarded as "first principles," Isaacs takes great care to support them by 1) articulating them clearly and showing their congruence (if not always direct agreement) with Freud's writings, 2) demonstrating their compatibility with accepted developmental research, especially with respect to the early dating of phantasy activity that had become so controversial, and 3) presenting her own child observational data to substantiate Klein's views, with particular emphasis on demonstrating the presence of preverbal phantasy.

In the ensuing discussions of this paper, many of the points presented become the foci of intense debate between the competing factions. While much of this debate fails to arrive at satisfactory resolution, it does serve to clearly articulate the points of difference separating the groups. Divisive theoretical issues can be usefully grouped into four areas: 1) The use of concrete/subjective v. abstract/objective terminology in describing mental processes; 2) the relation between phantasy, instinct, and the psychic apparatus; 3) the role of phantasy in early object relations; and 4) phantasy and the interaction of psychic structures. In addition, differences of viewpoint regarding the proper relationship to Freudian theory crystallize out of these discussions. In this chapter I will take up each of these areas of difference by first summarizing Isaacs' position as stated in her paper, then distilling the basic arguments about these issues made by each of the groups.

I. Subjective v. Objective Terminology

> I wish to state here my opinion that the primary content of all mental processes are unconscious phantasies. Such phantasies

> are the basis of all unconscious and conscious thought processes (Isaacs, 1943; p. 272).

This statement by Isaacs introduces the first basic postulate of the Kleinian view of phantasy, which she puts forth after reminding her audience of Freud's emphasis on the psychic *reality* of phantasy productions, not to be diminished in comparison with the reality of material and objective events. She states:

> Again, the word 'phantasy' is often used in contrast with 'reality,' the latter word being taken as identical with 'external' or 'material' or 'objective' facts. But when external reality is called 'objective' reality, there is an assumption which denies to psychical reality its own objectivity as a mental fact (p. 269).

She goes on to quote several passages by Freud in which he seems to place greater weight on psychic over material reality, such as the following:

> In contrast to material reality, these phantasies possess *psychical* reality, and we gradually come to understand that *in the world of neurosis psychical reality is the determining factor* (quoted in King and Steiner, 1991; p. 270; Italics in original).

In emphasizing the parity of psychical and material events, Isaacs seems to be doing two things. The first is emphasizing the reality *for the subject*, of his or her unconscious phantasy and the determinative role it plays in shaping his or her psychological world. This is the individual and experiential sense of phantasy as the "primary content of mental life." The second, and more controversial meaning implied by this definition relates to the language and mode of conceptualization most appropriate to basic theoretical descriptions of the psyche. For Isaacs, the language of phantasy, rather than that of abstract mechanisms, captures best the actual nature of mental events, because it conveys the meaningfulness inherent in the "psychic character" of those events:

> In particular, the value of the word 'phantasy' is that it emphasizes the *psychic character* of the processes we are concerned with. A suggestive way in which this fact is sometimes stated is that the special character of mental as compared with physical processes is that they have *meaning* . . . The word 'phantasy' serves to remind us always of this distinctive character of meaning in the mental life (p. 272; italics in original).

To put it simply, Isaacs and the Kleinians assume a categorical distinction between those events of the mind and those of the body and "material reality:" the former follow the symbolic laws of meaningfulness described by Freud, while the latter follow the abstract laws of physical reality. To use the language of material reality to describe psychic reality is simply inappropriate, in that it blurs this basic distinction and obscures Freud's discovery that, while distinct, the physical and the psychic have equal claim to the status of "reality," which therefore obviates the need to translate phenomena from the former realm into the language of the latter in order to be "scientific."

However, this sort of translation is just what the Viennese and many of the British Independent Psychoanalysts insist upon. In her paper, Isaacs takes on the arguments of one of the more sophisticated and articulate proponents of this view, Marjorie Brierley, an analyst from the Independent Group. Here Isaacs responds to Brierley's (1942) paper, entitled "'Internal Objects' and Theory", which explicates the writer's "difficulty in coming to grips" with Klein's views, due to the latter's tendency to express generalizations "in perceptual rather than in conceptual terms." In Brierley's view, using the language of subjective experience to describe psychological processes runs the

> risk of confusing the mental process with the physical act . . . it is imperative for scientific purposes to distinguish the conceptual from the perceptual mode of thought. The non-sensible nature of mind and mental process renders it obligatory to discuss them in abstract terms. . . whilst one can think of a mother as being ac-

> tually dismembered, one cannot conceive of a mental object being literally shattered – one cannot take a hammer to a mental object . . . If the object is consistently thought of as a mental object, an organization within the ego, this stumbling block is removed. It is possible to think of a mental object system not indeed in terms of wholes or bits and pieces, but in terms of integration and disintegration. (quoted in Isaacs, 1943; p. 273).

Clearly, Brierley objects to what she sees as the Kleinian failure to properly distinguish between objective and experiential terminology, a view stated even more clearly in passages not quoted by Isaacs from this paper, such as the following argument for retaining the distinction between the language of discrete observation and that of theoretical generalization:

> Thus, if a man with an over-acid stomach eats a sour green apple, he will probably experience pain. He may say about this pain: 'That apple is burning a hole in my stomach.' This, in effect, is a phantasy; the processes set up in his stomach feel like that. The things that are really happening in the stomach will be more accurately inferred and described by the physiologist (Brierley, 1942; pp108-109).

Brierley cogently makes the case that one should use data from the realm of phantasy, or psychic reality, only to make determinations about events of the "mental apparatus" itself, which, like the stomach, should be described in a way that uses perceptual information to make a theoretical inference about the objective situation. In the interest of maintaining clarity, Brierley insists that we keep our terms distinct, just as the traveler is best served by remaining aware of whether he or she is looking at the map (theory) or the countryside (phenomenological data). In her view, Klein "lays herself open to misunderstanding in her generalizations by a choice of terms too close to her specific source material." (p. 109)

Brierley's perspective, however, assumes a purpose shared by both physical scientists and psychoanalysts is served by maintaining the distinction between theoretical and observational terminology. In the case of the physi-

cian diagnosing the stomach ache in Brierley's example, the purpose is clear; the psychological experience is used as a sign regarding a malady with actual existence on the physiological plane. Here the need for translation makes sense; one needs to go from the realm of subjective experience to that of physical phenomena, which lack consciousness and are extended in space. Generalizing from the phenomenological to the abstract and technical aids in making this translation – different modes of discourse are assigned to different kinds of phenomena. With the psychoanalyst, however, there may be a problematic element introduced if translation into the abstract and technical mode, because it follows the practice of the physical sciences and medicine, carries with it the assumption that theoretical entities occupy a physical reality (like the stomach) more real or valid than phenomenological experiences. The radicalness of Klein's approach is that she does not make this assumption; she sees the structures, processes, and mechanisms of the inner world as comprised of the very stuff that experience is made of – phantasy. This is no longer modelled on the model of the physical sciences, but is a completely psychological view of the mind (Caper, 1988).

However, this distinction is nowhere taken up in Isaacs' paper; instead she seems to actively avoid confronting on this issue directly:

> Now, this way of stating our problem raises a number of fundamental questions regarding scientific explanation in general, some of which would take us too far afield from our present purpose. I shall confine myself to the psychological problem (p. 273).

This response is rather remarkable; it skirts the point about which Isaacs and Brierley are actually divided (because it would "take us too far afield"), and instead takes up the developmental priority of concrete over abstract mentation *on the level of psychological experience*. As discussed above,

this is the first, and least controversial meaning of phantasy as "primary content" of mental life. It is as if Isaacs reads Brierley to be saying that *in the child's experience* abstract concepts precede concrete ones, rather than seeing that Brierley's argument is actually one about whether the subjective or objective vantage point can claim greater validity as the descriptive language of mental phenomena. Isaacs does not address the fact that Brierley does not share her assumption that theory should relate primarily to the inner experience of the individual, as her response to Brierley's comment that "One cannot take a hammer to a mental object" makes clear:

> The child feels (later, imagines) that he *does* take a (felt or imagined) hammer to his (felt or imagined) mother. Mrs. Klein does not say that object is whole or in bits, as seen by an observor. She does say it is so for the child. She is speaking of what the child is experiencing, on the level of wish and phantasied action and its phantasied intentions and results (p. 275; italics in original).

What Isaacs misses here is that, for Brierley, the perspective of the external observor is precisely the language most appropriate for theorizing, not "speaking of what the child is experiencing," which is *merely* the language of clinical data.

In the discussions that follow Isaacs' presentation, this difference in viewpoint regarding subjective v. objective terminology continues to be a point of contention amongst the competing groups. In the First Discussion, Edward Glover claims Isaacs is "addicted to a sort of psychic anthropomorphism," in which there is a confusion of psychological mechanisms with "concepts of the psychic apparatus" (p. 326). S. H. Foulkes, an immigrant from Vienna and adherent of Anna Freud, addresses himself to the implications

he sees in the Kleinian "confusion" of theoretical and experiential terminology:

> This so-called signicative function of language is precisely the one exclusively to be used in scientific, rational thinking . . . It is this dehydrated, lifeless, skeletal use of words for which we aim, and for good reasons, if we want to compress our clinical experiences, for instance, into scientific terms to be used for a precise and short cut. [Insisting on reducing psychoanalytic concepts to underlying phantasy] would be just the same as to say that somebody who understands the theory of music cannot understand a concert (p. 364).

In Foulkes' view, one needs to *abstract from* clinical experience to theoretical concepts in order to make "scientific formulations." To elevate the conscious or unconscious phantasy of internal objects to the same metapsychological status as intrapsychic structure (e.g. ego, superego) is to lose the distinction between clinical and theoretical discourse that serves to demarcate those concepts used to order and categorize from those that merely denote phenomenal experience. Foulkes sees a particular problem in this for clinical thinking, in that phantasy concepts (i.e. introjected objects), once elevated to theoretical constructs, would begin to be seen as "primary motors," in the same way as instincts traditionally are. For Foulkes, this is akin to "the religious and spiritual level with an independent soul having energies of its own from another world," and represents a "regression to pre-scientific thinking" (p. 365).

Ella Sharpe, a member of the independent group, echoes this concern in her contribution to the Third Discussion:

> My query about technique concerns the psychotic belief of actual objects inside, breasts, penises, parents, evil, and good. Sometimes I get the impression that some analysts who deal with these beliefs, interpret to their patients as if they themselves believed not only their patients' beliefs, but in the actuality of the concrete objects inside (p. 405).

These views invite reponses from Isaacs and her fellow Kleinian, Paula Heimann. To Foulkes, Heimann replies with a clinical discussion (this was a previously presented case, to which Foulkes had referred in his comments), and concludes with the statement that "devils" that the patient had felt to exist concretely inside "were a creation of her mind, an outcome of her unconscious conflicts, a peculiar blend of love and hate, anxiety and guilt, punishment and reparation" (p. 391). Similarly, in Isaacs' reply to Sharpe, she states:

> Like Miss Sharpe, we believe that the patient believes he has concrete objects and part-objects inside him. And we accept the full weight of his belief, without evasion, we do not, however, ourselves believe that he has, nor give the patient reason to suppose that we believe it (p. 459).

It is interesting to note that, as with Isaacs' rebuttai to Brierley in her paper, objections to the loss of distinction between clinical observation and theoretical concepts are uniformly answered from a *clinical* standpoint by the Kleinians; they neither acknowledge nor deny the claim that they have effectively eliminated an important distinction between experiential and theoretical modes of discourse. Their recourse to clinical discussion, while possibly evasive, may also reveal something of the truth of the accusation – to answer the criticism that the theoretical and clinical are insufficiently distinguished with a clinical answer can easily be read as an indirect support of this non-distinction.

However, I would also suggest that in not addressing the criticisms in the terms they are offered might represent something more fundamental than evasion, something more akin to a *demonstration* of perspective, a response from a different set of ideological coordinates. That is, to argue for the distinction between theory and inner experience implies the possibility of an objective vantage point; remember that Foulkes' main worry was that phan-

tasy, rather than instinct, would be seen as a "primary motor," and that under this delusive belief mental phenomena would be traced to its unconscious phantasy level and simply left at that (p. 365). This concern necessarily assumes there is something more absolute – Foulkes puts instinct and the external world in this category – to which phantasy relates as a "significant nodal point" in the clash between these more significant, objective realities. By not explicitly responding to this particular point (and similar ones offered by Brierley, Glover, and Sharpe), Isaacs can be seen as leaving an open question. She neither affirms this as a difficulty in the Kleinian viewpoint, nor argues that the Kleinians continue to uphold the familiar distinction between scientific reality of theoretical concepts v. the mere subjectivity of phenomenological description. Isaacs' response to Sharpe, that "we believe the patient believes" in the reality of internal objects but "do not ourselves believe" in them addresses the clinical issue without answering the more basic philosophical question that seems to trouble the non-Kleinian analysts – how can one's sense of holding to some modicum of objective reality be maintained when the categories between theory and experience are no longer distinct?

This issue is clearly one of fundamental importance; very basic assumptions are involved regarding the place and purpose of theory in psychoanalysis and the proper form of scientific discourse. In a broader sense, fundamental questions are posed that challenge the dichotomies of objectivity-subjectivity and reality-phantasy. It is as if Klein and Isaacs have said that in the realm of the mind these dichotomies have been both inverted and subverted; subjectivity and phantasy are the road to truth, and as such constitute the only form of reality of the mind that might claim scientific validity – subjectivity takes the place traditionally held by objectivity, as phantasy does that

of reality. As I will attempt to show below, this question of the relation between phantasy and reality, and the implicit questioning of the possibility of objectivity with respect to mental phenomena, runs deeply through each area of theoretical controversy between these groups. As I will also attempt to show, the ramifications of this questioning deeply unsettled many of the members of this discussion, and arguably served as an emotional catalyst to the discussions themselves.

II. Instinct, Psychic Apparatus, and Phantasy

In "developing more fully" the postulate that phantasy is the primary content of mental life, Isaacs derives a second postulate from the following statement by Freud:

> 'We suppose that it [the id] is somewhere in direct contact with somatic processes, and takes over from them instinctual needs and gives them mental expression.' [Freud, S. 1933a: 98; SE 22:73]. (Quoted in King and Steiner, 1991; pp. 276-77).

Isaacs states:

> I believe that this 'mental expression' is unconscious phantasy. Phantasy is the mental corollary, the psychic representative of instinct. And there is no impulse, no instinctual urge, which is not experienced as (unconscious) phantasy. (p. 277).

While the first postulate located phantasy as the general constituent of psychic reality, and by granting that domain conceptual primacy made phantasy the "primary content," this postulate fleshes out the substance and source of phantasy. For Isaacs and Klein, it is the manifestation of instinct in the mental realm. While instinct may have other manifestations in the physical realm (e.g. physical energy, bodily tension, chemical processes), in the mental, and therefore properly psychoanalytic domain it will take the form of phantasy.

For Isaacs, phantasy expresses in action the fulfillment of the particular urge; e.g. an infant's hungry desire to be fed might take the form of an inner experience of sucking at, and perhaps incorporating the breast. In accord with the characteristics of early mental processes, the infant's wish will be felt as the deed itself, so that "he not only feels 'I want to' but actually 'I am doing' this and that action towards his mother." (p. 277)

This model of the early mental equivalence of wish and deed in phantasy provides an important juncture with Freud's writings. While Isaacs acknowledges that her view of phantasy as the "mental corollary of instinct" goes beyond Freud's written views on the subject, she reads him as coming close to this idea in his thoughts about "hallucinatory wish fulfillment;"

> Now I know very well that Freud himself did not say that the 'mental expression' of instinctual urges is the same thing as phantasy. But in my view he came very near to this when he postulated the infant's satisfaction of his wishes in *hallucinatory* form. . . in the beginning of mental life, 'whatever was thought of (desired) was simply imagined in a hallucinatory form, as still happens with our dream-thoughts every night. This is an attempt at satisfaction by hallucination.' [Freud, S. 1911b: 114; SE 12: 219].
>
> Freud does not say that the infant has unconscious phantasies. But the capacity to hallucinate is, in my view, either identical with phantasy or the pre-condition for it (p. 278).

Isaacs follows this by quoting Freud's (1911b) statement of the process by which the desired breast is originally "imagined in hallucinatory form" before the onset of the reality principle and the subsequent development of other means of attaining satisfaction. It is clear that Freud assumes that this process is a very early attempt at gratification, that it involves conjuring up the wished for satisfaction as an internal reality in a primitive attempt at coping with frustration, via the process of "regression to the sensory end of the

psychic apparatus" (cf. Freud, 1900; chpt 7). Isaacs extends this concept in at least two important ways.

The first extension she makes is to generalize the process of hallucination to all manifestations of instinctual wish. By making phantasy the ubiquitous form of representation of the entire internal world, Isaacs moves beyond the particular situation described by Freud (hallucinated breast as the byproduct of frustrated oral needs). For her, *all* instinctual desires are immediately experienced (i.e. hallucinated) unconsciously as achieving satisfaction: "And there is no impulse, no instinctual urge, which is not experienced as unconscious phantasy" (p. 277). Whether she is implying that all instinctual urges are implicitly partially frustrated, leading to a ubiquitous regression to sensation for all impulses, or instead whether she reads Freud as having broadened his view on this subject, or some other possibility (e.g. she views this differently than Freud despite a general agreement concerning the mechanism involved) is not clear from Isaacs' statements.

Isaacs also extends the relation between instinct and phantasy by making it clear that it is not *only* instinctual wishes that assume their inner representation in phantasy:

> Freud refers to 'the mental expression of instinctual needs'. In my view, this means not only *libidinal* desires, but destructive impulses and anxieties also. Moreover, phantasy soon becomes a means of defence against anxieties, a means of inhibiting and controlling instinctual urges, and expression of reparative wishes (p. 277; italics in original).

This seems to move beyond the model explicitly provided by Freud, whereby wishes are experienced as fulfilled only as the most primitive means of coping with frustration. In the above statement, Isaacs defines phantasy as

the representation of all mental impulse, whether it be sexual or aggressive, affect (anxiety) or even an ego mechanism in opposition to impulse (defense).

Further, in early phantasy "implicit meaning" is given to external sensations through their interaction with wish-fulfilling phantasies; for Isaacs and Klein, sensory experiences are never merely perceived in their brute form, but are always *interpreted* through their interaction with instinctual wishes and frustrations in accord with the pleasure principle. Isaacs quotes Riviere's contribution to the 1936 'Exchange Lectures' (cf. chapter 1) to this effect:

> I wish especially to point out, therefore, that from the very beginning of life . . . the psyche responds to the reality of its experience by interpreting them – or rather, by *misinterpreting* them – in a subjective manner that increases its pleasure and preserves it from pain. . . The phantasy life of the individual is thus the form in which his real internal and external sensations and perceptions are interpreted and represented to himself in his mind under the influence of the pleasure-pain principle. . . I would draw your attention to the conclusion that phantasy life is never 'pure phantasy'. It consists of true perceptions and of false interpretations; all phantasies are thus *mixtures* of external and internal reality. [Riviere, J. 1936:399] (Quoted in King and Steiner, 1991; italics in original).

Thus, phantasy is made up of external and internal experiences in a state of fusion comprising an individual, subjective rendering of reality. While sensory experience provides many of the ingredients, the element of *subjectivity* is a function of individual, instinctual experience, and is generated by the hallucinatory mechanism described by Freud. In this way, because we begin life hallucinating instinctual wishes, we are already always subjective beings from birth, and therefore never experience reality in a direct, unmediated fashion.

These expanded views of the relation of instinct and phantasy – that *all* impulses are experienced in hallucinatory form from the beginning of life,

including anxiety and defense, and that these provide the vehicle for subjective interpretation of experience from the beginning – provoke two different kinds of objections, one narrow, the other global and related to the philosophical issues discussed in the preceding section. The narrow objection concerns what is seen as an overgeneralization of the early mechanism of "hallucinatory wish-fulfillment" to describe phenomena unrelated to the situation originally described by Freud – the frustration of instinctual needs. In Anna Freud's words:

> With the suggested new use of the term 'phantasy' early mental processes are grouped together under a common connotation irrespective of whether they are instinct derivatives or not. Hallucinatory expression is equally ascribed to all these processes, again irrespective of whether they are instinct derivatives or not. The singular nature of all instinctual processes in contrast to others as stressed in the libido theory is thereby obscured (p. 329).

In this objection, Anna Freud clearly wants to differentiate, from the beginning, those mental processes that are instinctual from the non-instinctual. This position represents a common theme for her throughout these discussions; she is the upholder of *clear distinctions*, whether these be between libido and non-libido, primary and secondary process, or autoerotism and object-relatedness. Isaacs' response, also characteristic, is to challenge the notion of any such clearly demarcated domains:

> I know of no evidence to show that in the earliest stages we can distinguish between mental processes which are instinct-derivatives and those which are not. . . as I have already agreed, the details of the way in which perception and knowledge of external reality become differentiated from phantasy and internal reality await much fuller study (pp. 371-2).

Brierley's response occupies an intermediate position between the narrow and global objections to these ideas about the relation of instinct to phantasy. She echoes Anna Freud's concern that Isaacs lumps together instinctual

and non-instinctual aspects of mental life in a way that obscures important distinctions, particularly those between *thinking* and phantasy. While Brierley acknowledges the possibility of a common origin of all mental process in primitive mentation, and accepts the notion that all mental events have meaning, she objects to the word "phantasy," and suggests "meaning" instead as an overarching term, to denote both the subjective meaning and the interaction of internal and external sources of the infant's experiences. While Brierley seems comfortable with the notion of undifferentiated early mental processes, and an interaction of internal and external experiences from the beginning, her chief concern is that the distinction between "phantasy-thinking" and "reality-thinking" in the *adult* should remain conceptually distinct:

> But if we expand the concept phantasy to cover all primitive subjective experience, we must also extend it forwards and regard all adult thinking, not merely as developed from and continually influenced by more primitive modes of thinking, but as itself a variety of phantasy. This would obscure a difference that is important to maintain (p. 331).

Similar to her position with regard to subjective v. objective language for mental events described above, Brierley seems concerned that accepting these ideas would leave no room for the possibility of objective thought distinct from the processes of unconscious phantasy.

Glover articulates the more global critique. His objections are similar to Brierley's, but go beyond the specific issue of instinct and phantasy to a more general criticism of the Kleinian view of the psychic apparatus. He sees the Kleinians as failing to recognize that the human psyche is initially and primarily concerned with adaptation to reality. In his view (which he sees as basic to "accepted Freudian teaching"), phantasy is a *secondary* development that requires the more highly evolved mind of an older child to attain. Like

Anna Freud, Glover's objection begins with references to Isaacs' overgeneralizing from "hallucinatory wish fulfillment" to too many psychic functions. However, this serves as a mere entree to the more general objection that the Kleinians fundamentally misunderstand the nature and function of the psychic apparatus itelf. He develops this critique through the course of the first five discussions. In the first, he berates the Kleinians for their

> neglect of the significance of reality factors in the laying down of memory traces of sensory experience. . . They seem to confuse the relations of psychic reality to phantasy and to reality proving respectively. The regression in oral hallucinatory gratification, e.g. activates the memory traces of the actual experiences at the sensory end of the apparatus. And reality proving is after all concerned with the relation of gratification or frustration of instints to the external objects of these instincts, not with snapshots of the Himalaya Mountains (p. 327).

This last statement seems to be a caricature of the view that the infant is initially oriented more toward internal phantasy breasts ("snapshots of the Himalaya mountains") than to 'real', external gratifications and frustrations – the opposite of what he describes as Freud's "orderly series" of concepts. Glover develops this point further in the third discussion, where he describes the initial formation of (veridical) memory traces as adaptive, mobilized by frustration, and promoting activities that lead to gratification and avoid frustration. Thus, at the beginning, the basic function of the psychic apparatus is a "reality function," and representations that cohere under this function are realistic images and memories. 'Mental representation' and 'phantasy' are therefore essentially quite distinct. Glover also sees hallucinatory wish fulfillment, which Isaacs describes as the prototype of phantasy, as oriented primarily to reality:

> although the process fails to gratify the instinct it is regulated along reality lines. The hallucinatory regression is an attempt at gratification initiated by frustration but arrested at the imaginal

> level and so doomed to failure. It is a frustration product characterized by its extreme imaginal intensity, but the imaginal element is in no sense a phantasy. *There is as yet no question of using the term 'phantasy' for such psychic events.* Phantasy in the sense in which it is used by Freud is a much later, more complicated, and from the point of view of reality a more revolutionary development (p. 397; italics in original).

For Glover, phantasy can only take place after some degree of psychic maturation; awareness of the relation between subject, aim, and object is necessary, as is some awareness of the different degrees of frustration. In other words, one must have some modicum of awareness of reality before phantasy is possible; one must be able to relate to reality before a distortion in that relationship (as in phantasy) can take place:

> The divorce of early forms of thought from their original adaptation function can only be achieved through violent strains to the psychic apparatus, as is indeed obvious in the case of regression in the psychoses (p. 399).

He makes clear the implication of this view for the question of the early infant's *subjectivity*:

> I repeat, the basic function here is a reality function, i.e. reality in terms of instinct gratification and frustration within an undefined but no doubt short space of time, that is to say as soon as the larval state has passed, the baby has as good (that is to say, adequate and effective) a sense of reality for any given instinct as any of us in this room have for ours, in some respects probably a better (more wholehearted) reality sense (p. 397).

Glover clearly sees infancy as beginning with an initial period of "objective" apperception of reality which underlies the later development of phantasy, exactly the opposite of Isaacs and Klein's sequence. His objection to the primacy of phantasy is strenuous and categorical, and the sense of danger he feels in this idea is apparent in the following statement:

> I have always insisted on the necessity of postulating the primary reality function of the primitive ego. Indeed, without such

> a postulate, there is nothing to prevent us falling into a primitive variety of mysticism (p. 399).

The feeling of threat here is palpable; it is as if the "primary reality function" stands as a bulwark against the powerful undertow of "mysticism." One senses that Glover fears for the dissolution of his *own* epistemological grounding ("nothing to prevent *us* . . . "), as if the foundation for ideas about certainty and objectivity feel so fragile they might dissolve if Kleinian ideas about phantasy, with their assumption that all mental processes ultimately rest on a ground of phantasy, were accepted. There are echoes of this in Foulkes' warning of a "regression to pre-scientific thinking", quoted earlier, as well as Brierley's wanting to salvage the possibility of some aspect of the realm of adult thinking from the distorting grasp of phantasy.

Characterstically, in Isaacs' response to Glover the underlying philosophical issues (and anxieties) he broached in the passage quoted above ("primitive variety of mysticism") are simply not addressed. Instead, Isaacs's response to Glover takes up the fight within the context of Freud's views on the subject of phantasy and reality, arguing that her position is more compatible with Freud than is Glover's.

> Dr. Glover asserts that reality-testing and reality-adaptation are quite independent of phantasy and prior to the latter in time of development. . . But this is quite contrary to Freud's own views. There are many passages which show that Freud regarded the reality-principle as the secondary one, coming into operation because the infant finds phantasy unsatisfying (p. 465).

Isaacs then cites passages from 'Two Principles of Mental Functioning'(1911) and 'Negation' (1925) to support her point. One passage from the latter work seems particularly well-chosen to rebut Glover:

> The study of judgement affords us, perhaps for the first time, an insight into the *derivation of an intellectual function from the inter-play of the primary instinctual impulses*. Judging has been

> systematically developed out of what was in the first instance introduced into the ego or expulsion from the ego carried out according to the pleasure-principle [Freud, S. 1925:370; SE 19: 238]. (Quoted in King and Steiner, 1991; p. 467; italics added).

Isaacs concludes:

> *Thus, on Freud's own view, the mechanism of introjection, which arises out of and rests upon the Ucs phantasy of incorporation, underlies not only the retention of memory-traces, but also the function of reality-testing and judgement.* . . . On Freud's own teaching, therefore, if we are to understand either phantasy or reality-testing and 'intelligence', we must look at mental life as a whole and see the relation between these various functions during the whole process of development. To set them apart and say 'that is phantasy but this is perception and intelligence' is to miss the developmental significance of both (pp. 467-8; italics in original).

This sets the two perspectives in sharp contrast, and also demonstrates the extent to which both sides claim to ground their positions in Freud, an issue to be addressed more fully in the next two chapters. To reiterate a point made above, while the opponents of Isaacs and Klein are voicing, mostly indirectly, a kind of epistemological anxiety aroused by Kleinian ideas on phantasy, these seem completely ignored by Isaacs, who speaks from a position in which the differences are simply assumed to constitute different readings from Freud. The idea that there might be something deeply unsettling about the idea that judgement and reality-testing ultimately rest upon phantasies of oral incorporation seems not to have struck her. From the Kleinian point of view, it is natural to think of phantasy and reality, judgement and imagination, as intrinsically interpenetrating domains.

III. Phantasy and Early Object Relations

The third main aspect of phantasy in Isaacs' presentation concerns the idea that the content of phantasy *always* involves an object relationship, from

the very beginning. This is made clear in Isaacs' description of the hallucinated breast, which is simultaneously both the mechanism behind the earliest phantasies and the model of the infant's first object relations:

> What does the infant hallucinate? We may assume, first, the nipple, then the breast, and later, his mother, the whole person. . . hallucination does not stop at the mere picture, but carries him on to what he is, in detail, going to do with the desired object which he imagines (has unconscious phantasies) he has obtained. We know already that it is the oral impulse that is at work, and which conjures up the hallucinated nipple. And the intensity of such a wish and the hate of frustration, will stir up a still stronger desire, viz: to take the whole breast into himself and keep it there, as a source of satisfaction. Thus we must assume that the introjection of the breast is bound up with the earliest forms of the phantasy life. (p. 278).

Thus, hallucination of the breast, as the "earliest form of phantasy life," is both the first appearance of phantasy and the first object relation. It also leads to the first introjection, and therefore to the first internal object. In this way, subjective experience, phantasy, and external and internal object relations are inextricably bound up with one another and coterminous in their beginnings; there is no subjective existence without a phantasied object relation, and this is derived from both instinctual experience and actual relations with an external object.

Isaacs supports this view on two legs. First, she finds passages in Freud that she sees as consistent with her view. Interestingly, the first Freudian passage she cites is one that contains an idea about early development – the concept of *autoerotism* – that will be used against her by the Anna Freud group:

> In so far as it is auto-erotic, the ego has no need of the outside world, but . . . it cannot but for a time perceive instinctual stimuli as painful. Under the sway of the pleasure principle there now takes place a further development. The objects presenting themselves, in so far as they are sources of pleasure, are absorbed by the ego into itself, "introjected". . . while, on the other hand,

> the ego thrusts forth upon the external world whatever within itself gives rise to pain (v. infra: the mechanism of projection). [Freud, S. 1915a: 78, 80; SE 14: 135-6, 138-9]. (Quoted in King and Steiner, 1991; p. 278-9).

This is a passage from "Instincts and their Vicissitudes"(1915a) in which Freud is describing the development of the "purified pleasure ego". In Freud's description, as the ego begins to become aware of stimuli it experiences them as painful, and adapts with a new development, whereby pleasurable experiences and objects are absorbed into itself, or "introjected," and painful experiences and objects are expelled from itself, or "projected." Important for Isaacs' argument are both the implication that this process takes place extremely early in development, and that Freud seems to see introjection and projection as taking place *in phantasy*. In Isaacs' words:

> I am quite aware that Freud, in describing the primary introjection, nowhere calls it an unconscious phantasy. But, as I have already explained, it is to my mind impossible to see how the process of introjection can otherwise be conceived than as operating through phantasy. I therefore hold that we are entitled to claim Freud's concept of primary introjection as a support for our assumption of the activity of Ucs phantasy in the earliest phases of life (p. 279).

It is notable that Isaacs does not address any possible contradiction of this view posed by Freud's idea of an earlier, autoerotic phase ("insofar as it is autoerotic, the ego has no need of the outside world.") The possible contradiction will not be lost on others, however, as we will discuss below.

The second leg of support for early object-relatedness comes from behavioral observations Isaacs provides in a section of her paper entitled "Facts of General Development." There Isaacs lists a number of observations (many culled from reports by prominent developmental researchers during the 1930's and 40's), that she sees as indicating both the presence and quality of phantasied object relations in the first year. In particular, she describes an ini-

tial predominance of negative over positive expressional signs, evidence of a very early visual orientation toward objects, and manifestations of rapidly progressing perceptual and memory capacity during the first year, culminating in purposeful play and the rudimentary elements of language. From these observations she argues that the infant is oriented toward objects from the beginning, and has early cognitive capacities and emotional tendencies consistent with the kinds of phantasies described by Klein, particularly in relation to the unfolding of the depressive position in the middle of the first year.

Objections to these views of early object relations also rest on two legs – apparent contradiction with Freud's written views on an initial stage of autoerotism and a more general disagreement over the mental capacities of very young infants. Barbera Lantos, an adherent of Anna Freud, is the first to disagree with Isaacs over the issue of autoerotism, but seems implicitly to agree with her regarding early perceptual abilities and object orientation:

> We estimate the dynamic force of this pleasure so highly that we don't feel the need to look for other explanations. We believe that bodily functions . . and the functioning of the sensory apparatus . . . are *pleasurable in themselves*. So is mental development with its gradual acquisition of knowledge and understanding. This pleasure we call *auto-erotic*, referring to the sensory apparatus, organ pleasure, referring to bodily functions and intellectual pleasure – they are all the same in so far as they are pleasures in themselves, that is to say: *pleasures without meaning* (p. 349; italics added).

Somewhat later Lantos adds:

> The actions he performs show in our opinion – his growing intelligence. . . The fact that he is able to recognize persons, that he is aware of their coming and going and afraid of their loss, and that he reacts accordingly, is in our opinion bound up with the development of the sensory and mental apparatus without suggesting the existence of phantasies (p. 351-2).

We should note the way in which Lantos uses the concept of autoerotism; she is specifically referring here to an absence of conscious phantasies accompanying various forms of play. In Lantos' view, pleasurable behavior of infants in their first year is autoerotic to the extent that it is enjoyed for immediate sensory pleasure alone, and is not motivated or accompanied by an underlying object-related phantasy. On the other hand, Lantos describes the infant as being aware of and attached to objects and exercising its intelligence in relation to objects – thus autoerotism, in Lantos' usage, does *not* imply a lack of external object relations, i.e. is not equated with an objectless state. Therefore, one can see her objection as directed more toward the issue of early phantasies involving objects than to object relatedness in general.

In contrast to Lantos, Kate Friedlander, another adherent of Anna Freud, views the concept of autoerotism as referring specifically to an objectless state:

> . . . it is a basic principle in this analytical conception of the first year of life that the first object relationship to the mother has not been there from the beginning but is the result of a process of development going for months before the high achievement of object relationship of a still primitive kind of course is apparent at all (p. 407).

Friedlander emphasizes the immature "brain-anatomy and physiology" of the child in accounting for this prolonged period preceding even very rudimentary object relations.

Interestingly, one can easily see a kind of contradiction emerging in these supposed allied views, both of which invoke the concept of autoerotism in critical response to Isaacs' interpretation of infant observational data. Lantos explains the capacities described by Isaacs as manifestations of the autoerotic pleasure achieved by the exercise of expanding cognitive capacities in interactions with objects to which the infant has a significant relationship

(although one without internal phantasy components), while Friedlander sees the same observed capacities as instances of autoerotic pleasurable activities in an infant largely unrelated to objects due to very primitive cognitive development. Both object to Isaacs' view of early object relations on the grounds of autoerotism, but they differ in whether that term simply refers to pleasurable behavior in the absence of phantasy (Lantos), or a complete absence of object relations (Friedlander).

Anna Freud attempts to reconcile this contradiction in her comments, offering a position that unifies the opposition to Klein's view of early object relations. In reference to the child's earliest relation to the mother, Anna Freud states:

> the infant is at this time exclusively concerned with his own well-being. The mother is important, so far as she serves or disturbs this well-being. . . the infant's object relationship is still an indirect one: changes in the object reach him by way of difference in the satisfaction given. The person of the object remains interchangeable so long as the gratification remains the same (pp. 418-19).

The relationship with the object present at the beginning is *indirect*: the mother's actions are extremely important only insofar as they affect experiences of satisfaction and frustration. There is no object relationship "in the proper sense" despite the centrality of the external object in regulating pleasure and pain, because the object is not experienced as an object, but merely as an environmental condition. (This accords with Friedlander's view of autoerotism as devoid of object relations.) In addition, because during this early period the aim of the instinct "is of overwhelming importance," while the object "is only dimly taken into account," sensory experiences exist vividly without a corresponding imaginal component; feelings exist without object phantasies – this consistent with one aspect of Lantos' view of autoerotism,

which assumes some degree of perception and object awareness early in development.

However, this still leaves Lantos' insistence on the child's rapidly expanding intellectual and perceptual abilities, which raises an interesting problem. If the child is demonstrably acquiring knowledge and understanding of the *external* world during the first year, why would we not also assume a parallel level of sophistication in the *internal* world? Why doesn't the child's observable interest in objects from an early age indicate 'object-relatedness' in some form? And, how does this observable interest in objects square with Anna Freud's insistence that, for instincts, "the object is only dimly taken into account"?

Anna Freud deals with these issues by drawing a line in the ego, as it were. In essence, she divides the ego's synthetic function in half; part of it functions to synthesize and organize perceptions of the external world, while the other part correlates and orders the instinctual experiences of the internal world. Further, she sees an important differential in the time of onset of each half of the ego's synthesizing activity:

> I consider, in agreement with Mrs. Isaacs, that correlation or synthesis of perception and reality-testing is achieved in degrees from birth onwards. . . [however,] this synthetic function is not exercised on instinctual urges during the first year and, in fact, not until considerably later. Even though correlation of perception grows continually, wishes and impulses continue to be governed by the primary process with its characteristic lack of unification (pp. 421-22).

In effect, while perceptions and experiences of the external world are becoming integrated, providing for the kinds of learning observed by developmental researchers, the internal, instinctual realm remains unorganized and diffuse. Because of this, "true object relations," in which a libidinal cathexis is invested in an internal object, cannot yet take place. Instead, we see

mere reaction tendencies in response to changed environmental conditions; i.e., perceptual maturation and some forms of rudimentary learning take place, but as yet there are no object relations or representations, and certainly no object phantasies.

Isaacs offers replies to each of these points. To Lantos' view of early, autoerotic pleasure as "without phantasy," Isaacs states categorically that "autoerotism cannot be understood without reference to internal objects"(p. 460). While she does not spell out why this is so (leaving it for Paula Heimann to take up in her paper on introjection and projection), Isaacs does raise the point which Anna Freud had hoped to adequately address beforehand; namely, that

> It does not seem reasonable to me to emphasize auto-erotism so strongly whilst at the same time drawing attention, as Dr. Lantos does, to the development of perception and intelligence. Perceptions cannot be developed apart from object relationships, and libidinal and intellectual development are intimately related (460-61).

In reply to Friedlander's view of autoerotism as "object-less," Isaacs responds by quoting directly from Freud:

> In the first instance the oral component instinct finds satisfaction anaclitically – on the basis of the satisfaction of the desire for nourishment; and its object is the mother's breast. It then detaches itself, becomes independent and at the same time autoerotic, that is, it finds an object in the child's own body [Freud, W. 1923a: 42, 101; SE 18:245] (Quoted in King and Steiner, p. 461).

Isaacs goes on to acknowledge that without reading this and similar passages one could be led to conclude that Freud assumed "a period of unbroken autoerotism from birth onwards" (p. 461), but that this did not represent the entirety of Freud's thought, as demonstrated by the above passage. Indeed,

> Freud himself nowhere insisted a time period to the duration of unadulterated 'primary narcissism'. He does not say that it per-

> sists unchanged or practically unchanged for several months from birth onwards. For him it is, like 'primary process', a limiting concept. . . there is no evidence that it occupies the *whole field* of mental life in the infant beyond the first few hours, or that Freud held that it did. As soon as there is a response to the smell and contact with the breast, as soon as sucking is established, there is some degree . . . of object relationship (p. 462; italics in original).

Because of the many studies (some of which Isaacs had reviewed in her initial paper) indicating early sensory recognition and response to the mother by the infant, Isaacs "cannot agree that the infant's relation to the breast or to his mother is 'indirect', as Miss Freud puts it. It is direct enough, but in terms different from those of later perception" (p. 462).

It is clear by now that the term 'object relationship' has significantly different meanings for the respective groups. For the Anna Freud group, it implies a more or less stable libidinal cathexis of an internal representation of an external object, which requires both the perceptual development necessary to begin to relate to external objects and the emotional and cognitive maturation needed to both recognize and care about the object as an independent agent, distinct from 'environmental conditions' and the degree of satisfaction of one's own immediate wishes and needs. As Anna Freud begins to make clear, the latter condition requires a longer period of time to achieve than the former, and rests upon the establishment of sufficient internal organization to maintain stable, differentiated representations of objects.

In contrast, Isaacs and the Kleinians see no time delay between awareness of the external object and 'object relationship'. While the form of object relationship evolves over time (indeed, the form and trajectory of this evolution is arguably Klein's primary theoretical and clinical interest), it is present in some form from the beginning:

> The first object is not the mother, but the nipple-breast. Presently the infant perceives and desires her face, her hands and arms. . . The fact that the infant's early libidinal and perceptual relationships are with part-objects – nipple, breast, face, hands, etc., together with the intensity and depth of his feelings, means that his world is a very different one from our own . . . But it is nonetheless a world of object relationships – *alongside autoerotic satisfactions* (p. 463; italics in original).

Where this differs most essentially from Anna Freud's view is in the assumption of meaning given to object experiences by the very young infant. For Anna Freud, whatever the level of perceptual capacities, there is neither emotional interest in nor cognitive capacity for imbuing meaning in objects; pleasures with external objects are autoerotic, both in the sense of being without an internal phantasy corollary as well as being without real interest in or awareness of the *source* of the pleasure in and of itself. In short, the Anna Freudian baby is not yet subjective; it responds to the objective sensation without elaboration or additional interest – it is a pure stimulus-response creature. For the Kleinians, while the extreme immaturity of perception is acknowledged and emphasized (at first only part-objects can be registered), subjectivity is present from birth because an inner creation of meaning from the interaction of drive and sensation takes place from the beginning – it is *never* simply a stimulus-response machine, but is always a subjective being, and this is *due to the always present distortion or elaboration of experiences of the object by both instinct and cognitive immaturity*. To set these views in stark relief: the Anna Freudian baby, because it is cognitively and preceptually immature, is *not yet* a subjective creature in the world of objects, and it only becomes so secondary to objective perception of objects. Conversely, the Kleinian baby, because it is cognitively and perceptually immature, is *always* a subjective creature in the world of objects, with the degree of objectivity secondary to subjective, instinctual experience. In a word, for the Anna

Freudians, objectivity is given, while for the Kleinians, subjectivity is given. Because both agree that objectivity is not present from birth, disagreement centers on when subjective, individual experience begins, and this disagreement is tied up with differing views of object relationship.

IV. Phantasy and Psychic Structure

As shown above, the arguments posed by both sides of these debates suggest that differences over the view of early object relationship can, in part, be boiled down to differences over the nature and functioning of the ego in the first year of life. Anna Freud suggests that the ego synthesizes and organizes external reality preferentially, and that the internal world lags behind, remaining diffuse and disorganized throughout the first year, thereby precluding the building up of the object representations required for the infant to relate to an object *qua* object. The ego is viewed as a part of the mind vested with the functions of organizing and synthesizing that which was diffuse and unorganized (the id). Ego and id therefore stand apart, with id (primary process, instincts, pleasure principle) presiding over the internal domain in the first year, and the ego only gradually approaching it to grant it organization. The functional and temporal distinctions between external and internal objects, discussed above, reflect the distinction between ego and id when viewed in this light. It is as if Anna Freud sees the ego and id as antithetical and independent; the id lords over the internal domain, maintaining structureless chaos, while the ego develops in response to the outside world, only bringing itself to the underworld when it has gained sufficient strength and experience from its work above-ground. Until the ego can harness the id, and rationality rule over irrationality, 'true object relationship' is impossible. Again, this seems to rest on the notion that object relationship has its beginnings in an

objectively perceived experiential world with instinctual elements gradually introduced, but in a way that does not compromise reality testing.

This absolute, polar distinction between properties of the id and ego is upheld by Anna Freud in a variety of related contexts. In her first contribution to the Discussions she objects to Isaacs' statement that primary process underlies all rational thinking on the grounds that this implies a blending of primary and secondary process functioning. Anna Freud's objection places a particular emphasis on the integration of impulses, conflict, and ambivalence implied in many Kleinian formulations of unconscious phantasy:

> There is, in Mrs. Isaacs' description of the unconscious, no free and independent flow of instinctual urges. . . Impulses enter into *conflict* with each other: the baby cannot feel rage against its mother without feeling its love for her threatened and, consequently, either heightened or diminished. Its *ambivalent* feelings cannot exist side by side but have to be projected outward in part. . . Unconscious life, according to this paper, thus combines qualities of the primary with important characteristics of the secondary process (p. 330).

Anna Freud concludes:

> the new theory, due to the assumption of earlier integration, finds no room for the primary process of functioning in the first year of life. This would cut out the identity of functioning at this stage with functioning in dreams and leave us at a loss where to look for the kind of uncorrelated mental life to which dream-function regresses; or the whole theoretical conception of the primary process is altered so as to include integration with its consequences. This again leaves dream life unaccounted for (p. 331).

Essentially, Anna Freud seems to be saying here the absolute dichotomy she insists upon is required by the psychoanalytic concept of dreams, because the theory assumes that regression in the temporal and formal senses always occur together (cf. Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973; p. 387). Thus, the formal regression to primary process in dreaming implies a temporal regression

to an earlier period to which the dominance of this form of thinking corresponds. This might seem to contradict the position, stated by Glover, that the infant is primarily oriented toward reality and adaptation, were it not for the amended view put forward later by Anna Freud (and discussed above) that the ego is preferentially oriented toward the outer world, leaving inner reality in a state of primary process unintegration during the first year. Taken together, these views present a picture of the mind as cleanly segregated: primary and secondary process, ego and id, impulse and integration are cleaved from the beginning.

Glover elaborates this view further with his objection that "Mrs. Isaacs does nothing to distinguish a cathected memory from a phantasy," and, in fact, that "Mrs. Isaacs' metapsychology implies that thought and phantasy are primarily indistinguishable" (p. 398). Again, the distinction falls along the fault-line established by Anna Freud – memory traces are formed by the "primary reality function of the primitive ego," whereas phantasy, in the form referred to by Klein, would require some sort of admixture of primary process and secondary process, and Glover insists that the capacity for this sort of revolution in mental functioning is a relatively advanced acquisition of the mind. Glover and Anna Freud both insist, in different contexts, on the absolute bifurcation of conscious and unconscious, primary and secondary process, and, implicitly, id and ego in the first year of life[9].

For the Kleinians, the relationship between the ego and the id is obviously seen quite differently. Isaacs states:

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[9]It is important to note how frequently Anna Freud and Glover both invoke concepts from the topographical model in this discussion, leaving the relation of ego to id largely implied. This would seem to give credence to Isaacs' observation that, despite Freud's important (post-1920) revisions, Glover's concepts are largely drawn from Freud's pre-1915 writings, as have been those of the "Vienna group" (cf. p. 454).

> Freud himself has repeatedly shown that in his view *the ego is a differentiated part of the id.* He did not put it in those words when he first formulated his views about memory-traces in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* but he has done so since in several of his writings (p. 463).

Isaacs offers the following quotation from Freud:

> Originally, of course, everything was id; the ego was developed out of the id by the continual influence of the external world. In the course of this slow development certain material in the id was transformed into the preconscious state and was thus taken into the ego [Freud, S. 1940: 43; WE 23: 163] (Quoted in King and Steiner, p. 463).

Isaacs concludes:

> The ego is not to be thought of as a mere system of marks; a wraith or a shadow of experience. It is a living part of the id which has become modified by experience of the external world, in its search for satisfactions from objects in the external world (p. 463).

Thus, rather than viewing the ego and id as mutually exclusive, Isaacs sees them as integrally related. The ego develops out of the intersection of id and outside world, and remains tied to both. Learning about external objects is not viewed as distinct from the properties of the id, as assumed by Anna Freud; on the contrary, learning and relating to the world are positively infused by the instincts of the id, beginning with the oral incorporation of aspects of reality very early in development:

> All learning is oral learning, at first. All through the middle of the first year, the infant's hand reaches out to everything he sees in order to put it into his mouth, to feel and explore it. . . This means that the objects which the child touches and manipulates and looks at and explores are invested with oral libido. He could not be interested in them if this were not so. If he were entirely autoerotic he could not learn (pp. 463-64).

Again, for Isaacs the categories drawn by Anna Freud are simply wrong. In her view, one cannot sharply divide ego from id, primary from secondary

process, internal from external world, or phantasy from learning; to do so is both artificial and contrary to Freud's own written views. But for Anna Freud, Glover, and their adherents, ignoring these distinctions blurs "Freud's orderly series of concepts." Indeed, looked at from the standpoint of differing views of the ego and its relation to the id, many of the areas of dispute fall into place. If one assumes both that the ego is clearly distinguished from the id (this is implied in nearly every one of Anna Freud's discussions of the concept of phantasy), and that the ego, with its functions of reality testing, secondary process, and synthesis, is the sole agency to deal with reality, then Glover's insistence on the primarily reality-adaptation function of the psyche necessarily follows. Similarly, the view that phantasy does *not* originally underlie activities or relationships in the external world follows from the notion that the ego initially stands apart from the id (and thus, from wish-fulfilling phantasies), and only begins to relate to it through a belated and gradual domination of the internal domain. In this view, phantasy and object relationship are both developmental accomplishments that signal the ego's appropriation and integration of aspects of the id; in the former case, this is through a regressive response to frustration that is only possible after some degree of integration between ego and id has been attained, in the latter it is a developmental achievement, an integration of instinctual drive with a representation of the ego.

On the other hand, if one agrees with Freud's statement, quoted above by Isaacs, that the "ego was developed out of the id," it might follow that the various qualities that characterize the ego (secondary process, learning, perception, memory, etc.) similarly evolved out of those that characterize the id (primary process, wish-fulfillment). At the very least, Freud's statement implies no clean demarcation of these processes, and therefore seems inconsis-

tent with the kinds of objections raised by Glover and Anna Freud, e.g. that Kleinian conceptualizations violate the "primary reality function of the primitive ego" or find "no room for the primary process of functioning in the first year of life."

It should be noted in this connection that one of the most frequent objections raised by Glover and others concerns the selective quotation of Freud by Isaacs. In Glover's words:

> I maintain that Mrs. Isaacs' method of quotation from Freud and other writers does not conform to scientific requirements, in particular that the quotations are given without the necessary context which in many cases would show that they do not support Mrs. Isaacs' contentions (p. 325).

These objections are raised at several different points, but not specifically against the above quotations on the relation of ego to id, which are offered in the last session devoted to discussion of phantasy, therefore leaving no time for rejoinder. Nevertheless, the general objection should be considered, along with the stance taken by each side with respect to the issue of properly interpreting Freudian theory. It is quite clear that, throughout the discussions, the Kleinians quote from Freud's actual text much more frequently than the Anna Freud/Glover group, while the latter is given much more to condensed, authoritative summaries of what they take as the essence of Freudian thought. Both sides accuse the other of misrepresenting Freud. Glover states:

> I don't agree with these contributors who suggest that Freud's basic concepts were mere tentative formulations which he would himself have played about with or modified freely at some later date. The outstanding fact about the theoretical chapter in his *Interpretation of Dreams* and about the formulations contained in his paper 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' is that they have stood the test of time. They are in fact basic (p. 396).

Isaacs replies:

> In actual fact, Freud greatly expanded and revised his metapsychology in successive contributions – although he did not always re-write every part of his earlier work in the new light of his later discoveries and later developments of theory. In Dr. Glover's account of Freud's views he refers only to *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) and 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' (1915). But many other parts of Freud's works have to be considered if we wish to gain an adequate idea of his whole metapsychology (p. 454).

In a way, these different views of Freud's text can be seen to mirror perspective taken on psychic structure, discussed above. In Glover's view, the *facts* are preestablished and 'basic' from the beginning, and are therefore not subject to interpretation or modification. Just as the ego is in touch with reality from the beginning, and hence 'realistic' perception could always be envisioned as a return to this pristine early condition, so is psychoanalytic theory clearest in its beginnings, 'basic', and the true meaning of later developments is always to be grasped through returning to those founding concepts.

For Isaacs, on the other hand, theory is viewed as organic and growing rather than factual and basic; to get the full meaning of Freud one needs to follow the interpenetration of ideas and the conceptual launching points leading in various directions, just as the psyche is envisioned as always made up of intepenetrating domains and processes, with no topographical area or period of time segmented off from the rest as enjoying priveledged access to truth. Hence, no part of the mind, or theory, is necessarily conceived of as more 'basic', but can only be grasped within the context of a much larger and more complicated whole.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate the particular way underlying attitudes about the possibility of objectivity permeated the

theoretical discussions of phantasy in the Controverial Discussions. Areas of theoretical disagreement were divided into four areas – mode of theoretical discourse about mental events, instinct and the psychic apparatus, early object relations, and views of psychic structure – and in each area I tried to show how the groups divided over assumptions about whether humans are originally, fundamentally, and enduringly in contact with objective reality, or instead whether experience is subjective and mutually constructed from internal and external sources from the beginning, with an approach to consensual reality only possible through optimal developmental experiences. These were the foundational Anna Freudian/Ego psychological and Kleinian positions of the 1940's, as viewed in relief through the lens of the Controversial Discussions. As I briefly discussed above (and will explore more exhaustively in the next two chapters), the participants' attitudes toward Freudian theory itself were similarly refracted through these particular perspectives.

Having shown this, a number of significant questions emerge. First, to what extent was this division in views a function of the political, social, and identity tensions faced by the various participants of these discussions due to their respective situations in the context of the global warfare, displacement from countries of origin, economic concerns, loss of father and father figure in Freud, etc. (See Chapter 1 for a fuller summary of these issues). In effect, to what extent were these modes of thought expressing more fundamental anxieties originating from individual and group sources? For example, one could argue that the anxiety felt by Anna Freud due to immigration and loss of father, status, homeland led to a kind of rigidification and need for a more *objective* grounding, just as the threat felt by Glover for his previously near-guaranteed inheritance of leadership of the British Psychoanalytic Society due to the ascendence of Klein led him to also want to cling to the 'preestablished'

facts that used to be 'basic' – here possibly referring to his own preestablished fact of succession, as well as issues of theory.

These speculations and others deserve some careful consideration, and I will return to them in Chapter 6. However, there is a second question that should probably take priority, as it concerns more directly the theoretical issues we have been examining thus far and predates the political and personal issues enumerated above. That is, does the fact of these divisions around this particular fault-line reflect something of the ultimate origin in the ideas themselves – are these controversies manifesting something underlying in Freudian theory itself? Was Freud split over the question of subjectivity? Does his theory, following some inherent internal division, naturally lead to two contradictory positions regarding the relationship between subjective, individual, constructed experience and objective, veridical perception of reality? If so, this would account for both the mundane observation that the participants of the controversies differed substantially in their reading of Freud, as well perhaps address the more subtle and difficult question of the reason for the sharply polarized stances assumed with respect to reality by the participants of these debates.

Chapter 4: The Beginnings of the Concept of Phantasy in Freud's Pre-Psychoanalytic Period (1893-1899)

I. The Place of the Imaginary in Studies on Hysteria

The prehistory of psychoanalysis (approximately 1893-1900) has often been equated with a single theme: Freud's 'abandonment' of the seduction theory, and replacement of it with an emphasis on phantasy and 'psychic reality' (e.g. Masson, 1984). Based on Freud's letters to Fliess, 1897 has been considered the crucial turning point for these changes and the beginning of Freud's theorizing about phantasy. However, as several authors have demonstrated (e.g. Schimek, 1975, 1987; Laplanche and Pontalis, 1968), the typical narrative of this period, characterizing it as a clean break between two discrete points of view, significantly oversimplifies the complicated interplay of ideas revealed by a close reading of the relevant texts.

As Laplanche and Pontalis (1968) point out, if one places at the beginning of psychoanalysis Breuer's account of his treatment of Anna O (Breuer and Freud, 1895), the dialectic between traumatic memory and wishful phantasy begins with a decided emphasis on the latter element. This is apparent in Breuer's initial understanding of the source of Anna O's hysterical symptoms (contractures, disturbances of vision, inability to drink water or eat bread, hallucinations, loss of capacity to speak her native tongue, states of confusion):

> She embellished her life in a manner which probably influenced her decisively in the direction of her illness, by indulging in *systematic day-dreaming*, which she described as her 'private theatre' (p. 22; italics added).

For Breuer, his patient's daydreams offer the key to both pathogenesis and cure. He writes of his first technical innovation:

> I used to visit her in the evening, when I knew I should find her in her hypnosis, and I then relieved her of the whole stock of *imaginative products* which she had accumulated since my last visit. It was essential that this should be effected completely if good results were to follow (p. 30; italics added).

What Breuer came to understand through this procedure was that his patient's "*absences*" – her periodic confused, hallucinatory, aggressive states – constituted a breaking through into consciousness of a second psychical grouping, a dissociated portion of the mind (referred to as a "*condition seconde*"). The "imaginative products" comprising the second grouping ranged from "freely-created poetical compositions" conveyed in narrative form, to "frightful and terrifying hallucinations". It seems clear from Breuer's account that he saw these as different forms (verbal v. visual) of the same "ideational complexes." Thus, in his initial gropings, Breuer's clearly emphasizes the realm of phantasy as both cause ("systematic daydreaming") and underlying content of Anna O's confused mental states.

With a second technical innovation, Breuer seems *initially* to move from the realm of imagination to that of memory. His new technique arose out of an accidental discovery that when his patient remembered, with full affect, the initial event preceding the onset of physical symptoms they would vanish completely. With some symptoms the process leading to removal was "exhaustive" because of the requirement that each intervening memory related to the symptom be recalled in reverse sequence before arriving at the original event. For example, Anna O's symptom of not hearing when spoken to was ultimately traced to 303 separate instances, which Breuer meticulously breaks down into seven different categories. Of the importance of capturing the correct sequence of these memories, Breuer writes:

> But in the patient's memory they were so clearly differentiated, that if she happened to make a mistake in their sequence she

> would be obliged to correct herself and put them in the right order; if this were not done her report came to a standstill (p. 37).

Thus, remembering events that actually occurred became a crucial component of technique, and out of this seemed to grow Breuer's original notion of conversion symptoms as "mnemic symbols".

However, when Breuer describes the *original* event that precipitated the "incubation and pathogenesis of this case of hysteria" (p. 38), it becomes clear that, even in the context of pathogenic memories, imagination alone remains the primary catalyst. I will quote selective from this account:

> [During a period in which Anna shared the responsibility for nursing her ill father] She once woke up during the night in great anxiety about the patient, who was in a high fever . . . She fell into a *waking dream* and saw a black snake coming towards the sick man from the wall to bite him. . . She tried to keep the snake off, but it was as though she was paralyzed. . . Next day. . . a bent branch revived her *hallucination* of the snake, and subsequently her right arm became rigidly extended. Thenceforward the same thing invariably occurred whenever the hallucination was recalled by some object with a more-or-less snake-like appearance. This hallucination, however, as well as the contracture only appeared during the short *absences* which became more and more frequent from that night onwards (pp. 38-39; first two italics added).

What is particularly notable about this account is that *the precipitating event of this first psychoanalytic case is found in the workings of the imagination*, with no correspondence with any immediate event in external reality.[10] This fact is important to note given Freud's emphasis on the recovery of scenes of actual (v. fantasized) traumatic events in the first several cases he describes in *Studies on Hysteria*. These include such experiences as having dead animals thrown at oneself as a child, being emotionally persecuted by

[10]However, Breuer does offer that "It is most likely that there were in fact snakes in the field behind the house and that these had previously given the girl a fright; they would thus have provided the material for her hallucination" (p. 38). In this case, the phantasy of the snake uses as part of its material previous experiences in outer reality, in much the same way as Freud later describes the use made of "day residue" in dream formation.

relatives, and suddenly losing a husband (Emmy Von N.); being shouted at by an employer (Miss Lucy R.); and being sexually molested by an adult relative (Katherina).

In his accounts of these cases, Freud seems to take great pains to recover the original "scenes" behind the symptoms that took place in reality, as well as to insist in each case that there appeared to be *no innate predisposition* for the acquisition of hysteria. This latter point may indicate something about Freud's insistence on finding "true scenes". In their Preliminary Communication, Breuer and Freud (1893) agree that "hysterics suffer from reminiscences" and that these reminiscences, or "mnemic residues" lead to symptoms when the ideas contained in them are both charged with intense affect and are dissociated into a second psychical grouping, and thereby blocked from forming associations with other ideas. As a result, the emotions connected with the ideas are prevented from "normal wearing-away" through "abreaction and reproduction in states of uninhibited association" (p. 11). In their view, this state of affairs occurs either when the traumatic intensity of the emotional reaction excludes abreaction, or when the person voluntarily suppresses one (these are referred to as traumatic and retention hysterias, respectively). Alternately, the dissociation of a psychical grouping can take place if the events occur when the person is already in an altered ("hypnoid") state, which can occur either as a result of intense emotions (e.g. anxiety), or for "dispositional" reasons. This latter condition is referred to as "dispositional hysteria." (In Neuropsychosis of Defense (1894a) Freud introduces a further classification, "defense hysteria," which he also discusses at length in his psychotherapy chapter of Studies on Hysteria. This important amendment will be discussed in some detail later in this section.)

It is important in the present discussion to recognize that, while "Preliminary Communication" was written jointly, it represents an uneasy pasting together of contrary opinions on the subject, which become clarified when the authors' individual theoretical chapters are examined separately. In his theoretical chapter, Breuer states:

> Freud has found in the deliberate amnesia of defence a second source, independent of hypnoid states, for the construction of ideational complexes which are excluded from associative contact. But, accepting this qualification, I am still of opinion that hypnoid states are the cause and necessary condition of many, indeed most, major and complex hysterias (p. 216).

In Freud's theoretical chapter he states:

> I regard this distinction as so important that, on the strength of it, I willingly adhere to this hypothesis of there being a hypnoid hysteria. Strangely enough, I have never in my own experience met with a genuine hypnoid hysteria (p. 286).

At this point a line begins to be drawn between these two men.[11] One senses with Freud that the symptoms must have *meaning;* to explain them as resulting from coincidental occurrences during a momentary "hypnoid state", or, worse yet, that such a corresponding state might arise merely for "dispositional reasons" seems to grate on his entire sensibility in the matter. For Freud, the most significant discovery during the period of *Studies on Hysteria* was that of the psychological mechanisms underlying symptoms – this placed the central action in the realm of thoughts and ideas, which, in Freud's day, would have been understood as mere epiphenomena of more substantial causes in the domain of the physical or biological (Neu, 1973). In Freud's words, "We were usually content with the statement that the patient was constitutionally a hysteric, liable to develop hysterical symptoms under the

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[11]In a letter to Fliess dated July 12, 1892, Freud wrote: "My hysteria has, in Breuer's hands, become transformed, broadened, restricted, and in the process has partially evaporated" (Masson, 1985; p. 32).

pressure of intense excitations *of whatever kind*" (Breuer and Freud, 1895; p. 144). In searching for a way of explaining the significance of psychological meanings, Freud clearly felt the need to set himself apart from those prominent members of the medical establishment who held biologically reductionistic positions, in particular Janet, with his notion of an "inborn weakness leading to an incapacity for psychical synthesis" (quoted in Freud, 1894a; p. 68.). Clearly, Breuer did not espouse a purely innate basis for hypnoid states,[12] a fact that Freud (1894a) recognized and emphasized in the "Neuropsychosis of Defense".

However, the theory of hypnoid states lacked a substantial alternative theory of causality; Freud's need to locate the *actual scenes* suggests a need to find something as real and valid as the biological mechanisms of heredity to anchor his insistence on the meaningfulness of hysterical symptoms. A passage from a famous letter from Freud to Fliess is suggestive in this regard:

> It seems once again arguable that only later experiences give the impetus to *fantasies*, which [then] hark back to childhood, and *with this the factor of a hereditary disposition regains a sphere of influence from which I had made it my task to dislodge it* – in the interest of illuminating neurosis (Masson, 1985; p. 265; italics added).

The above was written two years after the publication of *Studies on Hysteria*, at the moment Freud felt compelled to discard his seduction theory. Despite the different context, however, it is important to note Freud's association between something being a 'mere phantasy' and the ascendance of hereditary disposition, as well as his self-described goal of "dislodging" hered-

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[12]In fact, in his discussion of Anna O. Breuer attributed her tendency toward hypnoid states to a "monotonous family life", in conjunction with an acquired habit for daydreaming, upon which the affects of "anxiety and dread" resulting from her father's illness transformed her daydreaming into states of *absence* (Breuer and Freud, 1985; p. 42).

itary as an explanatory concept; one almost senses a kind of messianic zeal in this matter.

As discussed above, Breuer's emphasis on the causal role of fantasies rests on their occurrence during hypnoid states, which he saw as sometimes resulting from psychological events, at other times from innate disposition. However, as Laplanche and Pontalis (1968) point out, there is an apparent circularity in reasoning behind Breuer's formulation of the psychologically induced hypnoid states:

> fantasy becomes trauma when it arises from a special hypnoid state but, equally, the panic states it induces help to create this fundamental state by a process of autohypnosis (p. 1).

The insubstantiality of this formulation was surely not lost on Freud as he searched for firm ground to anchor the psychological meanings behind symptoms against the powerful ideological current in favor of hereditary explanations. As Ernest Jones said of Freud, "For him a question of meaning usually became at once the question of origin" (quoted in Benassy and Diatkine, 1964). At least initially, fantasy must have seemed an inadequate origin indeed.

II. The Predominance of the Imaginary in Freud Prior to the 'Seduction Theory'

It is my view that the story of 'the Seduction Theory and its Abandonment' has oversimplified the place of fantasy in Freud's thinking during this early period. While Freud clearly had an initial reaction against the etiological importance attached by Breuer to Anna O's 'daydreams' and 'imaginative activity,' reflected in the importance he gave the recollection of *actual scenes* in the early cases he presents in *Studies on Hysteria*, we also see him beginning to place greater clinical significance on the 'wishful ideas' that

generate psychological conflict and determine particular aspects of hysterical symptoms. This is first evident in the case of Lucy R. Whereas the symptoms of his earlier patient, Frau Emmy von N., were due entirely to the trauma caused by upsetting experiences passively endured (e.g. being pelted by dead animals, persecuted by in-laws), in the case of Lucy R. one part of pathogenesis was due to the presence of a wishful idea defensively split-off from the "dominant mass of ideas constituting the ego", the other part to actual events, now passively endured (behaviorally) but traumatic due to an interactive effect with an active but unconscious wish.

Lucy R. was a 30-year-old governess who came to Freud after losing her sense of smell, which had been replaced by a powerful, disturbing olfactory hallucination of burnt pudding. She also complained of depression and fatigue. Freud's initial assumption is as follows:

> It was essential . . . that the *subjective* sensations of smell should have had a specialized origin of a sort which would admit of their being derived from some quite particular *real* object (p. 107; italics added).

Note immediately Freud's opposition between subjective and real; the assumption here is that the patient's irrational subjectivity will become sensible only when its derivation from the *real* is elucidated. Freud proceeds along the lines established by Breuer – eliciting memories of the earliest experiences of the symptom in order to determine the nature of the trauma responsible for repudiating the pathogenic idea. He quickly succeeds in eliciting an important scene, in which her charges express great affection for her simultaneous with her detecting that she had burnt the pudding. Freud determines the traumatic element; Lucy had given notice that she would leave her employment due to slights at the hands of other servants, but now felt conflicted due to her fondness for the children. Freud concludes:

> This seemed to complete the analysis of the patient's subjective sense of smell. It had turned out in fact to have been an *objective* sensation originally, and one which was intimately associated with an experience – a little scene – in which opposing affects had been in conflict with each other (p. 115; italics added).

While he has unearthed the *real object* determining the symptom, Freud remained unsatisfied. Why did she become hysterical rather than deal with these emotional conflicts in some other way? Freud continues:

> Now I already knew from the analysis of similar cases that before hysteria can be acquired for the first time one essential condition must be fulfilled: an idea must be *intentionally repressed from consciousness* and excluded from associative modification (p. 116; italics in original).

It is interesting, and somewhat surprising, to note that this is the first point in the book where Freud explicitly introduces the idea that conflict between an idea and the ego and subsequent repression are an *essential* cause of hysteria[13] – the concept of repression had been mentioned in Chapter 1 as merely one of a number of mechanisms that might play a role in a *traumatic* hysteria. It is also interesting that Freud now makes no mention of "hypnoid states": defence is presented as the sole cause of hysteria.[14] Freud seems to be bringing in a change in perspective under cover of something 'known all along,' as it were. This is a complicated change, as it seems to jettison, for the moment, Breuer's hypnoid states along with the notion that hysteria has its origin in *objective* trauma. As Freud goes on to describe, the particular pathogenic idea entertained by Lucy is something approximating a 'wishful

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[13]However, he had presented this view in a previous publication entitled "The Neuropsychosis of Defence" (1894a).

[14]Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) have pointed out that after 1895 the phrase "defence hysteria" is never again referred to; after making the argument that all cases of hysteria ultimately derive from defence (Breuer and Freud, 1895; p. 285), the term itself seems to become redundant for Freud.

fantasy'. He interprets to her the fact that she is really in love with her employer, and that she has a secret hope of taking the (now deceased) wife's place with him and his children.

To this interpretation, Lucy responds laconically "yes, I think that's true," but is not relieved of her symptoms. Two other 'scenes' need to be recovered first, each of which were actual events involving the employer, one in which he remonstrated against a family friend for kissing the children, the other in which he blamed Lucy for allowing a visiting 'lady' to kiss the children. After both of these were recovered and explored, Freud reports the patient's symptoms disappeared.

Freud then offers the following formulation:

> In cases of this kind. . . the main emphasis falls upon the nature of the trauma, though taken in conjunction, of course, with the subject's reaction to it. It turns out to be a *sine qua non* for the acquisition of hysteria that an incompatibility should develop between the ego and some idea presented to it. . . The actual traumatic moment, then, is the one at which the incompatibility forces itself upon the ego and at which the latter decides on the repudiation of the incompatible idea (pp. 122-3).

While the account of this case began with a search for *objective* determinants of symptoms, it ends with the notion that the trauma itself is not an objective matter, but is predetermined by an already split-off incompatible idea; a trauma occurs when some event "forces the incompatibility on the ego." In the case of Lucy, "the traumatic moment was the moment of her employer's outburst against her about his children being kissed by the lady"(p. 123). This led her to pathologically defend against an idea previously entertained, of taking her place as her employer's wife, because it indicated that her wish was unrealistic, and therefore too painful to bear. Freud also describes "auxiliary moments" in which external events elicit a convergence of the two psychical groups. In his view, it is from the original traumatic moment that

the initial splitting takes place, and from the auxiliary moment that symptoms form, making use of objective features of the situation for material (e.g. smell of burnt pudding and cigar smoke). In effect, Freud seems to be saying that the "real objects" that become represented in symptoms are now secondary to the original conflictual ideas and wishes.

Thus, we now see Freud moving toward a position that makes the wishful idea primary, and the *objective* fact secondary in the pathogenesis of hysteria. In the case of Elizabeth Von R., the final case discussed by Freud in *Studies on Hysteria*, he has clearly shifted his focus almost exclusively to the subjective, emotional and imaginary life of his patient. Freud begins his treatment of Elizabeth, who suffers from leg pains and fatigue in the following way:

> I therefore decided to put a direct question to the patient in an enlarged state of consciousness and to ask her what *psychical impression* it had been to which the first emergence of pains in her legs had been attached (p. 145; italics added).

The choice of words here – *psychical impressions* rather than *mnemic residues*– seems telling; Freud's concern here is with the subjective realm, not the memories of "real" objects to which symptoms relate. He notes his patient's lack of concern about her symptoms and conjectures her attention must be dwelling on "thoughts and feelings" that lay concealed behind the pain, and it is these to which he devotes most of the paper. As a result (and, as Freud himself notes apologetically), this particular case reads like the "work of imaginative writers" and seems to lack the "serious stamp of science" (p. 160). Freud may have felt some misgivings about this. In my view the quality of the case reflects his momentary lack of concern about maintaining his objective anchor for the psychic processes of hysteria. Following the initial formulation of 'defence hysteria' adumbrated in "Neuropsychosis of Defence"

and illustrated in the case of Lucy R., Freud describes the case of Elizabeth purely in terms of the conflict between her erotic ideas and moral convictions. Briefly summarized, Elizabeth's conflicts began when she withdrew from a romantic interest to care for her ill father, then multiplied when she fell in love with her sister's husband (a fact she could now acknowledge until the end of treatment) shortly before her sister fell ill and died. Over the course of treatment, many different memories and associations to 'walking', 'standing', 'sitting', etc. are recalled, the meanings of which seemed to coalesce around either feelings related to either the first or second set of wishes and conflicts. Toward the end of treatment Freud and Elizabeth return to a set of memories related to a walk that shortly preceded the initial outbreak of symptoms. For the first time she recalls the presence of her brother-in-law on the walk, but not her sister, who remained behind due to her (soon to be fatal) illness, and recounts their intimate conversations.

Several days later Elizabeth's symptoms appeared for the first time upon her revisiting the location of their walk:

> There she sat down and dreamt once again of enjoying such happiness as her sister's and of finding a husband who would know how to capture her heart like this brother-in-law of hers. She was in pain when she stood up. . . (p. 156).

Here there is a clear relationship between *wishful daydream* and symptom formation, one quite similar to those described by Breuer in his treatment of Anna O. Thus with the case of Elizabeth Von R., the final one presented in *Studies,* Freud seems to have come full circle by offering an etiological formulation that places primary emphasis on "products of the imagination", while also eschewing recourse to hypnoid states in favor of a still theoretically undeveloped emphasis on sexuality.

This is a curious shift in Freud's thinking, given his previous emphasis on "actual" traumata involving "objective" precipitants. A review of Freud's publications closely preceding *Studies* offers some insight into the way Freud's underlying assumptions began to change during the course of treating patients with the cathartic method. In his 1894 paper entitled 'The Neuropsychosis of Defence', Freud offers his first statement of "defence hysteria" as one in which the original trauma results from an "unbearable idea" which is incompatible with the ego and subsequently split-off into a second psychical grouping (discussed above). Later in the paper Freud offers his first statement of the role of sexuality in hysteria:

> In all the cases I have analyzed it was in the sexual life that a painful affect – of precisely the same quality as that attaching to the obsession – had originated. . . Incidentally, it is easy to see that it is precisely in regard to the sexual life that unbearable ideas most frequently arise (p. 73).

Here the notion of sexual etiology is present alongside defense, but without any kind of theoretical linkage. The same year Freud writes a paper about 'Anxiety Neurosis' in which he offers an initial theoretical account of the role of sexuality in neurosis. In short, Freud states the view that there are two forms of neurosis – neurasthenia and anxiety neurosis – which are distinct from hysteria in that they have a "somatic" rather than "psychogenic" cause, and the somatic factor involved is either an excessive accumulation or depletion of sexual excitation as a result of either *coitus interruptus* (anxiety neurosis) or masturbation (neurasthenia). The sexual factor is directly linked to either an inability to relax or chronic lassitude, respectively. In this paper, as well as Freud's chapter on Psychotherapy in *Studies*, he makes it clear that, at this point, "sexual neuroses" are equivalent and quite distinct from hysteria and obsessional neurosis, whose etiology is psychogenic and therefore not

derived from sexual (i.e. somatic) factors. At the same time, Freud suggests that hysteria and obsessional neurosis are almost always "mixed" with anxiety neurosis, and thereby share in the sexual/somatic element. In Freud's words:

> The neuroses which commonly occur are mostly to be described as 'mixed'. Neurasthenia and anxiety neuroses are easily found in pure forms as well, especially in young people. Pure forms of hysteria and obsessional neurosis are rare; as a rule these two neuroses are combined with anxiety neurosis. . . As regards hysteria, however, it follows that that disorder can scarcely be segregated from the nexus of the *sexual neuroses* for the purposes of study, that as a rule it represents only a single side, only one aspect, of a complicated case of neurosis. . . (Breuer and Freud, 1895; p. 259; italics added).

It should be noted that the "sexual neuroses" are here unambiguously those with a somatic rather than psychological cause. In essence, the sexual content Freud had begun to observe as a constant feature of the "incompatible ideas" of his hysteric patients is derived somehow from the admixture of somatic factors, themselves the result of *actual sexual practices* (i.e. *coitus interruptus*) rather than imaginary ones. We are now in a position to formulate two statements describing the underlying transformations in Freud's thinking about hysteria during this period:

1) At the beginning external, objective traumata were seen as both "actuality" underlying hysterical symptoms and the content making up the specific meanings of the symptoms. This was evident in Freud's initial preoccupation with finding the hysterical "scenes" behind symptoms and linking each to its "real object."

2) Freud's clinical experiences alerted him to the ubiquity of sexual daydreams and wishes in neurosis, as in the cases reported in *Studies*. This, among other factors, led him to realign his views. He now saw meaningfulness as intrinsic to forbidden sexual fantasies, while external reality became

relegated to "auxiliary" status in symptom production. Freud's need for grounding is met by his formulation of "sexual neuroses," a term to be replaced by *actual neurosis* in 1898 (this particular choice of wording is particularly noteworthy). These neuroses, explained by a combination of physiological and external (and therefore 'real') causes, but *definitely not* by heredity (cf. Freud, 1894b, 1896a), provide a basis of actuality for the "psychogenic" neuroses (which alone are 'unreal') by taking the etiology of the former on loan, as it were. Viewed in this light, the actual neuroses provided a kind of conceptual bridge for Freud, which allowed him to transform his array of meanings; fantasy became intrinsically meaningful, while external factors, in their brute form, became the merely contingent, auxiliary features of psychogenic neurosis, while also maintained a an indirect causal role via the "actual" practices behind anxiety neurosis. The linking element is sexuality, shuttled in by way of the ubiquitous mixture of hysteria with anxiety neurosis.

It is important to note how Freud's accounts prior to 1896, while described hysteria as almost always "mixed" with anxiety neurosis, do not actually describe an underlying interaction; the psychical and the somatic remain separate. For example, Freud's paper on 'Anxiety Neurosis' (1894b), which provides the most detailed discussion of the issue, ends with this statement:

> . . . the difference [between hysteria and anxiety neurosis] is merely this, that in anxiety-neurosis the excitation . . . is purely somatic (the somatic sexual excitation), whereas in hysteria it is purely psychical (evoked by conflict) (p. 117).

For the moment psyche and soma are separate, and hysteria remains in the realm of the psychical and imaginary. However, this quickly changes.

III. The Seduction Theory: First Psychogenic Integration of Sexuality

Freud's correspondence with Fliess probably provides the best indication of the background of Freud's intellectual changes during this early period. Throughout the summer of 1894 Freud's letters are filled with references to the parallel actions of hysteria and anxiety neurosis, in much the same way as do his publications at this time. However, there is a note of discontent as well, as in this letter sent to Fliess on June 6, 1894:

> . . . but in hysteria it is *psychic* excitation that takes a wrong path exclusively into the somatic field, whereas here it is a *physical* tension, which cannot enter the psychic field and therefore remains on the physical path. The two are very often combined.

Freud continues:

> That is as far as I have got today. *The gaps badly need filling. I think it is incomplete, I lack something*. . . (Masson, 1985; p. 82; italics added).

Freud does not explicitly say what he feels is missing from this formulation, but the course of the correspondence reveals it. While he can write about anxiety neurosis as the "deflection of somatic sexual excitation from the psychical field" (1894b; p. 110), he cannot yet describe the condition of health (or pure hysteria), wherein the somatic sexual excitation succeeds in becoming psychical and undergoing vicissitudes in that region. In short, Freud has a mind-body problem, which he now attempts to overcome. At this point Freud's various drafts of manuscripts sent to Fliess concerning theoretical problems begin to focus on the interaction (rather than mere parallel functioning) of somatic and psychical processes, as in the following draft on melancholia, sent in December, 1894:

> There are two possible causes: (1) if the production of somatic sexual excitation (s. S) sinks or ceases; (2) if the sexual tension is diverted from the ps. S [psychic sexual group]. . . it can be further assumed that excessive masturbation . . . extends to the *produc-*

> *tion of s. S and brings about a lasting reduction in the s. S., thus a weakening of the p. S.* (p. 99; italics added).

Here Freud is modeling two-way interactions between the psychical and somatic processes, which he is beginning to describe in economic and neuronal language. In April 1897 Freud announces his work on "The Psychology for Neurologists," (later referred to as the "Project for a Scientific Psychology"), then writes the following month that he is

> tormented by two aims: to examine what shape the theory of mental functioning takes if one introduces *quantitative* considerations, a sort of *economics of nerve forces*; and, second, to peel off from psychopathology a gain for normal psychology (p. 129; italics added).

Freud now appears headed *away* from a view that, for a time, seemed to conceive of the somatic and psychical in separate ways, and that placed the crucial etiological factors squarely in the camp of the psychical and imaginary. He is moving toward one in which he will try to sustain a kind of paradox, by maintaining *both* the primacy and independence of psychical meaningfulness *and* the physical/objective underpinnings of that meaningfulness. His first such paradoxical integration is the "Seduction Theory."

IV. The Paradoxical Seduction Theory

On January 1, 1896 Freud sends Fliess a letter containing two important theoretical advances. The first is contained in the text of the letter: it is a summary of the way energy (Q) is transferred between somatic ("end organs") and the psychical, through an explanatory scheme involving three levels of "neurones." The outer level neurons convey qualitative information to the intermediary level, which activates the psychical neurons, not through the transfer of quality or quantities of energy, but through a more indirect "excitation." In Freud's view, "These are the paths for all the quantity that fills

[psyche]; also, of course, the paths for sexual energy" (Masson, 1985; p. 159). Thus the system envisioned by Freud includes both energy transfer and an intermediate gap between the psychical and somatic, where one level activates the next but does not directly transfer energy. There is both a leveling to the neuronal level and an insistence on some degree of discontinuity between psychical and somatic. Both conditions are necessary for the new theory Freud is to propose.

Included with this letter is "Draft K," apparently Freud's first elaboration of the seduction theory (this had been previously eluded to, in a later dated October 15, 1895). The main points of this theory also appear in two publications: "Further remarks on the Neuropsychosis of Defence" (1896a) and "The Etiology of Hysteria" (1896b). In the January letter, Freud offers the following formulation: the mind deploys defence when the employment of psychic energy results in unpleasure. This so-called 'normal defence' cannot be used against perceptions, only thoughts and memories. Normal defence is non-problematic in most cases; unpleasant thoughts are simply put out of consciousness, or the repression is overridden if contemporary interest in the thoughts occurs. (In effect, there is no countervailing force in normal repression, the ideas that are unpleasant are simply not thought about.) On the other hand,

> The trend toward defense becomes detrimental, however, if it is directed against ideas which are also able, in the form of memories, to release fresh unpleasure –as in the case with sexual ideas. Here, indeed, is the one possibility realized of a memory's having a greater releasing power than was produced by the experience corresponding to it. Only one thing is necessary for this: that puberty should be interpolated between the experience and its repetition in memory – an event which thus strongly increases the effect of the revival (p. 163).

This is essentially an elaboration, in theoretical terms, of the pithy formulation offered by Freud three months earlier, that reads: "Hysteria is presexual sexual shock . . . "Presexual" means actually before puberty, before the release of sexual substances; the relevant events become effective only as *memories*" (p. 144).

In "The Etiology of Hysteria" Freud (1896b) makes it clear exactly what form the "presexual" experiences of childhood *must* be:

> Sexual experiences in childhood consisting of stimulation of the genitals , coitus-like activities, etc. are therefore in the final analysis to be recognized as the traumata from which proceed hysterical reactions against experiences at puberty and hysterical symptoms themselves (p. 190).

Thus, in Freud's view *actual* sexual experiences during childhood constitute the necessary ingredient for pathological repression in hysteria – although during childhood itself these would only succumb to 'normal' repression. The advent of puberty (and, in Freud's thinking at this time, the beginning of sexuality) is necessary between the original sexual experience and a later instigating ('auxiliary') experience before pathological defense can take place. Puberty, in this formulation, provides the "fresh unpleasure" that converts normal repression into pathological repression, and converts an unpleasant memory into a "foreign body". In this way the memory comes to have "a greater releasing power than was produced by the experience corresponding to it."

Thus, a new structure is created for pathology, in which the domain of thought (and imagination) is supported by the external and biological 'actualities' while simultaneously transcending them; "trauma" is not equivalent with any actual event, but now always depends on at least two actual events in relation to one another. Trauma itself is suspended between these

external scenes but also depends on the internal interposition of sexuality. Trauma is solely in the realm of the mental, but rests upon the external and biological. In this state of suspension the domain of meaning is preserved, not reduced to either 'actual' external factors (real trauma) or 'actual' internal factors (physiology/heredity), while at the same time *both* actualities provide the reality anchor so important to Freud.

Throughout the next eighteen months of correspondence before sending Fliess another theoretical paper ("Draft L") Freud's thoughts seems to center on two factors: 1) the death of his father on October 23, 1896; and 2) a renewed clinical focus on finding 'actual' scenes of various forms of childhood seduction. With increasing frequency in his letters throughout this period, Freud attributes these seductions specifically to the *father*. For example:

> It seems to me more and more that the essential point of hysteria is that it results from *perversion* on the part of the seducer, and *more and more* that heredity is seduction by the father (p. 212; italics in original).

Here again we see a return to a situation where actual external experience (seduction) is directly counterposed to heredity, as in Freud's earliest cases. What can this mean?

Clearly, one can make a case that the two factors – the death of Freud's father and a returned preoccupation with actual scenes, now with the father as culprit – are intimately related, particularly in light of Freud's discovery of hysterical symptoms in himself and his siblings (cf. Masson, 1985; pp. 230-231). Indeed, the argument that Freud's own conflicts, triggered by the death of his father, determined the shape of his thinking during this period seems fairly transparent, and has been discussed by various authors (e.g. Gay, 1988; Schur, 1972). A standard interpretation along Oedipal lines, similar to the one Freud himself begins to make the following year, might run as follows: as the death

of his father awakened Freud's own Oedipal rivalry in a moment of 'victory', he felt a need to project the 'blame' onto the father rather than face the guilt emanating from his own unconscious culpability. As a result, the original structure of the seduction theory ('deferred action'), according to which trauma is never *reduced* to actual events, is regressively collapsed. (In Kleinian terms one could describe this as a temporary regression to the more concrete mode of the paranoid position, within which the paradox embodied in 'deferred action' is unsustainable.) Freud is back again to his original thesis, wherein actual external trauma provides the source of meaning in symptoms, and provides the only response to those ready to claim heredity as the primary etiological factor.

V. Fantasy

In a letter dated April 28, 1897 Freud begins to show some skepticism about his father-preoccupation, and this seems to correspond to a recent increased interest in his own dreams. In reference to some dream material from the previous night, Freud writes: "Since I myself am still in doubt about matters concerning fathers, my sensitiveness becomes understandable" (Masson, 1985; p. 237). This statement is remarkable given the apparent *lack* of doubt in this matter during the previous year. It also reflects an increased level of self-awareness, perhaps resulting from his self-analysis.

The next month Freud sends Fliess three letters, two of which contain drafts of manuscripts describing, for the first time, an explicit theoretical discussion of *fantasy*. A passage near the beginning of the first of these letters, dated May 2, 1897, best conveys Freud's new sense of fantasy:

> In the first place, I have gained a sure inkling of the structure of hysteria. Everything goes back to the reproduction of scenes. Some can be obtained directly, others always by way of *fantasies*

> set up in front of them. The fantasies stem from things that have been *heard* but understood *subsequently*, and all their material is of course genuine. They are protective structures, sublimations of the facts, and at the same time serve for self-relief. Their accidental origin is perhaps from masturbation fantasies. (p. 239; first italics added, others in original).

Here fantasy is broken down into three aspects:

1) Fantasies are defensive, in that they occlude the scenes reproduced in symptoms. The defensive function is also conveyed in the phrase "protective structures." This passage appears to be the first place where Freud states in writing that what some of what patients recall is something other than memory – in this case, a defense against memory.

2) At the same time, fantasy itself is a form of memory, particularly of *auditory* material – "things that have been heard but understood subsequently" (this echoes the earlier idea of 'deferred action'). Freud makes clear here that fantasy is always comprised of *actual* experience; while condensed and distorted, "all their material is of course genuine." However, Freud later sounds not quite so categorical; in a letter dated May 25, 1897, he writes:

> Fantasies are formed by amalgamation and distortion analogous to the decomposition of a chemical body which is compounded with another one. . . A fragment of the visual scene then combines with a fragment of the auditory one into the fantasy, while the fragment set free links up with *something else*. Thereby *an original connection becomes untraceable* (p. 247; italics added).

Here the reference to "something else" that combines with fantasy leaves the door open to the possibility that fantasy is not merely a reconfiguration of actual memory, but is also composed with another element that leads the original components to "become untraceable."

3) Fantasy gratifies impulse. At points Freud seems close to stating that fantasy *expresses* impulse, as in the above statement that "They are protective structures, sublimations of the facts, and at the same time serve for *self-relief.*

Their accidental origin is perhaps from masturbation fantasies." This certainly conveys the element of gratification in fantasy. Freud addresses the exact relations between memory, fantasy, and impulse in the letter of May 2:

> A second important piece of insight tells me that the psychic structures which, in hysteria, are affected by repression are not in reality memories – since no one indulges in memory activity without a motive – but *impulses* that derive from primal scenes. I realize now that all three neuroses (hysteria, obsessional neurosis, and paranoia) exhibit the same elements (along with the same etiology) – namely, memory fragments, *impulses* (derived from memories), and *protective fictions* (p. 239; italics in original).

Here Freud is offering what will become a critical idea for him–that the material subject to repression in symptom formation is derived from impulses, not memory. At the same time, however, he retains the priority of memory by making these impulses derivative from "primal scenes."[15] Thus, memory is the bedrock, alone responsible for symptom formation either directly, or indirectly through the derivatives of impulse and fantasy. Fantasy is envisioned on the same conceptual level as impulse; fantasies may gratify and intermingle with impulses, but cannot be derived from them.

In "Draft N," sent on May 31, Freud seems to entertain different possible relationships between memories, impulses, and fantasies:

> Memories appear to bifurcate: one part of them is put aside and replaced by fantasies; another accessible part seems to lead directly to impulses. Is it possible that later on impulses can also derive from fantasies? (p. 250).

While Freud considers the possibility of a causal relationship between impulses and fantasies, he is only willing to see fantasies, which are made from memories, as originating impulse, not vice versa.

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[15]Freud is not yet using this term to denote parental intercourse, but is instead referring, in a more general sense, to early traumatic experiences organized into scenes. (Cf. Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973; p. 335).

Several points should be made about the view of fantasy Freud holds in May 1897. First, fantasy seems to have inherited the intermediate position between the registers of actual and psychic previously occupied by the concept of deferred action. Fantasy is not identical to actual memories, nor can it be directly traced to them due to the "something else" that also comprises them; at the same time the memories underlying fantasy are "of course genuine"– they are actualities. Fantasy is both derived from the real and quite removed and ultimately untraceable to the real; it is both firmly rooted and essentially dislocated. Thus, the paradoxical suspension in 'deferred action' is now replaced by suspension in fantasy;[16] this view of fantasy represents a transformation of terms that recreates a previous paradoxical structure.

Second, the view of motivation Freud presents here is very curious; his need to ground his theoretical structure in external reality now begins to seem quite cumbersome, and this is nowhere more evident than when he attempts to articulate the relationships between fantasy and memory, as quoted above. In contrast to this is the clarity of statements linking fantasy and symptom to the theory of dreams, which Freud is developing at the time. For example:

> Remembering is never a motive but only a way, a method. The first motive for the formation of symptoms is, chronologically, libido. Thus symptoms, like dreams, are *the fulfillment of a wish* (p. 251; italics in original).

Here, for a moment, Freud seems to grant primacy to impulse, while remembering is reduced to "a method." However, for the moment this statement seems to represent something of an anomaly, as well as an omen.

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[16]I do not mean to imply that 'deferred action' as a concept disappears entirely. In fact, it continues to reappear at regular intervals, beginning with Freud's letter to Fliess of November 14, 1897 and ending with the case of the Wolfman in 1918.

VI. End of the *Neurotica* and the Search for Firmer Ground

After Freud's initial theoretical formulations of fantasy his letters to Fliess reveal a state of intellectual unrest. In June 1897 he describes going through "some kind of neurotic experience" that leaves him with "veiled doubts, with barely a ray of light here or there." He closes his letter with a note of foreboding: "I believe I am in a cocoon, and God knows what sort of beast will crawl out" (p. 254). In July he blames his intellectual difficulties on his neurosis and, somewhat cryptically, also on his relationship with Fliess:

> Something from the deepest depths of my own neurosis set itself against any advance in the understanding of the neuroses, and you have somehow become involved in it (p. 255).

Freud's thoughts in August reflect more of a mixture of feelings; he is both "very satisfied with the psychology" and "tormented by grave doubts about my theory of the neuroses" (p. 261).

The following month Freud seems to come to an intellectual and emotional crossroads. On September 21, 1897 he writes to Fliess "I no longer believe in my *neurotica*," referring to his theory of childhood seduction as the key to neurosis, then enumerates the reasons: 1) disappointing results with many patients who failed to successfully complete their analyses; 2) the improbability that there could exist the vast number of sexually abusive fathers required to explain the many cases of hysteria; 3) the insight (undoubtedly related to his recent speculations about fantasy) that "there are no indications of reality in the unconscious;" and 4) that even in the deepest psychosis the sought-after unconscious memories of childhood do not appear.

Freud describes the emotional effect of this realization:

> . . . I have no idea of where I stand . . . It seems once again arguable that only later experiences give the impetus to fantasies, which [then] hark back to childhood, and *with this the factor of a hereditary disposition regains a sphere of influence from which I*

> *had made it my task to dislodge it*–in the interest of illuminating neurosis (p. 265; italics added).

Despite his attempt at grounding his new realizations about fantasy in a base of actual memory, the conceptual (and clinical) problems of that formulation, which represented something of an unsteady hybrid of his prior traumatic theory of neurosis and new wish-fulfillment theory of dreams, led to its collapse. Once again Freud is left with no ground upon which to defend the psychological against "heredity." The third reason he offers for his loss of faith seems of particular importance in this regard:

> . . . the certain insight that there are no indications of reality in the unconscious, so that one cannot distinguish between truth and fiction that has been cathected with affect (p. 264).

Without these "indications of reality" Freud is left with fantasy as a purely mental phenomenon, operating according to its own laws but not resting on anything more substantial than itself. As I have discussed throughout this chapter, for Freud the 'purely mental' lacked the necessary substance for a theory of psychological causality. With his concession of "no indications of reality" he is left with only the mental, only fantasy, and therefore no foothold against "the factor of a hereditary disposition."

In spite of this, Freud offers the following note of optimism near the end of his letter:

> In this collapse of everything valuable, the psychological alone has remained untouched. The dream [book] stands entirely secure and my beginnings of the metapsychological work have only grown in my estimation (p. 266).

This statement might offer an indication that Freud was aware, on some level, from where his next solution to the 'reality problem' would come sixteen months later: his wish-fulfillment theory of dreams. In the meantime, however, his letters reveal considerable casting about between the

external and biological in his search for grounding: initially he shows a rejuvenated preoccupation of finding *actual scenes*, including at times those that indicate "paternal etiology." For example, Freud writes in December 1897: "My confidence in paternal etiology has risen greatly" (p. 286), and several weeks later declares, "the intrinsic *authenticity of infantile trauma* is borne out by the following little incident which the patient claims to have observed as a three-year-old child" (p. 288; italics added), followed by a description of an early scene in which the child witnessed the mother submitting to anal intercourse, the exact details of which are reproduced in hysterical attacks.

At other times Freud renews an earlier speculation that "something organic plays a part in repression," and formulates a theory in which the childhood stimulation of sexual zones that are normally abandoned leads to pathological repression through an associative linkage of disgust and libido (pp. 279-281). Here his focus is on the physiological processes by which childhood seduction leads to hysterical symptoms, and follows the familiar structure of 'deferred action,' but introduces the new element of bodily zones of sexuality, which are in infancy "not yet so much localized" as later. In the case of "normal repression" most of the zones become extinct through a kind of "nonneurotic deferred action," as the stimulation of earlier sources of pleasure releases a modicum of unpleasure and disgust in adulthood. In pathology, however, zones *other than the genitals*, which have been subject to abnormal levels of pleasurable stimulation in childhood, create excessive levels of both pleasure and disgust in adulthood when reevoked psychologically, through a process Freud refers to as "deferred internal disgust" (p. 281). (This letter is clearly a precursor to ideas Freud will offer in *Three Essays on Sexuality*, where he links the pregenital zones to repression with his famous dictum, "neuroses are, so to say, the negative of perversions" (1905b, p. 31).)

In contrast to these two lines of thought, which continue to focus on maintaining a connection to physical and external bases of neurosis, Freud opens up a third area of speculation involving fantasies that are "universal" such as the Oedipal and "family romance" fantasies. These are structured fantasy scenarios that are both inherently independent of actual experience and thus far unconnected to any speculation about possible biological (e.g. zonal) basis. Interestingly, it is this third line of thought, with its exclusive emphasis on fantasy, that seems to grip Freud as he approaches the completion of the Dream book, and several statements reflect his discomfort with the inherent lack of grounding in this line of thought. For example, in a letter to Fliess dated February 23, 1898 Freud writes:

> Several chapters of the dream book already are complete; it is turning out nicely and leads me far more deeply into psychology than I had imagined. All of the new formulations are at the philosophical end; absolutely nothing has come up at the organic-sexual one (p. 300).

Three weeks later Freud returns to this topic: "It seems to me that the theory of wish fulfillment has brought only the psychological solution and not the biological–or rather metapsychological–one. (p. 301).

In April Freud announces greater clarity, and offers this small tidbit: "initially I defined the etiology to narrowly; the share of phantasy in it is far greater than I had thought in the beginning" (p. 311). In June the tone of his letter begins to sound more definite, and also provides a reordering of the terms 'memory' and 'fantasy':

> All neurotics create the so-called family romance. . . where does the material for creating the romance–adultery, illegitimate child, and like–come from? Usually from the lower social circles of servant girls. Such things are so common among them that one is never at a loss for material . . . In all analyses one therefore hears the same story twice: once as a fantasy about the mother; the second time as a real memory of the maid (p. 317).

It seems clear here that Freud is claiming universality for the family romance fantasy, at least for neurotics ("all neurotics"), and that the actual events making it up are secondary – it is recounted "the *second* time as a *real* memory of the maid." Again, the element of universality remains unexplained.

Several months later (September 22, 1898) Freud begins to sound apologetic toward Fliess about this lack a biological grounding:

> I am not at all in disagreement with you, *not at all inclined to leave the psychology hanging in the air without an organic basis.* But apart from this conviction I do not know how to go on, neither theoretically nor therapeutically, and therefore must behave *as if only the psychological were under consideration.* Why I cannot fit it together [the organic and the psychological] I have not even begun to fathom (p. 326; italics added).

Despite Freud's confessed mystification about his inability to unravel the mind-body problem, his tone of confidence in new formulations continues. In January of 1899 the phrase "key of phantasy" begins to appear at regular intervals, along with references to therapeutic successes (a marked change from his defeated tone one year earlier), and allusions to an emerging new theoretical advance. On January 4 Freud writes:

> There is something to it. It is dawning. . . I want to reveal to you. . . that the dream schema is capable of the most general application, that the key to hysteria as well really lies in dreams (p. 338).

On January 30 Freud offers more elaboration on his new point-of-view:

> The light has not gone out . . . bits of insight are dawning now here, now there–a genuine reinvigoration by comparison with the desolation of last year. What is rising out of the chaos this time is the connection to the psychology contained in the *Studies on Hysteria*–the relation to conflict, to life: clinical psychology, as I should like to call it. . . *fantasy as the key* holds fast (p. 342; italics added).

The reference to *Studies* is instructive. Recall the first move toward fantasy in 1895, represented in the case of Elizabeth Von R. At that time Freud

had moved away from an original emphasis on external trauma and, for a brief period, worked from a clinical perspective in which hysteria was explained purely in terms of conflictual wishes and fantasies. As discussed above, this perspective gave way to renewed preoccupations with the biological and external realities Freud sought for conceptual grounding. In "behaving as if only the psychological were under consideration" Freud has now freed himself to conceive of wishes and fantasies as the primary ingredients of neurosis. The fruit of this approach is apparent in Freud's letter of February 19, 1899:

> Not only dreams are wish fulfillments, so are hysterical attacks. This is true of hysterical symptoms, but probably applies to every product of neurosis, for I recognized it long ago in acute delusional insanity. *Reality–wish-fulfillment–it is from these opposites that our mental life springs* (p. 345; italics added).

This last statement surely conveys better than any other the revolutionary nature of this progression in Freud's thought. He is now willing to consider a different conceptual structure, one in which reality is no longer required as a complete support for the mental; reality need now only support one leg, as it were. The other rests squarely in the domain of "wish fulfillment," which itself remains unsupported by biological roots – it is left "hanging in the air" – despite Freud's protestations to the contrary.

This marks a dramatic change. As we have seen, during the period leading up to 1899 Freud had attempted to maintain a biologically-rooted perspective while also adumbrating a new viewpoint in which the psychical is also seen as causal, through the construction of theoretical frameworks that could serve to support both views paradoxically. With the change of 1899, paradox is abandoned, and wish and reality are left on equal footing. This immediately poses several questions.

First, what factors could conceivably lead Freud to so fundamentally alter his basic epistemological assumptions? This is not immediately clear, although several candidates present themselves as possibilities. For one, the accumulating clinical evidence may have stretched the seams of what his theoretical ideas could handle, and therefore he may have simply jettisoned one set of requirements in order to lighten the load and make theorizing more parsimonious. A second possibility is that he may have been influenced by the infiltration from the wider intellectual culture of ideas challenging views about the nature of reality (cf. Rorty, 1979). This is an intriguing question, one that we will consider in the concluding chapter of this work.

A third possibility relates to the possible transferential meaning for Freud of rooting his ideas in what he had been educated to see as a properly "scientific" context. It seems clear from their correspondence that Freud saw Fliess, at least at times, as representing a kind of scientific ideal; there are a number of passages in which Freud follows statements of self-abasement ("my lack of medical knowledge once again weighs heavily on me") with an implicit affirmation of his colleague's superior knowledge ("I would not have dared to invent this plan of action on my own, but I confidentially join you in it" (p. 107)). A number of factors seemed to combine around 1899 in leading Freud's previous relationship to Fliess as analyst, mentor, idealized other, and alter ego, to undergo dramatic changes, and these have been commented on by Freud's biographers (e.g. Gay, 1988; Schur, 1972). It is important in the present context merely to note that at the moment that Freud's ideological framework began to shift, he became defensive toward Fliess about the possibility of the latter perceiving him as "leaving the psychological hanging in the air without an organic basis." After Freud reveals the revolutionary new turn his ideas have taken, his sharing of ideas with his colleague began dwindling;

letters following the critical one of February 1899 show very few new discoveries or insights. (Forrester (1997) has pointed out that Freud stopped using Fliess as an intellectual sounding board after the publication of *Dreams*; for his next book, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), Oscar Rie served in the role of reader and critic previously occupied by Fliess.)

Unfortunately, the exact nature of what factors led to the falling out between Freud and Fliess remains unknown. What we can speculate is that their separation, after an intense and fruitful period of emotional and intellectual near-symbiosis, may have helped Freud to also separate, at least for a time, from part of what Fliess had come to mean to him: a representative of certain scientific ideals that may have become too constraining.

A second question relates to the fate of Freud's new ideas regarding the distinction between psychical and the physical, or (to return to the overall theme of this work), that between phantasy and reality. As I will show in the next chapter, while 1899 does represent a watershed of sorts in Freud's thinking about these issues, it is not an end-point. Several years following the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, Freud will again return to an emphasis on external reality and physiology (albeit different in important respects from the views of the 1890's) before finally altering the terms of his theory in a way that transforms his view of the psychic apparatus, first by redefining phantasy as the preexperiential bedrock of the mind, then eventually recasting the psyche itself in completely representational terms. It is to those changes, and their implications for a Freudian theory of phantasy, that we turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Phantasy in Freudian Theory (1899-1939)

In the last chapter I examined the beginnings of Freud's concept of phantasy in relation to his various attempts to establish the intrinsic nature of the mental realm while also grounding it in some form of material reality. Phantasy initially functioned as a kind of template to join the incompatible perspectives of psychic determinism and physical reductionism. It was also integral to Freud's perspective of 1899, which momentarily left considerations of 'actuality' to one side, and began to view reality and wish-fulfillment on equal footing. This new approach was conveyed in the statement: "Reality–wish fulfillment–it is from these opposites that our mental life springs" (Masson, 1985; p. 345).

In this chapter I will follow the course Freud's thinking about phantasy throughout four distinct phases of his thought, each corresponding to a new ordering of the psychical in relation to external and material reality. These are: the 1) the elevation of wish and introduction of the concept of 'psychic reality' in the dream theory (1899-1905); 2) the return of physiology in the first theory of sexuality (1905-1910); 3) reformulated view of instinct and phantasy as psychic bedrock in the metapsychological writings (1910-1919); and the representational view of mind in the Structural Theory (1920-1939). In my discussion I will attempt to link both the specific views of phantasy and the undergirding issues concerning the relationship between the psychical and physical to the disagreements over phantasy in the Controversial Discussions.

I. Unconscious Wishes and Psychic Reality in the *Interpretation of Dreams*

The *Interpretation of Dreams* introduces two central concepts that become eventual focal points in the later debates over phantasy: the nature of

psychic reality and the distinction between primary and secondary process. Because of the importance of debates over these concepts I will first explore their specific meanings in Freud's text before moving on to a discussion of the 1900 view of phantasy.

Psychic Reality

Near the end of *Dreams*, Freud introduces the concept of "psychic reality" in two separate references. The first appears in the context of a critique of the longstanding philosophical tradition of equating the conscious with the psychical. Freud argues against this view by stating that "everything conscious has an unconscious preliminary stage," and that even when the contents of the unconscious never reach consciousness, they continue to retain "the full value of a psychical process" (1900, p. 651). Thus, the unconscious is not only affirmed as psychical, it is also granted the status as the *originator* of consciousness.

Freud then offers a further characterization of the unconscious:

> The unconscious is the true psychical reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs* (p. 651; italics in original).

Several points need to be made here. First, in defining the unconscious as "the true psychical reality," he is distinguishing a single domain of the psychical as alone characterized by 'reality'; *unconscious*, but not conscious thoughts are 'psychically real'. Second, Freud begins to characterize what is meant by 'reality' through the parallel he draws between psychic and material reality: both are in essentially unknowable sources of conscious experience, while the unconscious, unlike external reality, is a non-material causal agent of conscious experience. Therefore, the conceptual bedrock for mental events

is here firmly placed in a domain that is decidedly non-material (and therefore psychic), while also transcendent of normal psychological experience, in that it is unknowable. In essence, the psychical becomes its own conceptual bedrock, and the need for grounding in the body or external reality is eschewed.

Freud's second (and only other) reference to 'psychic reality' in *Dreams* introduces an even narrower definition. He begins by considering the epistemological (and ethical) status of the unconscious, asking rhetorically, "Have not the unconscious impulses brought out by dreams the importance of *real forces* in mental life? Is the ethical significance of suppressed wishes to made light of . . . ?" (p. 658; italics added). Freud then invites himself to further specify what the concept of 'psychic reality' actually connotes:

> I think it is best . . . to acquit dreams. Whether we are to attribute *reality* to unconscious wishes, I cannot say. It must be denied, of course, to any transitional or intermediate thoughts. If we look at unconscious wishes reduced to their most fundamental and truest shape, we shall conclude, no doubt, that *psychical* reality is a particular form of existence not to be confused with *material* reality (p. 659-9; italics in original).

Here 'psychic reality' is clarified in two ways. First, Freud reiterates the absolute distinction between the psychical and material: psychic reality is "a particular form of existence, not to be confused with material reality." Second, Freud specifies more precisely *which* events or processes in the unconscious qualify as 'reality'–unconscious *wishes*. He clearly rules out "transitional or intermediate thoughts" from laying claim to the status of reality. As for the wishes themselves, it is only when they are "reduced to their most fundamental and truest shape" that the term 'reality' applies. However, Freud offers here no further qualifications or elaborations on what is meant by the

"truest shape" of an unconscious wish. (Freud's (1900) view of original wishes will be explored in the next section.)

In sum, Freud's definition of psychic reality in 1900 has the following attributes: 1) it is psychical, and therefore non-material; 2) it acts causally in originating conscious thought; and 3) it does not characterizes mental activity in general, or even all unconscious activity, but only unconscious wishes, and only when these are reduced to their "most fundamental and truest shape."

Hallucination and Unconscious Wish

Much of the theoretical and dream material in *Dreams* rests on the postulate, that "all dreams are the fulfillments of wishes." It is in the elaboration of the nature of these wishes that Freud implicitly defines the particular meaning of 'psychic reality.' In one discussion he offers three possibilities for the origins of such a dream-instigating wish: 1) a wish may have arisen in waking life but left unsatisfied; that is, it may have originated and remained in the conscious or preconscious mind; 2) a wish may have originated in the conscious or preconscious but was then repudiated (relegated to the unconscious) due to its objectionable content; or 3) "it may have no connection with daytime life and be one of those wishes which only emerge from the suppressed part of the mind and become active in us at night" (p. 590). Freud makes clear that, in his view, it is only this third kind of wish that can succeed in producing a dream, or (as he states later) a neurotic symptom. Further, Freud affirms that "a wish which is represented in a dream must be an infantile one" (p. 592); it is a wish that originated in the unconscious in infancy but was prevented from ever reaching consciousness due to the forces of repression.

Thus, Freud is categorical: there is only one kind of truly unconscious wish (that is, one originating in, rather than being secondarily drawn down into, the unconscious), and that is an infantile wish. As to the characteristics of such a wish (it's "truest shape"), Freud offers to "throw light upon the psychical nature of wishes" with his concept of hallucinatory wish fulfillment (p. 604). He begins his discussion of this concept by introducing the notion that the psychic apparatus is primarily concerned with reducing internal and external stimuli to the lowest possible level (the constancy principle). Its initial activity would consist of simple discharge of excitation along a motor pathway. However, the "exigencies of life" soon confront it with a more complicated situation, in that an external change (e.g. the provision of nourishment) becomes necessary for internal stimuli to dissipate and therefore for an 'experience of satisfaction' to occur. Thus,

> An essential component of this experience of satisfaction is a particular perception (that of nourishment, in our example) the mnemic image of which remains associated thenceforth with the memory trace of the excitation produced by the need. As a result of the link that has been established, next time this need arises a psychical impulse will at once emerge which will seek to re-cathect the mnemic image of the perception and to reevoke the perception itself, that is to say, to reestablish the situation of the original satisfaction. An impulse of this kind is what we call a wish . . . (pp. 604-5).

Here is Freud's basic definition of the wish, which, as we have seen, is the essential constituent of psychic reality: it is the impulse to reevoke the perception associated with the original condition of need satisfaction. As its original form, we can only assume that this represents the "most fundamental and truest shape" of the wish. The wish is thus constituted by impulse, perceptual memory, and the link between them. Thus, at the very heart of psychic reality is a connection to the earliest perceptual experiences of the external world, amalgamated with a purely internal experience of need. The

wish can therefore be seen as a synthesis of Freud's twin tyrants, the psychical and the externally 'real.' For Freud, even "psychic reality" must always contain a kernel of external, factual reality.

As to the initial experiences of wish *satisfaction*, Freud writes of two successive forms, hallucination and thought activity. The most primal is satisfaction via hallucination, of which Freud writes:

> An impulse of this kind is what we call a wish; the reappearance of the perception is the fulfillment of the wish; and the shortest path to the fulfillment of the wish is a path leading direct from the excitation produced by the need to a complete cathexis of the perception. Nothing prevents us from assuming that there was a primitive state of the psychical apparatus in which this path was actually traversed, that is, in which wishing ended in *hallucinating* (p. 605; italics added).

Of thought-activity, Freud writes:

> The bitter experience of life must have changed this primitive thought-activity into a more expedient secondary one. . . In order to arrive at a more efficient expenditure of psychical force, it is necessary to bring the regression to a halt before it becomes complete . . . and is able to seek out other paths which lead eventually to the desired perceptual identity being established from the direction of the external world. This inhibition of regression and the subsequent division of the excitation becomes the business of a second system, which is in control of voluntary movement– which for the first time, that is, *makes use of movement for purposes remembered in advance* (p. 605; italics added).

Here Freud counterposes the two original forms of wish-fulfillment. The first, hallucinatory wish-fulfillment is simply the reevocation of a perceptual memory image, e.g. the perception of a moment of satisfaction at the breast. In the above description Freud seems to leave no room for anything other than this simple act of hallucinatory mnemic recall (i.e. there is no elaboration of the experience of satisfaction; it is simply reproduced). The second form, which is initiated when the first fails to satisfy, takes place after the regression to hallucinatory sensation ceases. In its place are thoughts associ-

ated with *movement;* the infant cathects these memory-thoughts, which initiate future movement ("for purposes remembered in advance"). Whereas hallucination involves a mere passive reexperience of a memory of satisfaction, the somewhat later alternative, primitive thought activity, involves images of activity toward the object of satisfaction.

Freud seems to make clear what the exact relation between these forms of wish-satisfaction and dreaming is. He writes:

> Thought is after all nothing but a substitute for a hallucinatory wish; and it is self-evident that dreams must be wish-fulfillments, since nothing but a wish can set out mental apparatus at work. Dreams, which fulfill their wishes along the short path of regression, have merely preserved for us in that respect a sample of the psychical apparatus's primary method of working, a method which was abandoned as being inefficient(p. 606).

Now we can make some general statements. 1) Infantile wishes, which constitute 'psychic reality,' are not identical with either thinking or hallucinating, but precede them; wishes are the *urges* toward reevoking an earlier satisfying perception. 2) Wish-fulfillment can take one of two psychical forms: hallucination or thought-activity. The former involves a passive, regressive evocation of a perceptual memory, while the latter refers to memories involving active motor movements toward the object and culminating in satisfaction (the motor movements themselves are bodily, and therefore outside of the realm of psychical forms of wish fulfillment). 3) Dreams are a return to hallucinatory wish-fulfillment, and are constituted as a compromise formation between wishes and counter-wishes, represented in hallucinatory form. For this regressive return to hallucination to take place, the state of sleep is required.

Therefore, the truest shape of the unconscious wish would correspond to its form prior to gratification, in that it is this wish (and not its already-occurring gratification) that motivates the alternate forms of gratification de-

scribed by Freud – hallucination and thought leading to action. This is a crucial point we will return to in the discussion of implications for the Controversies over phantasy.

Primary Process and Secondary Process

In the section of Chapter 7 on "Primary and Secondary Process" Freud seems to clearly state that those original unconscious wishes motivating dreams and constituting psychic reality remain in an original state governed by primary process, which is characterized by impulses that push toward immediate discharge as soon as an accumulation of stimuli registers as displeasure. In primary process functioning there is no binding or channeling of impulse, merely discharge along the shortest possible path. The goal of primary process activity is always "perceptual identity;" that is, a repeated perceptual experience of satisfaction in the most direct way possible – primarily hallucinatory cathexis of the sensory image of the experience. In contrast, secondary process is a secondary adaptation to the "exigencies of life" in which discharge is inhibited, and energy is bound and transformed into a quiescent state. In this state the energy, with its "raised potential," can then be deployed in primitive forms of thought, consisting chiefly of 'experimental action' eventually leading to external action and salutary changes in the external world–thus, a more satisfying version of 'perceptual identity,' through the interposition of 'thought identity.'

As for the form of infantile unconscious wishes, Freud writes the following:

> In consequence of the belated appearance of the secondary processes, *the core of our being, consisting of unconscious wishful impulses,* remains inaccessible to the understanding and inhibition of the preconscious; the part played by the latter is restricted once and for all to directing along the most expedient paths the

> wishful impulses that arise from the unconscious (p. 642; italics added).

Thus for unconscious wishes of infancy; they remain in their original primary-process form, as an urge toward perceptual identity, and they are categorically separated from activities of the preconscious, which include primitive thought ("remains inaccessible to the understanding and inhibition of the preconscious"). Any conjunction of thoughts, ideas, actions, etc. with these wishes indicates preconscious responses to or amalgamation with the wishes, not the wishes themselves. Freud is clear that the latent content of a dream consist of elaborate phantasies, thoughts, and other wishful ideas, but these originate in the *preconscious*, and are only secondarily "drawn into the unconscious" following the transfer onto them of energy from the original unconscious wish. It is the unconscious wish alone, in this model, that retains the distinction of being the "core of our being" and the sole constituent of psychic reality.

Unconscious Phantasy and Psychic Reality

At this point we come back to the topic of phantasy. Although, as discussed in chapter 4, the concept of phantasy had played a significant role in the crucial changes leading to the orientation toward 'psychic reality' expressed in the *Interpretation of Dreams*, it does not enter into the text of this book until the section on "Secondary Revision" in Chapter 6. There Freud discusses the process by which the censoring agency imposes order and coherence on a dream after its initial formation–partly to meet the conscious mind's need for intelligibility, partly to add a further measure of distortion. Freud adds that while this is often done simply with the material at hand in the dream, at other times the task is made easier with the use of ready-made

formations available in *phantasies*. Freud then points out the parallels between phantasies and dreams:

> Like dreams, they are wish-fulfillments; like dreams, they are based to a great extent on impressions of infantile experiences; like dreams, they benefit by a certain degree of relaxation of censorship. If we examine their structure, we shall perceive the way in which the wishful purpose that is at work in their production has mixed up the material of which they are built, has rearranged it and formed it into a new whole (p. 530).

In one sense, phantasies, or daydreams, are the near equal of night dreams: they are motivated by wishes, have a more relaxed censorship, but are also subject to some degree of censorship. Like dreams, they are a disguised and compromised form of wish-fulfillment. Phantasies can also become a part of dreams (they form dreams within dreams, as it were), and their topographical location within the dream can range from the level of waking secondary elaboration in the manifest content to the deepest dream thoughts of the latent content. However, in all these the makeup of phantasies remains the same: they are compromise formations made up of a condensation of preconscious and unconscious elements.

Implications

These views have important implications for the Controversial Discussions. First, Anna Freud's opposition to the Kleinian view of phantasy finds considerable support in this text in the following ways: 1) Isaacs' equation of phantasy and psychic reality is not tenable, in that psychic reality applies exclusively to the unconscious wishes themselves in their truest shape, and phantasy is an intermediate form of mental activity comprised of unconscious wishes and preconscious thought activity; 2) Anna Freud's objection, that the Kleinian view of phantasy as both extremely early and as characterized by conflict and some degree of structure is incompatible with Freud's

views, finds considerable agreement here – for Freud primary process and secondary process are distinct, and only the former exist at the beginning of life and the origin of dreaming, while phantasies are always a later composite of the two forms of mentation; 3) Isaacs' claim that unconscious wishes are always experienced in hallucinatory form in the unconscious is belied by the description here, in which such hallucination is only possible under certain conditions, and is not characteristic of wishes in their original and truest shape.

Second, Freud's view between 1899-1905 offers, for the first time, a view of the psyche that places it on equal footing with material reality, and attributes causality of psychic events equally to the two domains. The need for a paradoxical balancing of psychical above the physical is momentarily dropped. However, a return to questions relating to sexuality and the body in 1905 also bring a return to a concern with physical foundations and new conceptual forms for preserving the autonomy of the psychical.

II. Phantasy and the First Theory of Sexuality

Sexuality and Physiology in *Three Essays on Sexuality*

In 1905 Freud writes two publications that present, for the first time, a theory of sexuality. With these we see a return to a concern with locating the underpinnings of the psychical within the realm of material reality[17], now specified in the chemical secretions of erotogenic zones.

Freud's introduction to his theory of sexuality appears in *Three Essays on Sexuality*, in 1905, immediately following a five-year-period in which his writing continues to be dominated by spinning out various implications of

[17]It is probably significant in this connection that the phrase "psychic reality" does not reappear in Freud's writings until 1915, when he revises his theory of instinct in way that fundamentally alters his view of the place of the body in sexual instinct.

the theory of mental functioning adumbrated in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. *On Dreams* (1901a), *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901b), and *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905a) are thus all, like their predecessor, focused on the vicissitudes of sexuality and its disguised wish fulfillments and conflicts, described in *purely psychological terms*. With *Three Essays*, Freud's previous concern with rooting psychological processes in physiology or external reality reappears. We see this near the end of the first essay, where Freud offers his initial formulation of the sexual instinct, which he describes as always comprised of a number of 'component instincts,'

> which, however, are not of a primary nature, but are susceptible to further analysis. We can distinguish in them (in addition to an 'instinct' which is not in itself sexual and which has its roots in motor impulses) a contribution from an organ capable of receiving stimuli (e.g. the skin, the mucous membrane or a sense organ). An organ of this kind will be described in this connection as an 'erotogenic zone'–as being the organ whose excitation lends the instinct a sexual character . . . excitations of two kinds arise from the somatic organs, based upon differences of a chemical nature. One of these kinds of excitation we describe as being specifically sexual, and we speak of the organ concerned as the 'erotogenic zone' of the sexual component instinct arising from it (1905b, p. 34).

Here the change in language from Freud's recent writings is immediately apparent. He is describing the sexual instinct, by now conceived as the prime candidate for energizing dreams and symptoms, as originating in "organ excitation" leading to the release of a particular kind of chemical. The surface area of each such organ is referred to as an erotogenic zone. Based on his study of perversions, descriptions of which make up the bulk of the first essay, Freud enumerates the various zones: the genitals, mouth, and anus, as well as "any part of the skin and any sense-organ" (p. 99). One dominant theme of this work is the notion that *actual* experiences involving these

zones determine much of one's psychological development, capacity to form relationships, and psychopathology.

In the second essay, Freud puts these disparate erotogenic zones and forms of sensuality in a developmental context; he describes the normal state of early infancy as a "polymorphously perverse" profusion of sensuality throughout the body that finally comes into focus around the genitals during the fourth year, at which time a particular object becomes a focus of sexual longing and a period of masturbation ensues. For Freud this is a "precursor of the subsequent final sexual organization following puberty" (p. 100).

Interposed between the infantile genital organization and the "final sexual organization" is a period of latency, and the principle determinant of either perversion or neurosis is determined by the extent to which the various zones unify under the dominance of the genitals (taking their place as forms of forepleasure only, not overshadowing genital gratification), or instead, whether focus on one or another zone or infantile form of pleasure remains dominant, through a process of fixation. About the determinants of this latter possibility, Freud is rather non-specific, but mentions a number of possible factors, which can be narrowed down to *constitution and heredity*, on the one hand, and the effect of "*accidental experiences*" on the other. Freud mentions seductions as one possible such experience, but is not specific about others. In order to lead to neurosis (rather than perversion), such fixations must become subject to repression, another process about which Freud says little here, except to add to it other contributing (*external*) factors:

> The fact is we must put sexual repression as an internal factor alongside such external factors as limitation of freedom, inaccessibility of a normal sexual object, the dangers of the normal sexual act, etc (p. 36).

Thus, Freud has clearly returned to the realm of the 'actual,' in the sense in which that term was used in chapter 4; the emphasis is decidedly on the somatic and external factors contributing to psychosexual development, neurosis, and perversion. In his other work on sexuality published in 1905, entitled "My Views on the Part Played by Sexuality in the Etiology of the Neuroses," Freud announces this shift of emphasis explicitly, in his argument that *organic disturbances of sexual processes* determine pathological repression and neurosis. He describes the contrast with his earlier views: "In other respects, constitutional factors have supplanted accidental influences; 'sexual repression' has taken the place of the concept of 'defence,' *which was intended purely psychologically*" (1905c, p. 18; italics added). At this point, Freud seems to have moved away from a "purely psychological" frame of reference.

Sexuality and Paradox

Despite this apparent move toward the 'actual' it can be argued that Freud, in characteristic fashion, finds a way of introducing a fundamental gap between the physical and the psychical, now through the parallel implicitly drawn between perverse and normal sexuality that detaches the latter from strict biological determinism and leads to a condition in which childhood object choice takes place first in *phantasy*. As a result, phantasy becomes both buffer and conduit in this complex sketching of the biological and psychological.

Freud begins to open this gap in his discussion of perversion, in which he sets out to show that neither object nor aim is intrinsically determined by sexual impulses in a predetermined manner. In his discussion of fetishism and other "aberrations of sexual aim," Freud makes the case that the zones of

sexual pleasure are not strictly determined, but are themselves subject to wide variation ("any part of the skin and any sense-organ can function as an erotogenic zone"), and are in no way assured of eventual genital dominance. Therefore human sensuality is not intrinsically sexual in the way one finds in other animals–there is a discontinuity introduced between the various experiences of sensual pleasure and the sexual function of reproduction, and therefore no assurance that the latter will be carried forward. In the words of Laplanche, "The whole of sexuality, or at least the whole of infantile sexuality, ends up by becoming perversion" (1976; p. 23).

Moreover, it is in the area of the sexual object, even more than that of aim or zone, that sexuality is seen as most detached from innate biological functions; Freud conveys this sense when he characterizes the object as the "most variable part of the instinct" and describes the initial disengagement of sexuality from the first object. As I will attempt to show, it is in Freud's description of this moment referred to by Laplanche (1976) as the "autoerotic turn," that the psychical detaches from the physical in Freud's 1905 theory. This is also a moment that prefigures the initial choice of a sexual object, which Freud describes as taking place first in *phantasy*.

This discussion of autoerotism begins with Freud's description of an initial period during which sexual pleasure is focused on the mouth, prior to the period of 'polymorphous perversity.' Freud describes this early situation in the context of early thumb-sucking:

> To begin with, sexual activity attaches itself to functions serving the purpose of self-preservation and does not become independent of them until later. . . The need for repeating the sexual satisfaction now becomes detached from the need for taking nourishment–a separation which becomes inevitable when the teeth appear and food is no longer taken in only by sucking, but is also chewed up (p. 48).

Thus, sexuality and the functions of self-preservation are initially indistinguishable; sensual pleasure is generated by the self-preservative act of nursing. The conditions under which the detachment of sexuality from self-preservative functions takes place is described in a later passage:

> At a time at which the first beginnings of sexual satisfaction are still linked with the taking of nourishment, the sexual instinct has a sexual object outside the infant's own body in the shape of his mother's breast. *It is only later that the instinct loses that object*, just at the time, perhaps, when the child is able to form a total idea of the person to whom the organ that is giving him satisfaction belongs (p. 88; italics added).

Here Freud is clear that an initial object relationship preexists the autoerotic detachment. Detachment of sexuality from self-preservation, as well as from the external object, takes place at a moment of recognition of the *totality* of the object: the child loses the object "just at the time. . . when the child is able to form a total idea of the person" to whom the breast belongs[18]. In effect, the object becomes sexual just as it is given up. But what replaces it?

Freud continues:

> As a rule the sexual instinct then becomes auto-erotic, and not until the period of latency has been passed through is the original relation restored. There are thus good reasons why a child sucking at his mother's breast has become the prototype of every relation of love. *The finding of an object is in fact a refinding of it* (p. 88; italics added).

Freud seems unambiguous on at least one point here; "refinding" of an object later in love is an act of rediscovering the *pre-autoerotic* object, which remains to be transferentially reevoked later in life. On the other hand, Freud writes earlier in the book about the first sexual object in the following way:

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[18]It is noteworthy that, at least here, autoerotism does not correspond to a time *before* awareness of the object is possible; quite the contrary, autoerotism begins at a time when whole object awareness has just become a possibility.

> It has been brought to our notice that we have been in the habit of regarding the connection between the sexual instinct and the sexual object as more intimate than it in fact is. Experience of the cases that are considered abnormal has shown us that in them *the sexual instinct and the sexual object are merely soldered together. . .* (p. 14; italics added).

An interesting contradiction appears. Whereas the first object (the pre-autoerotic object) is determined by the earliest experiences of need satisfaction, the later, exclusively sexual object is merely contingent; it is "soldered" on, as it were. However, this later object is also the refound object, and therefore would seem to be (if taken literally) determined by the first object.

These views become compatible if one assumes that, in the second passage, Freud is describing an external object, whereas in the passage on 'refinding' he is referring to an internally represented object, derived from pre-autoerotic object experiences and becoming transferred onto later external objects (Cf. Lear, 1990). In a sense, 'refinding' could be seen here as the quintessential Freudian paradox, containing both the real (external) and psychic (internal representation or phantasy); object love is thus seen as conjoining both a relationship with a real external object and an internal phantasy experience, itself initially derived from our most 'real' (directly need-satisfying) relationship with the primary object. The autoerotic turn inward constitutes the basic condition for such a paradox, as it represents the primal moment of dislocation from the somatic (self-preservative) and external (mother's actual breast) of the psychic realm (sexuality, phantasy objects). Thus, in becoming sexual we are simultaneously becoming psychological, in a way not directly determined by, but containing within, a kernel of our basic biological needs and unmediated experiences with the external world.

Phantasy, Autoerotism, and Object Choice

With regard to the earliest experiences of autoerotism, Freud says little about the original internal experience; he does not explicitly say that the earliest self-stimulation is accompanied by phantasy, and there is nothing to suggest that he held this view. He does clearly suggest that *later* autoerotism is accompanied by phantasies relating to the original object, and that such phantasies constitute the necessary first phase of "object choice." This idea is found in Freud's one reference to phantasy in *Three Essays* manifestly concerns pubertal masturbation:

> It is in the *world of ideas*, however, that the *choice of an object is accomplished at first*; and the sexual life of maturing youth is almost entirely restricted to indulging in phantasies, that is, in ideas that are not destined to be carried into effect. In these phantasies the *infantile tendencies* invariably emerge once more, but this time with intensified pressure from somatic sources (pp. 92-3; italics added).

While the context of this passage relates specifically to incestuous phantasies of early puberty, one can assume that his first statement–that object choice is accomplished first in the "world ideas" (i.e. phantasies)–might apply to earlier period of object choice as well. Indeed, Freud writes in the second essay that the choice of an object is "diphasic," and that the process of object choice in adolescence is merely the revived process begun "between the ages of three and five" (p. 66).

The idea that this childhood object choice is phantastical is further supported by what, initially, seems like a contradiction. Recall that, in his passage on 'refinding' the object (see above, p. 180), Freud states that "As a rule [after the original object relationship with the mother's breast] the sexual instinct then becomes autoerotic, and not until the period of latency is passed through is the original relation restored" (p. 88) If what Freud means here is that, after latency, the original relation with a real external object (rather than

the phantasied one of age 3-5) is restored, then the contradiction is removed, and a basic structure is elaborated, wherein the original, 'direct' relationship with an external object is turned inward, is retained first as a memory, then later as an active phantasy (perhaps after the intercession of a content-less autoerotic phase), and then eventually the phantasy leads the subject back to relationships with objects during the phase of pubertal object choice.

In sum, Freud's view of 1905 reintroduces phantasy as template between somatic/external reality and psyche by handling the contradiction posed by the following two ideas: 1) sexuality is initially constituted physiologically at discrete bodily zones; and 2) sexuality begins psychologically with a turning inward, *away from* the real external object and bodily, self-preservative needs. The concept of the phantasied sexual object forms a bridge by providing a point of displacement from the physiological and external that contains elements of each and serves as the point of reconnection back to sensual bodily experiences with real external objects. The bodily nature of sexuality and the intrinsic importance of the external object is preserved without reducing the psychical aspects of sexuality to either the physiological or real external experiences.

Clinical Applications of Phantasy: 1905-1910

In the years following the publication of *Three Essays on Sexuality* and preceding the beginning of his series of metapsychological papers after 1910, Freud focuses his attention on the clinical manifestations of phantasy in both normality and pathology. His papers of 1908-09–"Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality," "Family Romances," "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming," and "General Remarks on Hysterical Attacks"–show a particular focus on the origin and fate of unconscious phantasy, and seem to of-

fer one resolution to the questions that remained from *Three Essays on Sexuality*.

Of these papers, "Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality" (Freud, 1908a) provides the most comprehensive account of Freud's view of phantasy at this point. He writes there that unconscious phantasies are present in all neuroses and play a determining role in symptom formation. These phantasies are essentially *daydreams*, and like night dreams are motivated by unconscious wishes and generated by frustration. While unconscious during the production of symptoms, in most cases phantasies start out in consciousness, only becoming unconscious due to repression. (Freud leaves open the possibility that some may never have been conscious, but he sees this as less common).

As to conditions of their initial formation, Freud writes that "the common origin and normal prototype of all these phantastic creations are the so-called *daydreams of adolescence*" (p. 145; italics added). He adds further that such a phantasy "is actually identical with the phantasy which served the person in his sexual gratification during the period of masturbation" (p. 147). Here the reference seems to be to what Freud had described in *Three Essays* as the later period of masturbation following the interruption of latency and preceding the detachment of libido from incestuous phantasy objects.

Again, as in *Three Essays* there is no explicit mention of the mental accompaniment of earlier childhood periods of masturbation. Moreover, Freud's description of the initial "soldering" (see p. 181) of the phantasy to masturbatory act suggests a pre-phantastical masturbatory phase:

> The masturbatory . . . act at that time [it is unclear in this passage whether Freud is referring to a specific developmental phase, e.g. puberty] consisted of two parts, one of which was the creation of the phantasy and the other a manipulative performance for at-

> taining autoerotic gratification at the climax of the phantasy. It is known that the two components of the act have first had to be *welded together* (p. 147; italics added).

Here again we see the new structure of psychical and actual, in which they are seen as more-or-less free-standing but "welded together." Freud continues:

> Originally the active performance was a purely auto-erotic proceeding for the purpose of obtaining pleasure from a particular autoerotic part of the body. Later this performance became bound up with the idea of a wish emanating from the sphere of object love, and served as a partial realization of the situation in which the phantasy culminated (p. 147).

Here Freud initially gives chronological priority to the 'actual' component–the masturbatory act, and this seems to contradict the point made above, that Freud had established a structure wherein the original pre-autoerotic object is retained in phantasy form and is the recipient of libido prior to the first external object choice.

The solution to this contradiction is conveyed in Freud's statement that the initial autoerotic activity eventually becomes "bound up with the idea of a wish emanating from the sphere of object love." There is a curious ambiguity in the notion of an "*idea of a wish;*" this seems at least one step removed from a simple unconscious wish, which we recall from *Dreams* is merely a perceptual memory linked to an impulse. An "idea of a wish" suggests a form of representation of the wish that is not merely identical with the wish itself. However, this does not become phantasy until linked to the physical masturbatory act. Again, Freud seems to have a need here to at least weld (if not ground) the pathogenic psychological units to actual or biological realities. The "idea of the wish" without the masturbatory act is incomplete; it becomes constituted as a phantasy when joined with physical activity stimulating an erotogenic zone, then retains its status as a phantasy unconsciously after masturbation ceases.

This view of the relation between masturbation and phantasy is clearly consistent with the theory of instincts as it appears in 1905; there the *source* of the sexual instinct is located in "somatic organs" constituting the erotogenic zones (see p. 176). Given this, for an instinctual phantasy to carry any motivational energy, it must initially be linked with such a zone through a masturbatory act. Here the ideational component of a phantasy is partly derived from an representation of a former wish, which provides it with psychological meaningfulness. However, it is initially devoid of its own independent motivational potential, which it only acquires 'on loan' by becoming bound up with autoerotic physiological activity. Together, the two components constitute a phantasy.

Implications

In this phase of Freud's thought the developmental and clinical meanings of phantasy are introduced, along with several other concepts that will prove divisive in the Controversial Discussions: 1) the relationship between phantasy and instinct; and 2) the notion of autoerotism and early dating of phantasied object relations by Kleinians.

In the Kleinian view, phantasy is the mental representative of instinct from the beginning of life. As discussed above, during this phase Freud saw impulse becoming separated from the original object at the moment that the sexual and self-preservative instincts detached from one another, and the sexual impulses were gratified autoerotically for a period of time before joining up with and becoming mentally represented by phantasy preceding external object choice. While Freud was somewhat ambiguous about when *phantasy* object choice took place, there is no indication that he saw it as occurring

prior to the age of three. Therefore, the texts during this period seem to support those opposed to the Kleinians on the issue of early dating.

As for the overall notion of early phantasy object relations and phantasy, the issue is more complicated. On the one hand, as noted above, object choice in phantasy was not yet envisioned by Freud prior to the age of three, at the very earliest. On the other hand, the notion of autoerotism as 'pre-object' is contradicted by the passages I have quoted; during this period Freud clearly saw a relationship to an external object as *preceding* autoerotism and serving as the basis for all later object relations. This original object relationship was seen as eventually becoming represented in phantasies that underlie both object choice and symptom formation. The notion that the earliest tie to the object is represented in phantasy and serves as a kind of psychological bedrock for later experiences, both normal and pathological, is in clear agreement with the Kleinian position, and against that of the Anna Freud group, who insisted on object choice only beginning after autoerotism, and taking place first in reality, prior to the beginning of phantasy.

It should be remembered at this point that many of Freud's views during this phase are transitory. He clearly used the concept of phantasy to provide the psychical/representational aspect to the increasingly somatic views of sexuality he was formulating. In the next two phases of his thought the view of instincts, and eventually of the psychic apparatus altogether, become more intrinsically representational and subjective, and in this context the place and meaning of the concept of phantasy will again undergo significant change.

III. Metapsychology and Phantasy: 1910-1919

Beginning in 1910 Freud's thinking undergoes a remarkable (albeit little remarked) transformation that leads to a new view of phantasy in 1918. In what follows I will attempt to demonstrate how three interrelated sets of ideas that appeared between 1910 and 1911–narcissism, a revised theory of instinct, and the universality of the Oedipus complex–eventually required Freud to alter his view of phantasy in order to theoretically undergrid the conceptual changes introduced by these ideas.

As discussed above, leading up to this point Freud had clearly demarcated the various psychic elements of the psychic apparatus; these included: 1) unconscious wishes, made up of memory traces and impulses operating according to the primary process, and therefore seek rapid discharge and are unorganized and free-flowing. These alone, of all psychic elements, are considered 'psychic reality,' and therefore act causally on other psychical elements (see pp. 171-172). 2) Preconscious ideas, comprised of verbal presentations organized by the secondary process; these have structure and coherence. 3) Phantasies, which are composite structures made up of both preconscious and unconscious elements, and are seen as later developments, most often described as beginning in puberty, although the possibility of earlier beginnings is suggested (see p. 182). Phantasies are comprised primarily of memories, but are distorted, like dreams, by both wishes and defenses. They are thus both partly expressive and partly defensive, function to both recollect and distort, and serve both primary process (discharge) and secondary process (structure and intelligibility). It is in the nature of phantasies that they be more sophisticated, later developments, and therefore not the 'primary expression of instinct,' and do not comprise psychic reality, but instead are simply later developmental achievements serving compromise functions.

As also discussed, in 1905 Freud again made use of phantasy to append the psychic to the physical (as well as retain their distinctiveness); developmentally, phantasy was the bridge between autoerotism and object-choice ("it is in the world of ideas that the choice of an object is accomplished at first"), and it served as a sort of conduit between the purely somatic manifestations of libido at the bodily zones and the purely psychical aspects of neurotic symptoms. Thus, phantasy served to bridge these antithetical realms.

With developments after 1910 this way of conceiving of the mind, with the implicit restriction of subjective elements of the psychic apparatus to either verbal ideas, memories, wishes, or phantasies (made of elements of each) becomes untenable. In a word, the entire psychic apparatus becomes 'subjectivized' as Freud's language shifts toward a set of terms that cannot be encompassed by his previous framework. As I will try to show, the relationship between the psyche and the actual (somatic and external) also undergoes a profound change at this time, and again phantasy serves as the copping-stone, as it were, for the new integration of these epistemological terms.

Instinct Theory

Beginning in 1911, in a paper entitled "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia," Freud begins to refer to instinct as "a term situated on the frontier-line between the somatic and the mental, and consider it is denoting the mental representative of organic forces" (1911a, p. 44). Here both the somatic and psychic are emphasized, and instinct itself is now offered as the piece that would bridge the gap between psychic and physical, as a *representation.*

In "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" Freud juxtaposes two different ways of viewing the relationship of instinct to the body. The first, "from the

side of physiology" defines the instinct as "a stimulus to the mind" arising "from within the organism itself" (1915a, p. 84). The "nervous system" (rather than psychic apparatus) is discussed in terms of its primary function of "abolishing stimuli which reach it, or of reducing excitation to the lowest possible level" (p. 86). This is spoken from the perspective of the physical reality of the body; the instinct is a stimulus *to* the mind (about which no more is said from this perspective) *from* a nervous system designed to reduce tension.

Freud then takes up the situation from other direction, which he calls "the biological point of view" (it isn't entirely clear why he refers to it in this way, given the context). From this perspective instinct is a:

> *borderline concept* between the mental and the physical, being both the *mental representative* of the stimuli emanating from the organism and penetrating to the mind, and at the same time a measure of the demand made upon the energy of the latter in consequence of its *connection with the body* (p. 87; italics added).

From this perspective, instinct is not a "stimulus" from the body but a "representation" of such; the urge toward eliminating excitation (constancy principle) is here conceived on the physical side of things, while the function of representing is on the mental (cf. Loewald, 1971). Therefore, Freud can be read as beginning to define the function of the mind as primarily one of representing the body and its impulses, the most urgent of which operate according to the constancy principle.

While Freud is not always consistent in maintaining this distinction, there is a clear trend that develops from 1914 on, in which Freud maintains the distinctness of psychology by maintaining a representational, rather than direct, link between psyche and soma.

For example, in "On Narcissism," Freud writes: "I try in general to keep apart from psychology everything that is not strictly within its scope" (1914, p. 61). Similarly, in "The Unconscious" Freud states:

> But every attempt to deduce from these facts [of brain localization] a localization of mental processes, every endeavor to think of ideas as stored up in nerve cells and of excitations as passing along nerve-fibres, has completely miscarried. . . Here there is an hiatus which at present cannot be filled, nor is it one of the tasks of psychology to fill it (1915c, p. 124).

These statements appear to represent a declaration of independence, of sorts– Freud is formally swearing off his previous obsession with finding the right piece to reattach the physical and psychic in some essential way. Several pages after the passage quoted above, Freud brings this view to a discussion of instinct: "We can only mean an instinctual impulse the ideational content of which is unconscious, for *nothing else comes into consideration*" (p. 126; italics added).

Given Freud's long-running attempt to creatively integrate the physical and psychical domains, his sudden de-emphasis on the physical and acceptance of indeterminacy seems remarkable. Here he seems to be saying, 'psychoanalysis is truly about the psychical and what is represented there, let us attend to the physiological aspect only insofar as it becomes manifest as representation' It is not exactly clear what precipitated this change, although an altered viewpoint is evident from 1911 in the kind of concepts Freud begins to fit into his model of the psychic apparatus. In contrast to many of the earlier terms, such as memory traces, ideas, and wishes, these are more three-dimensional, interactive, and somewhat organic, as though he were describing internal organs that grow, merge, and multiply rather than the customary ideas, memories, and wishes and the shifting cathexes between them.

In should be noted that Freud is clearly reluctant to refer to these new conceptions of the mind as representing a form of phantasy. However, it is exactly the difficulty of fitting this new 'representational' way of thinking with established concepts, alongside the changed view of instinct and notion of universal phantasies, that leads Freud first to alter his view of phantasy in 1918, then to completely revise his model of the mind in a way that is consistent with the view of representation as the primary function of the mental organization.

Narcissism

Freud's theory of narcissism, culminating in his 1914 paper entitled "On Narcissism," proceeded in two steps. The first of these occurred in 1910, when Freud introduces the concept of narcissism in a footnote to the second edition of *Three Essays*. At this point the concept is used as an explanation for inversion, and refers to a certain kind of pathological early identification:

> future inverts, in the earliest years of their childhood, pass through a phase of very intense but short-lived fixation to a woman (usually their mother) and that, after leaving this behind, they identify themselves with a woman and take *themselves* as their sexual object. That is to say, they proceed from a narcissistic basis, and look to a young man who resembles themselves and whom *they* love as their mother loved *them* (1905b, p. 11).

It should be noted that Freud is not yet equating narcissism with a normal developmental phase; instead, he describes it as a particular pathological outcome of "too much tenderness on the part of the mother" (1910b, p. 54), which leads the initial object choice to give way to identification. As one aspect of such an identification, the boy exchanges his subject for object; instead of loving his mother, he will love himself as she loved him. Thus, nar-

cissism is here conceived in a two person field–it is more an exchange of role or position than an experience of enclosed self-sufficiency or merger.

While this is the first instance in which Freud discusses identification in relation to object-choice, he had previously described something similar in the context of phantasies underlying hysterical symptoms. For example, in his paper, "Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality" Freud (1908a) describes symptoms based on an underlying phantasy in which a patient enacts both the male and female parts of a sexual scene. Thus, he saw the possibility of reversing roles, or even maintaining opposite roles simultaneously, as a form of identification taking place in phantasy. However, nowhere in either *Three Essays*, or in his biographical work on *Leorardo Da Vinci* (1910b), in which the same view of narcissism appears, does Freud describe narcissism in terms of phantasy. But it would be difficult to know under what other heading identification could be placed, at this point in Freud's writing; it is more complex than simply a verbal idea, unconscious wish, or memory. And, as discussed above (p. 182), Freud had suggested the idea that object-choice proceeds by way of initial phantasy; thus there is precedent for linking these concepts, but this is something Freud does not do.

The following year Freud again refers to narcissism, this time in the context of the etiology of psychosis, in the case of Schreber (1911a). This time narcissism is described as a normal developmental stage between autoerotism and object-love, in which the sexual instincts are first unified on the self before proceeding to other objects. Interestingly, the notion of identifying with the mother, which Freud had previously equated with loving the self (in the place of mother) is no longer mentioned. Instead, narcissism is described in purely self-reflexive terms: "he begins by taking himself, his own body, as his love-object, and only subsequently proceeds from this to the choice of some

person other than himself as his object" (p. 31). There is thus an apparent reduction to a one-person scenario, in which the self loves itself, with no involvement by another. In this scheme, homosexuality is seen, not as an expression of the original narcissistic identification with the mother, but as a fixation in an intermediate step from complete narcissistic self-sufficiency toward the capacity to love a separate other; in narcissistic homosexuality the object occupies a sort of compromise position, separate from but similar to the self (Cf. Ellman, 1995; Ellman and Monk, 1997).

The important point here is that with this view of narcissism, as with the one preceding it, Freud is trenching in the realm of representation; in unifying the instincts on the self as the first object, Freud is now making clear what he means by an object; it can only mean a mental representation (before this point Freud was not clear about this, and representation–"the world of ideas"–seemed reserved exclusively for phantasy, which, as we discussed, occupied a circumscribed domain.) Here Freud is implying not only that the childhood objects are representations, but so are *all objects* of normal adults.

This view of object as representation is made clear in Freud's discussion of paranoia, which runs as follows: one becomes paranoid when a frustration in current love relations leads to a detachment of libido. Instead of reattaching to another person, or cathecting objects in phantasy (as in neurosis), a previous fixation in the narcissistic stage leads the person to recathect the self, leading to megalomania. Preoccupation with delusional phantasies of others represents an attempt at recovery via restoration of object ties[19]. Here Freud is distinguishing realistic representations of objects from the phantasies of objects cathected by neurotics, but both are clearly seen as repre-

[19]It should be noted that, whereas initially narcissism seemed to fit within the previous model of phantasy, it is now conceived as antithetical to phantasy–it is resorted to *instead of* phantasy.

sentations. This is in no way inconsistent with previous ideas, but it is also a point Freud never needed to make explicit until his concept of narcissism.

In his paper devoted entirely to the topic of narcissism–"On Narcissism"–Freud again alters the concept in significant ways by introducing economic concepts and offering a new metaphoric rendering of the ego:

> we form a conception of an original libidinal cathexis of the ego, part of which cathexis is later yielded up to objects, but which fundamentally persists and is related to the object-cathexes much as the body of a protoplasmic animalcule is related to the pseudopodia which it puts out (1914, p. 58).

The original narcissistic ego is now seen as both the first object and the first subject; out of its cathexis it becomes constituted as a unity, from which it eventually (after the development of the capacity for object choice) relates to other objects by sending out or drawing back parts of itself and its energy, like a "protoplasmic animalcule." This is a rather strange idea, and certainly without precedent in Freud's writing; it clearly represents a shift in Freud's mode of conceptualization. One difference relates to the relationship of instinct to the psychic organization; whereas in other contexts Freud had conceived of libido or cathectic energy infusing the psychic apparatus from physiological sources, in this passage Freud is modeling the psyche as possessing its own energy, more similar to a living organism than a machine powered by an outside energy source. Thus, one could say that the previous "apparatus model" of the mind, in which it is viewed as a scientific instrument, becomes an "organic model," in which the psyche is represented as a living entity, or collection of entities in interaction (Loewald, 1971).

A second, and related issue concerns the way the ego itself is rendered. Here it is not a static "idea" or "memory trace;" it is more like a subjective being, involved in exchanges of parts of itself and its energy with other beings.

For example, when falling in love the narcissistic ego sends its energy out and is depleted, only to have its narcissistic libido restored when the love is reciprocated. The confusion with which this idea is often received undoubtedly stems from an expectation that Freud is continuing to hold his previous notion that libidinal cathexis involves pleasurable zonal experiences in coordination with external objects–therefore this idea would seem to imply some form of energy transformation taking place between two real people, which is untenable. The current model only makes sense if it is assumed that Freud is describing both the ego and the object as similar *mental* entities. In this way, ego and object are cohabitants of the psyche similarly constituted as energy vesicles, exchanging energy with one another as both subject and object, source and receiver. It is important to point out here that Freud is describing the vicissitudes of narcissism in normal psychological states, not "introversion to phantasy" as in neurosis; therefore these internal interactions correspond, on some level, to interactions with "real" objects.

This way of conceiving of the mind is not an anomaly for Freud, but rather the beginning of a trend. The following year he introduces another set of ideas similarly organic and interactive, in a paper entitled "Instincts and their Vicissitudes." There he describes the "purified pleasure ego," a phase in the development of the ego immediately following that of narcissism. Freud writes:

> Under the sway of the pleasure-principle there now takes place a further development. The objects presenting themselves, in so far as they are sources of pleasure, are absorbed by the ego into itself, 'introjected'. . . while, on the other hand, the ego thrusts forth upon the external world whatever within itself gives rise to pain. . . Thus the original reality ego, which distinguished outer and inner by means of a sound objective criterion, changes into a purified *pleasure ego*. . . For this pleasure ego the outside world is divided into a part that is pleasurable, which it has incorporated into itself, and a remainder that is alien to it. A part

> of itself it has separated off, and this it projects into the external world and regards as hostile (1915a, p.99).

Clearly, although the metaphoric image is different in important respects–this protoplasm is more concerned with merger and division than investing and disinvesting energy–the organic and interactive quality is quite similar. It is also different in interesting ways that seem to relate to the developmental period in question. Whereas Freud earlier used the model of the protoplasmic animalcule to convey a mode of libidinal exchange between the ego and objects throughout life, here the idea of the purified pleasure ego conveys the initial reaction of the early narcissistic ego to the perception of external objects (again, as in On Narcissism, it is implied that these objects are some form of inner representation of the external world), and this consists largely of an attempt to return to narcissism through the distorting effects of introjection and projection (Ellman, 1995)[20].

Therefore, it seems accurate to suggest that Freud is envisioning the first psychological (that is, psychically represented) relationship between the ego and object as characterized by a kind of infusion of wish with reality, in a way that fundamentally alters the perception of reality during that early period–the wish to return to the earlier state of perfect narcissistic self-sufficiency leads to a fundamental altering of the boundaries between internal and external. Further, later interactions between ego and object represented psychically have, as one aspect, a mutual exchange of energy that cannot be

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[20]In the text Freud has the "reality ego" precede the "purified pleasure ego," which seems to introduce a contradiction in the account I am offering, as well as that he offered himself in "Two Principles of Mental Functioning" (1911b), where the reality ego follows the pleasure ego. One way of handling this contradiction was suggested by Ellman (personal communication): The original pleasure ego is taken for granted in the text; this would correspond to primary narcissism. The "original reality ego" could be a marginal development, very brief in duration and quickly supplanted by the "purified pleasure ego" when reality proves initially too aversive to bear. The PPE then would be an initial defensive response to this experience, as well as constituting the initial mode of relating to external objects.

thought to correspond with actual perceptual experience. Both of these refer to inner psychic experiences with objects that have no exact external corollary, and in one case involve a high degree of distortion. What is their place in Freud's model of the mind?

The only possible location where one could place this would be under the category of phantasy. As discussed above (p. 175), Freud's only concept with this degree of fluid and interactive quality, not derived directly from memory, blending characteristics of primary and secondary process, would be phantasy. However, while phantasy is mentioned frequently during this period, Freud does not describe the ego-object interactions, described above, as forms of phantasy. In addition, the only paper during this period (prior to 1918) in which Freud discusses in some *theoretical* detail the nature of phantasy appears somewhat earlier, in his 1911 paper entitled "Two Principles of Mental Functioning," and, as I will discuss below, this paper seems to argue against the idea of self and object representations as forms of phantasy.

In "Two Principles" Freud takes on the task of "investigating the development of the relation of the neurotic and of mankind in general to reality" (1911b, p. 21). Primarily he does so by naming the "reality principle" as the secondary line of motivation (roughly corresponding to the mode of activity of the secondary process), one which distinguishes itself from the initial "pleasure principle" by adaptations in the mental apparatus that place heightened significance on the functions of perception and motor action, as well as instituting the new functions of attention, memory-notation, judgment, and a form of thought characterized by "experimental action." The primary distinction for Freud is the difference in motivational priority–under the primacy of the earlier pleasure principle (corresponding to primary process), the mental apparatus cathects only what is pleasurable, and avoids what is un-

pleasurable, while under the reality principle the mental apparatus cathects what is *real*, irregardless of pleasure or unpleasure.

In describing the relationship between the two principles Freud returns to the idea of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment, which he had not written about since its introduction in 1900. For Freud, this mode of gratification exemplifies the pleasure principle (just as it had the activity of primary process) in that it leaves out any consideration of reality. Freud writes that the supercession of the reality principle is motivated by the failure of hallucination to provide any kind of sustaining gratification, but that this supercession is only partial:

> With the introduction of the reality-principle one mode of thought-activity was split off; it was kept free from reality-testing and remained subordinated to the pleasure principle alone. This is the act of *phantasy-making*, which begins already in the games of children, and later, continued as *day-dreaming*, abandons its dependence on real objects (1911b, p. 24; italics in original).

As we saw in chapter 3, this passage has been interpreted in different ways. The Kleinians read this as implying a continuation of an original form of phantasy from hallucinatory wish-fulfillment preceding the reality principle through the daydreams and games of later childhood and eventually adulthood. Against this view, the Anna Freud group saw this passage as indicating that "phantasy-making" only begins *after* the supercession of the reality principle, as a kind of frustration byproduct, and that the reference to its beginnings "already in the games of children" indicates this as a development originating in childhood (rather than infancy).

Clearly the passage could suggest either reading, and certainly given Freud's previous views of phantasy–as always involving condensations of unconscious and preconscious levels (the latter of which would correspond to development of the reality principle), and as mostly seen as beginning in later

childhood (if not puberty)–the interpretation by the Anna Freud group seems consistent with Freud. However, if we look *forward* from this passage to some of Freud's later ideas, the Kleinian position becomes more tenable, as I will discuss. However, the exact meaning remains ambiguous in this passage.

In a later passage Freud offers a similarly ambiguous set of ideas. In writing of this gradual and uneven supercession of the reality principle, Freud writes:

> For while this development [the domination of the reality principle] is going on in the ego instincts, the sexual instincts become detached from them in very significant ways. The sexual instincts at first behave auto-erotically; they find their satisfaction in the child's own body and therefore do not come into the situation of frustration which enforces the installation of the reality principle. Then when later on they begin to find an object, this development undergoes a long interruption in the latency period, which postpones sexual development until puberty. . . In consequence of these conditions there arises a closer connection, on the one hand, between the sexual instincts and phantasy, and on the other hand, between the ego-instincts and the activities of consciousness (p. 25).

One could read this several different ways. On the one hand, Freud could be referring to earlier ideas (e.g. 1905a) about phantasy arising during periods of masturbation, roughly corresponding to periods of initial object choice, which corresponded in earlier writings to the ages of 3-5, then again at puberty. In this view phantasy would be seen as a relatively advanced byproduct of frustration involving a condensation of unconscious wish and preconscious ideation.

However, this passage links the reality principle, not phantasy, to frustration. In fact, it is the absence of frustration, due to autoerotic gratification, that allows phantasy to develop instead of the reality principle. (This is a clear reversal of ideas proposed earlier in which phantasy was seen as a byproduct of frustration (cf. Freud, 1908a).) In detaching phantasy from frustration Freud

must be linking it merely to gratification, and here we see again the notion of continuity; it is the ego instincts which face frustration and therefore need to undergo modification, while the sexual instincts can continue direct gratification unabated through autoerotic phantasy.

In addition, Freud's idea about the initial object choice had changed since 1905; by 1911 Freud was stating explicitly that the initial unification of instincts around an object occurred much earlier than previously estimated, and corresponded to the primary narcissistic cathexis of the ego (see p. 193). One reading–the continuity reading–of both of these passages would therefore provide a direct link between the implicit notion of phantasy as operating continuously through the preservation of primary process in the unconscious, and constituting the setting of the initial cathexis of the ego and its first relations with objects described by Freud in 1914-15.

However, in 1911 the passages are merely ambiguous, and can be read either way, depending on whether one looks back to earlier concept or forward to ones that are beginning to germinate (see Baudry, 1994 for a different view of the ambiguity of these passages). This is perhaps fitting given the transitional nature of this period in Freud's thought. In addition to the changes I have already described, there is one other concept that will eventually push Freud toward a revised theory of phantasy in 1918, and that is the notion of universal phantasies.

Primal Phantasies

The final thread leading to Freud's late theory of phantasy is that of the universality of a limited number of common themes that appear in the phantasies of children, irrespective of actual experiences. These primarily include themes concerned with the differences between the sexes and the origins of life; thus the term 'primal phantasy' is well-earned (Laplanche and Pontalis,

1968). For example, the 'primal scene,' seduction phantasies, castration, origin of babies, origin of differences between the sexes, family romance, and positive and negative versions of the Oedipus Complex appear in Freud's discussions of primal phantasies.

The notion of universal Oedipal phantasies first appears in a letter to Fliess dated October 15, 1897, where Freud announces the discovery of his own Oedipal feelings from childhood and speculates that the universality of these feelings accounts for the "gripping power of Oedipus Rex" (Masson, 1985; p. 272). This idea appears in published form for the first time 1900, in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* in a section of "Typical Dreams." There he holds back slightly from stating categorically that Oedipal phantasies have universal status: "I cannot pretend that this is universally so, but the preponderance in the direction I have indicated is so evident that it requires to be explained by a factor of general importance" (1900, p. 289).

For the next decade the Oedipal situation remains in the background of Freud's thought, as he occupies himself first with elaborations of the wish-fulfillment theory of dreams and symptoms, then after 1905, with the physical manifestations of sexuality in erotogenic zones and connections to neurotic symptoms. Only in 1910 does Freud begin to use the term "Oedipus Complex," in a paper entitled "A Special Type of Object Choice Made by Men," although he is not yet explicitly considering it universal or the "nucleus" of the neuroses. This designation does not appear until 1913, in *Totem and Taboo.* There Freud writes "the nucleus of all neuroses as far as our present knowledge of them goes is the Oedipus Complex" (p. 202). This is also the work where Freud offers his basis for universal phantasies in the prehistoric killing of the father by a "primal horde" of brothers, which left a stamp

of "tragic guilt" that passed its way down through the generations in a kind of phylogenetic inheritance.

Thus, at the moment that Freud is asserting a universality to particular forms of phantasies, transcending both actual experiences and physiology, he offers another kind of external actuality, embedded within and behind the phantasy and transcending individual experience. At the same time the importance of actual experience in the external world is necessarily diminished now that psychological meaning is now contained in and conveyed by phantasy itself.

In 1915 several passages show the mark of the idea of universal phantasies and begin to indicate the extent to which idea alters the preexisting theory. In "The Unconscious" Freud writes:

> If inherited mental formations exist in the human being–something analogous to instinct in animals–*these constitute the nucleus of the Ucs*. Later there is added all that is discarded as useless during childhood development, and this need not differ in its nature from what is inherited" (p. 141; italics added).

These inherited formations now seem to have taken the place of unconscious wishes, which Freud had earlier labeled the "nucleus of the unconscious" and the sole constituent of psychic reality. However, it should be noted that Freud does not refer to these formations as phantasies; indeed to do so would contradict an earlier passage in the same paper, where Freud writes:

> Amongst the derivatives of the unconscious instinctual impulses, the character of which we have just described, there are some which unite in themselves opposite features. On the one hand, they are highly organized, exempt from self-contradictoriness, have made use of every acquisition of the system Cs, and would hardly be distinguished by our ordinary judgment from the formations of that system. On the other hand they are unconscious and incapable of becoming conscious. Thus they belong to their qualities to the system Pcs, but in actual fact to the Ucs. . . Of such nature are the phantasy-formations of normal

> persons as well as of neurotics (1915c, pp. 137-8; italics in original).

This again appears to represent the familiar view of phantasy as occurring through a condensation of unconscious and preconscious, and as primarily belonging to the latter system. We have discussed above (p. 198) the difficulties such a view presents for considering phantasy as the setting for the narcissistic and purified pleasure egos. Now, despite Freud's apparent offering of "inherited mental formation[s]" as constituting the "nucleus of the unconscious," it would seem untenable to consider something largely comprised of preconscious properties (i.e. phantasies) to be the core of the unconscious.

However, the notion that phantasies constitute this inherited core is unmistakable in another paper published the same year in which Freud begins to use the term "primal phantasy" for the first time. This appears in a paper entitled "A Case of Paranoia" (1915d), in which Freud attributes the paranoid delusions stemming from a patient's auditory experiences to the operation of a universal phantasy:

> Among the wealth of unconscious phantasies of neurotics, and probably of all human beings, there is one which is seldom absent and can be disclosed by analysis, concerning the watching of sexual intercourse between the parents. I call these phantasies, together with those of seduction, castration and others, *primal phantasies*; and I shall discuss more fully elsewhere their origin and the relation of them to individual experience (p. 103; italics added).

Here the denotation of phantasy is explicit, and we can easily assume that "primal phantasies" are identical to the inherited mental formations referred to by Freud the same year, and therefore constitute the nucleus of the unconscious. While Freud's explicit theory of phantasy contradicts such a view, there are several ways of understanding this difficulty. One is that Freud actually had two theories of phantasy at this time, but could only really

elaborate one of them because of limitations in his theoretical schema (the 'psychic apparatus' of 1900). Another possibility is that, while Freud saw such phantasies as rooted in inherited mental formations, the latter initially exist in latent form until joining with preconscious experiential elements after some degree of maturation (see Sandler and Nagera, 1963 for a discussion of this view).

Freud's case of the Wolf Man (1918) suggests such a possibility. This case is famous for Freud's interpretation that his patient, who suffered from phobic and obsessional symptoms, first during early childhood, then again as an adult, developed his infantile neurosis as a four-year-old due to having witnessed his parents in intercourse three years before. This interpretation follows from a dream of five wolves, which Freud takes to represent, in various details, the original aspects of the observed parental intercourse. There is a return of the 'deferred action' scheme here, only in reverse: in this case, a *later* seduction, by the sister at age three-and-a-half gives pathological meaning to the earlier experience of witnessing the parents' intercourse, and it is the earlier witnessing, rather than the later actual sexual experience, that is the prime focus of Freud's interpretive work.

It is crucial in the present context to point out how Freud's views of the actuality of the primal scene experience changed between his completing the case write-up in 1914 and its eventual publication in 1918. Whereas initially insisting of the primal scene experience " it is impossible that it can be anything else than the reproduction of a reality experienced by the child" (p. 243), Freud later demurs that an experience such as witnessing dogs in intercourse could have provided the original material for the scene. In this revised view, "phylogenetically inherited schemata" are responsible for transforming certain classes of experiences into universal phantasy scenarios; "*Wherever ex-*

periences fail to fit in with the hereditary schema, they become remodeled in the imagination. . . we are often able to see the schema triumphing over the experiences of the individual" (p. 314; italics added).

However, even with the revised view of "inherited schemata," Freud sees some form of earlier actual experience as necessary to provide certain memories that later become activated, through a kind of deferred action, to produce the phantasy. With the Wolfman, the phantasy does not actually form until after the age of three. Thus, this case is in keeping with the view that preconscious elements are required even for phylogenetic memories, it is the "schemata," not the phantasies themselves, that form the "nucleus of the unconscious."

1918: Phantasy and Psychic Reality

Freud's final, explicit revision of the concept of unconscious phantasy appears toward the end of his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1917-18), in Lecture XXIII. It is important to note that, near the beginning of this lecture, Freud offers a new synthesis of the psychical and the actual, and he accomplishes this by way of phylogenesis and primal phantasies. He writes of innateness that "constitutional dispositions are also undoubtedly after-effects of experiences by ancestors in the past; they too were once acquired" (p. 449). Thus Freud now revises his concept of the "complemental series" between the sexual constitution and infantile experience to include within the constitutional register earlier phylogenetic *experiences*, themselves the product of a complemental series, and so on. Thus a near infinite regression is invoked, in which constitution is always referring to experiences, even while it is structuring current experience. Experience and constitution are now each nested within the other, and become manifest in primal phantasy; thus, there is no

experience that is not partly derived from constitution, and no constitution that is not formed from experiences.

Of primal phantasy, Freud writes that "there can be no doubt that their sources lie in the instincts. . . in them the individual reaches beyond his own experience into primaeval experience at points where his own experience has been too rudimentary" (p. 461). In effect, instinct, no longer the direct expression of somatic excitation, but more recently conceived as the representation of bodily urges in the mind, is now also the conduit for earlier (primaeval) experience; thus representation lies at both the source and expression of instinct.

At the expressive end of instinct, Freud now gives phantasy a prominent place as well:

> All the objects and trends which the libido has given up have not yet been given up in every sense. They or their derivatives are still retained with a certain intensity in phantasies. Thus the libido need only withdraw onto phantasies in order to find the path open to every repressed fixation (p. 464).

In effect, every repressed instinctual experience, or fixation, is now represented as a phantasy. This definition clearly goes beyond earlier ones, where phantasy was a much more narrowly defined function, a kind of retreat from frustration or evocation of self-controlled satisfaction during autoerotic activity. Now it is the permanent representation of repressed wish and fixation, thus making it identical as well to the content of "primal repression" (cf Freud, 1915c; p. 130). This would seem to grant to phantasy a new structural status in Freud's theory; as both permanent content of fixation and mode of representation of the "primally repressed," phantasy is seen as the setting for those instinctual experiences considered the bedrock of the unconscious.

Thus, with the integration of 1918, phantasy comes to occupy two positions; in the case of primal phantasy, it is the repository for the innate, (itself constituted by the traces of earlier subjective experiences) and comprises the nucleus of the pre-experiential unconscious. As the content of fixated and repressed impulses, phantasy serves as the bedrock of the post-experiential unconscious. Manifest forms of phantasy–daydreams, symptoms, and night dreams–are made of composites of the two layers of phantasy, themselves composed of, but not limited to, individual memory.

This last point should be emphasized; with this view of phantasy Freud has constructed a model that transcends the 'actual' by placing it in the prehistoric past. While, hypothetically, some initial form of actual experience stored in memory was involved (in the prehistoric past) we can take this to be Freud's own 'phantasy of origin' which he needed to finally conceptually detach psychic reality from its underlying reliance on external and biological realities[21]. If looked at from the standpoint of the individual human subject, phantasy can now be seen to provide structure *from within* to contingent external experiences without recourse to a biological mode of explanation. With this, Freud has finally arrived at a purely psychological, representational view of the mind, and a redefinition of psychic reality no longer exclusively pertaining to unconscious wishes, but now extended to all manifestations of phantasy:

> The phantasies possess *psychical* as contrasted with *material* reality, and we gradually learn to understand that *in the world of the neuroses it is psychical reality which is the decisive kind* (p. 458; italics in original).

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[21]Clearly, Freud's repeated insistence on the original reality of the original scenes behind phylogenetic phantasies indicate that he never fully overcame this reliance, rooted in a fundamental belief in the exclusive opposition between event and constitution (cf. Laplanche and Pontalis, 1968).

1918: Phantasy and Psychic Structure

Having relocated phantasy at the deepest region of the mind and given it a structural status, what relationship is now implied between phantasy and psychic structure? As discussed above, the period from 1910 to 1918 was also marked by the development of the concept of narcissism, and with it a new metaphoric rendering of the psychological realm of interactions between the ego and its objects. Theoretical descriptions of phantasy in 1911 and 1915 did not cohere with a view of phantasy as the setting for these structured psychological interactions, in that these structures (e.g. the "purified pleasure ego") seemed to involve developmental experiences that took place prior to preconscious thought, which Freud had affirmed was always a principle constituent of phantasy.

One new element of the 1918 definition of phantasy seems to have bearing on this issue. Freud writes of phantasy: "Every desire takes before long the form of picturing its own fulfillment" (1917-18, pp. 462-3). He states further that "The creation of the mental realm of phantasy finds a perfect parallel in the establishment of 'reservations' or 'nature preserves' . . . A nature reserve preserves its original state which everywhere else has to our regret been sacrificed to necessity" (p. 463). While these passages show some similarity to the ideas presented in 1911, Freud is no longer ambiguous about whether phantasy begins with hallucination or with the beginning of reality testing. Here desires (instincts) are conceived as picturing their own fulfillment, and continuing to do so in the preservation of phantasy. No longer does Freud need to insert the immediate structuring effect of the system preconscious and prior memory; he has dispensed with that obligation with the

redefinition of instinct as representation and primal phantasy as imposing innate structure.

It is probably useful to return to the concept of the purified pleasure ego to illustrate this difference. It should be remembered that, in "Instincts and their Vicissitudes"(1915a), Freud posited this early ego formation as the initial experience of self and object at the moment that awareness of another becomes possible–it is the first point at which the object world breaks into narcissistic self-containment (Ellman, personal communication). Thus, perceptual experiences are present, and the ego reacts to this sensory material by attempting to incorporate and expel the good and bad experiences, respectively, and thereby restore the previous state of narcissistic perfection. While the earlier view of phantasy would have required the conjunction of preconscious elements to provide structure to the primary process aspects of phantasy (thus breaking the continuity from the stage of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment), Freud has now introduced the notion that of "inherited schemata" embedded in instincts, in the form of primal phantasy. This renders the structure-providing function of the system preconscious obsolete for the most basic forms of phantasy. While sensory experiences would still be required to provide the material, instinct itself can provide the form.

It should be noted that this formulation does not come directly from Freud; indeed, it might be seen to contradict one aspect of his views of 1918 that I have already discussed: his notion that the phantasy of the primal scene was 'deferred,' and formed from a construction of both earlier and later periods (and, therefore that the experiences at the earlier age were not sufficient in and of themselves to be characterized as phantasy). However, Freud does not affirm at this point that a deferred structure is a *necessary* condition of any kind of phantasy, and, as I have shown above, a number of his ideas sug-

gest the possibility of phantasy experience operating continuously, beginning with the initial hallucinatory experience of the breast, and only gradually becoming modified by reality and secondary process thought.

Implications

Clearly, Freud's views during this period come closer to those expressed in Isaacs' presentation on phantasy, largely due to explicit changes in Freud's views of instinct and universal phantasies, and secondarily from implicit changes in the view of the psychic apparatus, initially growing out of Freud's views on narcissism. To put it succinctly, these changes all point toward a continuity between initial hallucinatory experiences and later phantasies, without requiring the amalgam of earlier and later layers of the mind for phantastical renderings of reality to form. The point is made implicitly in Freud's conceiving of early forms of representation of self and object interactions and ego formation, and is explicitly supported in attributing representation to instinct and structure to primal phantasy, thereby obviating the need for mature levels of the psychic apparatus to provide these functions.

However, it is also clear that, despite indications pointing in this direction, Freud did not take the step to redefine early psychic structure in terms of phantasy, or to state explicitly that instinct is always represented as phantasy. As I will discuss below, after 1919 Freud extends and develops the emerging representational view of the mind I have described, but not by expanding the definition of phantasy. Instead, he retains phantasy as a more narrowly defined clinical concept, and uses his new structural concepts and altered instinct theory to explain the phantastically-rendered representational world of the infant.

IV. Representation and Phantasy in the Structural Theory

With few exceptions, even the most ardent "classical Freudians" have objected to ideas contained in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). This is the work in which Freud introduces his new dual instinct theory, which not only proposes the idea of the death drive – an instinctual urge to return to an inanimate state, which many found unacceptable for various reasons – but also alters the concept of instinct altogether in ways that I will discuss. It is important to note that many who responded to this work without completely dismissing it did so by attempting to reformulate newer ideas to fit earlier models (e.g. recasting "death instinct" into "aggressive drive" (Hartmann, 1939)). In my view, it is precisely what is new in this work (along with the new formulations of psychic structure introduced in 1921 and 1923) that represents the culmination of the fundamental changes of 1910-1919 in Freud's views of instincts, phantasy, and the psychic apparatus, discussed above.

The Mind as Bodily Metaphor

We begin to see signs of these changes in chapter IV of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In this chapter Freud introduces the image of a simple organism as "an undifferentiated vesicle of a substance that is susceptible to stimulation" (1920, p. 28). This image (importantly, quite reminiscent of Freud's "protoplasmic animalcule" of 1914) weaves its way throughout the text in various ways. Initially it seems Freud is merely offering a hypothetical account of the evolution of the first nervous system in a primitive organism, with a focus on the way such systems developed capacities to both receive stimuli and protect against overstimulation. Following this he shifts to consciousness, the preconscious, and the "stimulus barrier," pointing out the functional parallels between these human functions and aspects of the primitive organism. Throughout the discussion it remains vague whether Freud is

assuming the human mind continues to be comprised of features that were part of the physiology first inherited from microorganisms, or instead whether he is using this model as an analogy, for purposes of illustration. The former is directly suggested by Freud, when he writes: "Indeed, embryology, in its capacity as a recapitulation of developmental history, actually shows us that the central nervous system originates from the ectoderm" (1920, p.29).

However, in other passages a more metaphorical connotation is suggested. For example, Freud describes the stimulus barrier in the mind by way of the hardening of the outer layer of the "living vesicle," then applies this to the psychological problem posed by internal stimuli:

> And, secondly, a particular way is adopted for dealing with internal excitations which produce too great an increase of unpleasure: *there is a tendency to treat them as though they were acting, not from the inside, but from the outside,* so that it may be possible to bring the shield against stimuli into operation as a means of defence against them. This is the origin of *projection*. . . (p. 33; italics added).

There is something odd about this passage. Freud is first describing a primitive organism with a barrier against the outside–a physical protective boundary against external stimuli. Then he transposes this to the human mind, which has a corresponding barrier against external excitation. However, when he suggests that the boundary against *external* stimuli can also be used against *internal* stimuli, through projection, it becomes clear that he cannot be referring to physical stimuli–it is inconceivable that an internal stimulus (of either a physiological or psychological nature) could be literally cast out of the body and protected against with a stimulus shield. This only makes sense when it is assumed that Freud is referring to processes taking place *on the level of representation;* while representations of internal and ex-

ternal stimuli may differ in qualitative ways, the possibility exists of transforming one into the other.

This reading seems consistent with the direction of Freud's thought after 1911, discussed above. Indeed, given the psyche's representational connection to bodily stimuli (via instinct), biological images–particularly those involving physical exchanges with the environment–might be taken to reflect what is becoming for Freud the most basic mental function; the formation of bodily metaphor. In effect, what is most primal biologically becomes the representational bedrock, in the form of primitive metaphor. Given that the mind is made up exclusively of psychic reality, and consists entirely of representation (both of which are becoming established for Freud), the structure of a germ cell, or the cerebral cortex for that matter, can only serve as an analog to that which is *represented* mentally. Further, it follows that these physical organic structures, which Freud describes as evolving out of interaction with environmental stimuli, would reflect something of the way such interactions become represented mentally. While distinct (material v. psychic reality), both reflect adaptations in a similar way, because both arise out of the same fundamental biological realities. As Freud depicts them, these realities, on the most basic level involve the dangers of excess stimulation, as well as needing to both maintain receptive contact while also protecting against stimulation. Just as the organism develops physiological means of coping with physical stimulation, so must the psyche evolve ways of managing representations of stimuli, both of them through a process of progressive structuralization.

This seems to follow the basic story of both the simple vesicle and the mental apparatus, and is consistent with the view of psychic development presented by Freud since 1900. The fundamental difference reflected in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, one that Freud himself does not yet seem to

consistently recognize, is that the recent changes in his theory – his final responses to the challenge of containing both the psychic and the physical –have led to him describing the mind-body linkage as one of representation. Biology is related to the mind *as it is represented*, as models of the mind can only be models of what is represented from 'actual' reality.

Although I can no more than mention it here, this way of understanding Freud's use of biological metaphor goes some way toward accounting for the change in instinct theory from one in which instincts themselves are regarded as being "without quality," with structure (bound v. unbound) imposed by the psychic apparatus and aim provided by bodily zone (Cf. Freud, 1905b; p. 34), to one in which the quality and aim of the two fundamental instincts are *intrinsic*: "to lead what is living to death," on the one hand, and to achieve "a renewal of life" on the other (1920, p. 55). In terms of quality, the death instincts are "silent" and seek quiescence; the pleasure principle ultimately works in their service. Eros, on the other hand, is noisier, and fundamentally concerned with achieving *unification*; it is therefore closer to the bound impulses of the secondary process. Thus, neither quality nor aim are seen as imparted by the psychic apparatus, these are intrinsic to the organic principles which instinct is now seen to represent. Here, again, representation is exclusively the domain of the psychic apparatus, and the redefinition of instinct reflects this–instinct is the carrier of biological imperative into the representational realm of the psyche, whose function it is to create meaning through successively more integrated and organized representations. Thus, life and death, like the biological metaphors, are Freud's metaphors as well as those of the psyche.

This line of thought, merely latent in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, becomes manifest in *The Ego and the Id* in Freud's reformulated view of the

psychic apparatus, now essentially modeled organically and conceived in representational terms, with the "ego" ('the I') at the center. While in some respects replacing the system Pcs, which Freud had originally conceived as arising out of an adaptation to frustration, consisting in an inhibition of psychic energy and resulting increased tension tolerance, and beginning of secondary process thought (e.g. Freud, 1900; p. 638), the ego is conceived, first and foremost, in representational terms. While emerging out of the id, its "nucleus" is the perceptual system; thus it is janus-faced, always looking to both the id and the outer perceptual world. Further: "The ego is *first and foremost a bodily ego;* it is not merely a surface entity, but *is itself the projection of a surface*" (1923, p. 16; italics added).

Here the essence of the ego in its most basic form is exactly specified–it is bodily, not in a physical sense ("not merely a surface entity") but in a representational one, a "projection" of the surface of the body. The ego is therefore both a unity of internal (id) and external (perceptual) experience, as well as a mental projection of the surface of the body. Freud writes: "A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place from which both internal and external perceptions may spring" (p. 15). It is from both dimensions that the body ego first forms.

It is my view that we see here the logical culmination of Freud's reformulated view of the mind. In its function of representing somatic stimuli, the mind begins to convert that which merely registers (as 'presentations'), with no form or structure, into '*re*presentation,' initially through an linkage between inner stimuli and visual perception of the body. This primary association comprises the primal ego and becomes the prototype of its future functioning, in which it works to convert that which is inchoate (primary process) into more structured (secondary process) form, initially through linkages of

stimuli to visual perception, later between these pictures and 'word presentations,' and eventually the entire structure of language. Thus, one can envision a continuous process of nesting more basic representational units into more complex configurations with an ever-higher level of abstraction as part of the ongoing basic process of the psychic apparatus.

The functions Freud ascribes to the ego are consistent with this view; he includes as functions representing the external world and rationality, and controlling the approaches to motility. He eventually also includes the synthetic function (in essence, this is the main function that I have been describing), anxiety, and defense. While it may be tempting to see the 'functional' characteristics as either belonging to a different model of the ego, or perhaps relating to a different perspective of the same ego, it is my view that each of these functions can be understood as following from this basic function of representation.

For example, as to motility, Freud writes:

> The functional importance of the ego is manifested in the fact that normally control over the approaches to motility devolves upon it. Thus in its relation to the id it is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse; with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with his own strength while the ego uses borrowed forces. . . the ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own (p. 15).

Here is ego as horseman, harnessing the energy of the id. It is most important to remember Freud's intended meaning of 'the id;' the direct translation from the German usage–*Das Es*–would be 'the it,' which connotes the unnamed and unknown, in contrast to the ego, which is named and known ('the I'). The 'it' is also the unmediated somatic urge, initially unconscious, which only becomes conscious through "intermediate links." Thus the it, as unknown, can only be harnessed as it begins to be known through analogy

with what has already become known–initially with the body ego. Knowing can only take place through linking; a single unit is never knowable in-itself, only through association, in the most basic form of symbolism (cf. Peirce, 1867). Following this, the body-ego "harnesses" bodily urges through the most basic of linkages: identification.

Freud writes:

> At the very beginning, in the individual's primitive oral phase, object-cathexis and identification are no doubt indistinguishable from each other. We can only suppose that later on object-cathexes proceed from the id, which feels erotic trends as needs (1923, p. 19).

There are two steps presented here. First, object cathexis and identification are initially indistinguishable; this would correspond with the earliest experiences of satisfaction, which itself could be linked to nothing other than the satisfying object. In the absence of any other linkages, these two would be experienced as indistinguishable. It would only be the *absence* of satisfaction at a moment of need that need and object would become distinguishable, and at that point cathexis of the object could be said to come from the id, in that it has not yet become known (the 'it').

It is in coming to know these id needs that the oral mechanism come into being. First, the initial experience of need would be linked with that to which it is most immediately associated–the area of the body (mouth) and the needed satisfaction. Thus, taking in through the mouth might be the first representation of need, swallowing that of its satisfaction. The presence of the object and the internal presence of food would be associated; sucking movements (the beginning of autoerotism) would be yoked to initial desire.
Through a linkage of these the "oral mechanism of introjection" coalesces both desire and satisfaction, in that the desired object is represented through

incorporation and swallowing, leading to "an alteration of the ego which can only be described as setting up the object inside the ego" (p. 19).

Viewed from a different angle (and perhaps a somewhat later step), Freud describes this process and the means by which intentional control over movement is established:

> From another point of view it may be said that this transformation of an erotic object-choice into an alteration of the ego is also a method by which the ego can obtain control over the id and deepen its relations with it. . . When the ego assumes the feature of the object, it is forcing itself, so to speak, upon the id as a love-object and is trying to make good the id's loss by saying: 'Look, you can love me too–I am so like the object (p. 20).

We might add to this that representing the object as inside creates a higher order representation of self and object as similar. From this the self as objectively rendered is linked to the subjective body-ego, and this linkage provides greater self control, as subjective feelings and impulses, represented bodily, can be linked to actions initially observed in the other. A measure of coherence is thereby formed between internal impulse and the body as an object, leading to a yoking of need to motor action, and the beginnings of intentional movement. (Cf. Lacan's (1977) view on the "mirror stage" for a similar reading of this function of early identification in Freud).

It is important to point out what is distinctive in Freud's view here. Instead of motivation seen as stemming from mental wishes, as in 1900, or from specific bodily organs, with the mind functioning as a discharge apparatus, as in 1905-1915; motivation is now seen as emanating from the organism *as a whole,* and is characterized broadly in terms of the life and death instincts. The mind, as the organ of representation, primarily creates linkages of various levels of complexity; discharge remains in the domain of the body. Like the horseman, the ego (that part of the mind linked originally to the

body, then represented at higher levels by way of identification) guides both motor action and intentional forms of thought by yoking organic urges to these various other aims and functions. *It is for this reason that all of the most basic functions are initially represented as bodily metaphors;* by way of these the mind transform bodily urge into intentionality.

In his paper entitled "Negation," Freud (1925) articulates the process of a higher mental function evolving from basic biological functions by way of successive layers of representation: "The study of judgment affords us, perhaps for the first time, an insight into the derivation of an intellectual function from the interplay of primary impulses" (p. 216).

Freud describes this derivation in two steps. The most basic involves the determination of quality:

> Originally the property to be decided about might be either 'good' or 'bad,' 'useful' or 'harmful.' Expressed in the language of the oldest, that is, of the oral instinctual impulses, the alternative runs thus: 'I should like to eat that, or I should like to spit it out'; or, carried a stage further: 'I should like to take this into me and keep that out of me.' That is to say: it is to be either *inside* or *outside* me. . . From this point of view, what is bad, what is alien to the ego, and what is external are, to begin with, identical (p. 215; italics in original).

Swallowing and spitting are seen as becoming forms of internal action, derived from reflexive bodily responses to external stimuli that are either pleasant or aversive. Through linkage with similarly internal stimuli, these become metaphorized into mental actions, which continue to carry and deploy the force of the body's visceral responses. Repression is a somewhat more abstract version, wherein the aversive thoughts are cast out of organized experience, which is now no longer identical with body boundaries.

The next step involves replacing the equation of inside/outside and good/bad with one in which internal corresponds with what is subjective and external with objective. Freud writes:

> The contrast between what is subjective and what is objective does not exist from the first. It only arises from the faculty which thought possesses for reviving a thing that has once been perceived. . . Thus the first and immediate aim of the process of testing reality is not to discover an object in real perception corresponding to what is imagined, but to re-discover such an object, to convince oneself that it is still there (p. 215-6).

Here Freud is invoking what later analysts will call "object constancy" (e.g. Hartmann, 1939; Mahler, Pine, and Bergman, 1975) to explain the necessary condition for forming judgments about objectivity v. subjectivity; the infant must have the capacity to sustain an image of an object in its absence, then to anticipate the external object and compare to the internal image. Freud states that this process is further facilitated by the fact that:

> The reproduction of a perception as an image is not always a faithful one; it can be modified by omissions or by the fusion of a number of elements (p. 216).

This last statement is notable for its unambiguous proclamation that early representations are distorted prior to the capacity for reality testing; indeed, it is exactly such distortion that precedes and facilitates early reality testing. Indeed, in the present model, one would not expect the earliest representations to cohere faithful to external (consensual) reality; at this point for Freud psychic reality is completely constructed, not merely reflected, in precisely the ways I have been describing.

After this second step of discriminating subjective from objective, the intellectual function of negation is possible, and this integrates the earlier discriminations of quality and externality that were based in bodily processes. Indeed, for Freud negation is the *symbol* of these:

> The achievement of the function of judgment only becomes feasible, however, after the creation of the *symbol* of negation has endowed thought with a first degree of *independence* from the results of repression and at the same time from the sway of the reality principle (p. 217; italics added).

Thus, it is by way of increasingly sophisticated symbolic units that both the independence from somatic impulse and the intentional force of such impulse simultaneously become possible, thus once again suspending the psychical above the somatic and actual *without* reductionism.

Representation, Structure, and Phantasy

Now to return to phantasy. It is notable that Freud offers no further theoretical discussion of phantasy after the *Introductory Lectures* of 1917-18. When the concept of phantasy is invoked, it is in a clinical context, usually with reference to repression and symptom formation. As I have tried to show, this corresponds to Freud's shift toward a representational view of the mind, beginning in earnest in the 1920's. The coincidence of these factors makes sense in light of the ways the concept of phantasy had originally been used by Freud. On a philosophical level, phantasy had long served the function of a connecting template between the irreconcilable but inseparable domains of mind and matter. We saw this first with respect to 'actual reality' in the late 1890's, then in a similar way with somatic bodily excitation between 1905 and 1910. Phantasy also provided an intermediate position between what were initially seen as the firmly demarcated psychic systems of Ucs and Pcs, with their corresponding primary and secondary processes. For clinical reasons, Freud needed to describe phenomena that were not so easily categorized, and phantasy became his 'preserve' made up of 'half-breeds.' In phantasy, representational material can be both real and unreal, structured and un-

structured, wish-fulfilling and defensive, asleep and awake; phantasy could straddle and contain irreconcilables in the theory by standing in an intermediate space between opposites, while also including them within itself.

With the ascendance of Freud's representational view of the mind, it becomes clear why this function is no longer needed. With psyche as representation, first and foremost, of the body and its impulses in relation to external reality, and the ceaseless symbolizing and resymbolizing of the ego, mind and matter are contained within a new structure, *by way of symbolism*. That is, in making representation the primary mental function, mind and matter, as theoretical elements, are joined in a new creative symbol at a higher level than before, in that both their individual integrity and their inextricable unity are preserved and enhanced.

Similarly, on the level of clinical theory, the view of representation provides a model in which a continuity is established between the most primal and most advanced; discharge and inhibition no longer need be separated by different systems, in that 1) discharge is no longer conceived as a psychic function, and 2) inhibition is now conceived, along with all defenses and forms of intentional thought, as outgrowths of the most basic linkages of inner stimuli with bodily functions. In this model, reality is apprehended by way of the most organized layer of representations, which correspond to place of identity–the ego or 'I'; there is, however, no immediate, privileged access to reality by any one part of the mind. Instead it is approached by way of representational approximation, as depicted in "On Negation."

Given this, we should consider how one is to conceive of phantasy, in the strictly clinical sense, in light of these theoretical changes. If one thinks of phantasy as a segment of representational material prevented from integrating into an ever-increasing process of abstraction and integration, it follows

that this material would remain in a more primitive form, therefore closer to bodily impulses and anxieties: this is consistent with the aspects of phantasy emphasized in Freud's limited usage in later works such as *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety* (Freud, 1926). These free-standing units of representations could range from only mildly dissociated to vigorously opposed by the ego; correspondingly, the manifest form would range to easily accessible daydreams to forms that only become apparent through symptomatic manifestations. The clinical importance of phantasy remains, and perhaps increases, as phantasy is viewed as psychological material at some intermediate point of accessibility and integration with the rest of mental organization. Thus, the new therapeutic creed–"where id was, there shall ego be"–would implicitly place paramount importance on those unintegrated elements that remain somewhat accessible in an analytic process.

In terms of a theoretical understanding of the post-1920 view of phantasy, the primary differences are 1) there is no clear demarcation between memory and other aspects of thought–to some extent these are interchangeable; 2) phantasy is no longer conceived as a condensation between systems, but rather as occupying an intermediate level of organization and abstraction, equivalent to some point between the least organized aspects of the id and the highest level of the ego; 3) phylogenetic inheritance, while still an important idea, is no longer linked to phantasy (the phrase 'primal phantasy' seems to drop out after 1918), but is now attributed to "experiences of the id" (1923, p. 28). Like other aspects of the id, one might think of these as mere 'presentations' or bodily impulses, albeit ones that predispose one to particular ways of representing reality. In any event, Freud remains vague on this point.

Implications

Despite having largely dropped the theoretical use of the concept of phantasy from his writings, Freud's post-1920 representational view of the mind shows substantial implicit agreement with the positions set forth in Isaacs' paper on phantasy. First, his position that the most basic mental structures coalesce out of the operation of the mind's representational function (e.g. formation of the "body ego") is compatible with the notion that the basic elements of all mental processes are best described in subjective terms, argued by Isaacs in her statement that phantasy is the "primary content" of mental life. While Freud does not call these basic structures phantasy, he does describe them in subjective-experiential terms, as reflected in his naming structures in experience-near language (*Das Es, Das Ich,* and *Das Uberich*) and his late description of the evolution of defense and structure from the immediate experience of bodily impulses and activities.

Second, the idea that the child's initial *reality* is subjectively constructed from both instinctual and external sources from the beginning (in contrast to the notion of an original veridical sense of reality that is only later distorted) is in exact agreement with Freud's later views; it is precisely through the process of creating representational links between bodily (instinctual) urges and perception that body ego and sense of reality both begin to coalesce. (Freud's (1925) account of judgment evolving out of primitive oral mechanisms in "Negation" gives a particularly clear demonstration of this view). The view that one's sense of reality forms out of instinct and sensation was essential to Klein's view (see Chapter 2), and was antithetical to that held by Glover and Anna Freud in the Controversies.

Third, Freud's later theory supports aspects of the Kleinian view of early object relations. As discussed in Chapter Three, Anna Freud assumed

that, while the infant responds to changes in environmental conditions, a true object relationship does not form until after the first year because the ego's synthetic function is exercised preferentially on reality before taking up the impulses of the id; libido is autoerotically satisfied until id impulse begin to be synthesized with external experiences with objects in the second year. In the late Freudian view, the ego and object clearly evolve out of impulses and sensory experience together; because both make up the original components of primal representations, the notion that reality is granted primacy by the ego is untenable. Ego, object, and overall construction of reality evolve simultaneously out of progressive representation based on impulse and sensation, with primitive forms of ego and object present in the earliest representational units (cf. Loewald, 1951).

Fourth, Freud's writings during this period seem to eschew the categorical distinctions of his earlier views (e.g. those between primary and secondary process, or Pcs and Ucs); for him the ego evolves out of the id, and higher order mental functions out of base instinctual activities. This is consistent with the position of the Kleinians that sees all forms of thought and structure as originally evolving out of the same basic subjective content of the mind, which they view as phantasy. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Anna Freud group opposed many of Isaacs' positions because she was seen as "blurring" important distinctions between important functions and structures, and many of the other areas of disagreement by the Anna Freud group rested on the notion of cleanly demarcated areas and functions of the mind. While this is consistent with Freud's earlier views, it finds no support in his post-1920 writings.

Thus, in all major areas of disagreement of controversies over phantasy, the Kleinian view agrees in substantial ways with the late Freudian

view, despite a much restricted use of the concept of phantasy itself by Freud during this period. As I will attempt to demonstrate in Chapter 6, much of the fundamental agreement I have described rests on a very similar epistemological stance, the nature of which proved a significant catalyst for the heated polarization of the Controversial Discussions.

Chapter 6: Discussion

> *Considering that psychoanalysis is still a young science and in its developmental stages, we should not be surprised that inferences from Freud's work must differ according to which particular aspect of his discoveries is taken up and pursued further. Whether we lean more strongly toward some of his earlier findings which, though he went beyond them he never altogether discarded, or whether, on the other hand, we lay the emphasis on his later conclusions starting with* Beyond the Pleasure Principle *– this is bound to have a bearing on the differences in our conclusions.*
>
> **Melanie Klein,** contribution to an extraordinary business meeting of the British Psychoanalytic Society, March 11, 1942.

In this dissertation I set about the task of examining the remarkable controversies that arose around the concept of unconscious phantasy in London during the 1940's. I began by tracing the evolution of the concept of phantasy in Klein's writings, then examined the theoretical arguments between Klein and her opponents, and finally explored the meaning and function of phantasy in various stages of Freud's thought. In the end my conclusions agreed closely with those offered by Klein in the passage quoted above. That is, if one approaches Freudian theory not as a unified set of ideas, but rather as a series of alternative conceptual models, Klein's views on phantasy offer an elaboration, in different language, of the essential aspects of Freud's post-1920 model.

Having demonstrated the congruence of Klein with later Freud, however, the reason such heated debate was generated around this concept remains an unanswered question, and it is to this that I intend to turn in the present chapter, after first reviewing the area covered thus far.

I began by detailing the course of phantasy in Klein's writing beginning with her clinical view that children's relationship to reality is mediated by phantasy. The led her to develop interventions aimed at unlocking the free play of phantasy in order to restore full contact with reality in her treatment of children with various inhibitions. Next Klein began explicating the basis of sublimations in specific unconscious phantasies, making use of psychoanalytic theories of symbol formation for theoretical grounding. These views Klein later exchanged for aspects of Freud's structural theory, particularly the concept of the superego, because it better accommodated her evolving view of the ubiquitous underlayer of interactive object phantasies mediating the child's (and adult's) perception of reality.

During the middle phase of her writing Klein oscillated on the question of whether the distortions of projected archaic superego aspects were best thought of as a phenomenon of later development, following an initial period of more accurate object perception, or instead whether these projections themselves comprised the child's earliest perception. In 1930 Klein firmly settled on the latter, with her unambiguous proclamation that the child's reality is initially "phantastic and distorted" by primitive phantasy processes. It took her several more years to finally reorder her theoretical framework in a way that accounted for this view. Toward this end Klein effectively dropped the Freud/Abraham developmental framework in 1935, in favor of her concept of 'positions,' in which the relative integration of the experienced object, in the context of tremendous aggression, became the plumb-line of development (rather than zonal dominance); this placed the constructed integrity of the object at the center of psychological development.

In the period following Klein's introduction of the concept of positions she offered an explicit definition of phantasy for the first time. Given her

long-standing clinical emphasis on the concept, this belated definition is remarkable. In 1940, with the introduction of the concept of the "inner world," Klein's emphasis had clearly shifted from the distorted nature of object phantasies vis-a-vis the external world to the relative integrity and harmony of the individual's internal experiential world, irrespective of its degree of correlation with external reality. Here the notion of reality as intrinsically *constructed*, from both internal and external sources, came center stage, and the dichotomous relation between subjectivity and objectivity was subverted. Phantasy, in this frame of reference, becomes the subjective medium from which *relative* objectivity (an achieved state) evolves and upon which it ultimately rests. With this 'reality' loses its status as an independent measure and source of mental events.

In my examination of the Controversial Discussions I break down differences over the concept of phantasy into four main areas: 1) subjective v. objective terminology; 2) instinct and psychic apparatus; 3) early object relations; and 4) psychic structure. I point out that, in each area, the group opposing Klein is particularly disturbed by her *failure to distinguish* between a subjective and objective viewpoint on the workings of the mind, or between structures that deal with the instinctual/phantastical versus those that deal adaptively with external reality. At the end of this chapter I argue that it is precisely the perceived undermining of a foundation of objective reality, in early development as well as at the base of adult perception and rational thought, that the group aligned with Anna Freud found most objectionable in Klein's theory of phantasy. Glover probably best articulated the quality of this objection in the following statement:

> I have always insisted on the necessity of postulating the primary reality function of the primitive ego. Indeed, without such a postulate, *there is nothing to prevent us falling into a primi-*

> *tive variety of mysticism* (King and Steiner, 1991; p. 399; italics added).

I also described the extent to which both the Kleinians and the Anna Freud group attempted to ground their arguments in passages from Freud. While Isaacs, the primary voice of the Kleinians during debates over phantasy, provided far more direct quotations from Freud than her opponents, many of the latter claimed that she quoted Freud out of context, or in a way that failed to take into account his "orderly series of concepts." These exchanges, which included quite compelling arguments from both sides about their more accurate adherence to Freud, left the impression that both positions may have had some merit in their respective interpretations of Freud. In addition, given that much of the intensity of these polarized views seemed to stem from questions concerning the relation between the subjective and internal versus the objective and external, the question of Freud's approach to these dichotomies became a relevant area of inquiry.

The last part of this dissertation consists of an effort to explore both of these questions – Freud's specific views of phantasy and his general approach to understanding the relationship between the subjectivity of the mind and 'objective,' material reality. I begin by documenting Freud's initial orientation to both issues in the period prior to 1900. I describe there Freud's initial etiological turn toward external reality (in contrast to Breuer's focus on the imagination) in an attempt to find substantial grounding for his view of psychogenesis. With the failure of the seduction theory to hold up against clinical reality and logical scrutiny, Freud arrived at his initial view of phantasy, which served the theoretical function of maintaining the origin of neurosis in memory traces of *actual* experiences while also indicating some degree of mental independence from the specific details of factual reality; thus, the psy-

che could be both rooted in and independent of actual reality through the interposing medium of phantasy.

Next I follow Freud's thought on these issues after 1899. I show that throughout the various transformations of different aspects of Freud's theory up to 1920, the concept of phantasy continued to serve the function of simultaneously joining and separating the psychical from the 'actual,' whether the latter referred to external reality, as in the original 1897 usage, or physiological reality, as in Freud's first theory of sexuality in 1905-09. In addition, I point out that throughout the period from 1900-1910, Freud held to a view in which aspects of the mental apparatus were clearly demarcated: preconscious and unconscious; primary and secondary process; original wishes (which alone constituted "psychic reality") and intermediate thoughts; and impulse and defense. Phantasy served as a bridge between these separated areas, blending aspects of each in various composites. In the larger and the more specific issues, therefore, phantasy served as a kind of template to join incompatible elements, both philosophical and psychological in nature.

It is in this early phase that Freud's view of phantasy is closest to that of Anna Freud and her colleagues and farthest from that of the Kleinians, in large part due to his insistence on clearly separated functions and regions of the mind. During this phase the Kleinian notion that some form of phantasy could be present prior to adaptive relations with reality is contradicted by the requirement that preconscious elements, produced through adaptation to external reality, are necessary in any form of phantasy because they provide some degree of structure to the formlessness of primary process thought.

Following this I explore the shift in Freud's views during the metapsychological phase (1910-1919). A revised instinct theory and new way of describing the mental apparatus, as well as the added concept of primal

(phylogenetic) phantasy all point to significant changes in Freud's overall view of the relationship between subjectivity and objective reality, and for the particular theory of phantasy. To put it briefly, the mind is rendered in more metaphorical and representational terms (as is instinct, in particular), phantasy begins to be conceived as imposing its own structure (opening the way for phantasy preceding the development of the Preconscious), and the need for grounding the mind in external and physiological reality is de-emphasized (or rather, displaced backwards into the prehistoric past). Here the relationship of Freud's theory of phantasy to the respective combatants in the Controversies is more ambiguous, although there is some indication of a greater degree of coherence with some of Klein's views, particularly her notion that phantasy (for Freud, 'primal phantasy') serves as the nucleus of the mind, and in the deemphasis of clear distinctions between different mental areas and functions.

In my discussion of the post-1920 phase, I highlight what I see as a reordering of the status of the psyche in relation to external and physiological reality. This first occurs in the revised instinct theory, wherein the life and death instincts come to possess their own innate quality and aim (rather than having these imposed by parts or functions of the psychic apparatus). I describe this as extending Freud's definition of instinct in representational – rather than drive-discharge – terms beginning in 1915. In the post-1920 view the mind itself begins to be described as primarily functioning to represent the impulses from the body in conjunction with sensation from the external world; discharge is now a physiological function, while formation of a body-ego is the primary, and prototypic, function of the mind.

Thus, in this reformulated view, the construction of a world out of internal and external sources is the mind's basic function; external reality is no

longer viewed as antithetical to subjectivity, but is instead constituted by it from the standpoint of the psyche. Higher mental functions also rest on a bedrock of representations of basic bodily urges and processes. In this revised, representational view of the mind the term 'phantasy' is relegated to a restricted clinical usage to describe defensively segregated and primitive forms of mentation. The former theoretical and philosophical functions of the concept of phantasy have now been displaced by the redefined theory of mind itself.

Perhaps ironically, at the moment that the concept of phantasy is of least use to Freud, his theory comes closest to Klein's. In each of the areas of dispute in the Controversies Freud agrees in substance, though not in terminology, with the Kleinian position on phantasy. In brief, the basic processes and structures of the mind are cast in representational (subjective) language; the child's reality, beginning with the formation of the body ego, is built up out of both instinctual and sensory information; and the ego is seen as evolving out of the id, without any absolute structural or functional divide. Impulse, sensation, object, and ego coevolve in a gradual movement toward greater differentiation, with relative 'objective reality' conceived as only gradually becoming an experiential possibility through this process. In these essential views the Kleinian and late Freudian positions are practically identical, and it is exactly these points that served to bitterly divide the first generation of post-Freudian analysts in the Controversial Discussions.

Conclusions

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Controversial Discussions arose amidst great personal and political turmoil, during a time of massive geographical

dislocation and loss as a result of the outbreak of war. The still recent death of Freud was a major factor that served to raise concern about protecting the Freudian legacy as well as the overall integrity of psychoanalysis as a discipline. As is well known, maintaining the integrity of psychoanalysis had always been a point of central concern for Freud, as attested by the series of 'defections' that punctuated the field during his lifetime. This organizing pattern of psychoanalytic politics, accentuated by the factors listed above, was certainly magnified in the microcosm of psychoanalysis found in the British Institute and Society during World War II. Much of the intense anxiety and power politics feeding into the Controversial Discussions can surely be attributed to these and related factors (see Chapter 1).

At the same time, as I have attempted to demonstrate in this dissertation, very fundamental epistemological questions permeated the Controversial Discussions and raised a good deal of anxiety in some of the participants; I believe it can be shown that this particular anxiety also contributed substantially to the polarization of the Controversies. On the Anna Freud side one saw an insistence on maintaining the "scientific" attitude of psychoanalysis, which required that one not infer beyond the available evidence when revising theoretical ideas, as well as declaring *a priori* the assumption that the human infant is primarily oriented toward reality adaptation. Against this was the Kleinian view that the essence of the psyche is found in the earliest unconscious phantasies, and that these can be clearly discerned through the psychoanalytic method, particularly through analysis of transference. The important reality is therefore wholly psychic in nature, not external or objective, as reflected in Isaacs' theoretical elaboration of the concept of unconscious phantasy. "Scientific," as the term was used by the Kleinian side (particularly by Winnicott), referred to the freedom to revise ac-

cepted theory with new observations. In effect, this same term came to embody two distinctly different meanings: on the one hand it represented the methodological standards rooted in positivism and upheld by the natural sciences, and on the other it stood for the freedom to continue to divine new aspects of psychological truth using the subjective frame of reference proper to the psychoanalytic method (Holland, 1990; Steiner, 1985).

What has become clear throughout this work is the extent to which this epistemological divide was present within Freud as well. He began his work in the physicalist tradition of Helmholtz and only gradually de-emphasized the assumption that all mental events rest on a physical-chemical basis as he developed his more revolutionary perspective on the mind. However, as I have shown, Freud long sought to simultaneously hold this older view alongside his newer, radically subjective viewpoint, at least until the turning point of 1920. It is surely no coincidence that Klein began her career as a psychoanalyst with her first published paper in 1921 (the first half of which was completed in 1919). Thus, Klein's arrival on the scene coincides with, and eventually comes to represent, the later Freudian vision of the mind with its implicitly radical epistemology, which Klein begins to make explicit in the second decade of her work, after establishing her own theoretical footing on terms that fit the subjectivity of this frame of reference.

At the same time, this tension in Freud, one half of which Klein comes to represent, is also arguably *the* fundamental epistemological tension of this century, as the Positivistic belief in the capacity of science to find and accurately describe an objective reality existing outside of human thought meets up against (and in some ways is superseded by) a viewpoint that sees all human knowledge as necessarily perspectival and constructed (cf. Rorty, 1979, 1989). This shifting of ground, probably first registered in scientific discourse

with Kuhn's (1962) writings on scientific revolutions, has reverberated loudly throughout both the natural and social sciences during the last several decades, generating considerable debate and controversy. Within psychoanalysis this ideological flux has appeared in the form of debate between old-fashioned "classical Freudians" and critics from the hermeneutic or social-constructivist points of view (Silverman, 1994), while outside of it, in areas such as theoretical physics (Capra, 1991) and neuroscience (Eisenberg, 1995), among others, the view of scientific knowledge as always constructed, and never absolutely objective, has challenged more traditional positivistic notions.

In this work I have pointed out where the initial fault lines of this seismic event of 20th century ideas appeared in Freud's thought, and the way in which he struggled to integrate or at least contain the incompatible strands of objective science, on the one hand, and the uniquely subjective field of psychoanalysis on the other. While for much of his life Freud managed different ways to hold both elements, one could argue that the latter aspect of his work, which began to predominate over the former toward the end, did much to potentiate or amplify the unfolding critique of positivism by exposing the various ways humans unconsciously create their own supposedly objective experiences. Klein's innovation was to extend this most radical aspect of Freud, which culminated in her having to face the anxiety aroused in others by her (and Freud's) implicit undermining of the human self-image as objective and rational, particularly when in the role of scientist.

The Controversial Discussions thus became a kind of first crucible, not only of incompatible elements in Freud, but of old and new currents in Western philosophical and scientific thought. The urgency behind Glover's wish to expel Klein for her failure to see the "primary reality function of the primitive ego," or the determination in Anna Freud's insistence on main-

taining the absolute distinction between the reality-adapting and hallucinating aspects of the psyche could, in part, be viewed as representing something of the general human response to that element in psychoanalysis that has unsettled 20th century thought even more than the ubiquity of childhood sexuality or the discovery of the unconscious basis of behavior: the loss of our collective self-image as the only species with the ability to objectively know and master external reality through scientific method and rational thought. In short, it is my view that the controversies represent the beginning death throes of the self-image most cherished by Freud, who ultimately participated in its destruction – that of man as rationalist, able to finally overcome illusion through the scientific approach to truth (Freud, 1927).

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