

S. Freud

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In order to establish it more firmly, therefore, I will bring forward the further noteworthy fact that if hunger and thirst (the two most elementary self-preservative instincts), are unsatisfied, the result is never their transformation into anxiety, whereas the changing of unsatisfied libido into anxiety is, as we have seen, among the best known and most frequently observed of phenomena.

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We termed the cathexes of energy which the ego directs towards the objects of its sexual desires 'libido'; all the others, which are sent out by the self-preservative instincts, we termed 'interest'. (1) By tracing the course of the libidinal cathexes, their transformations and final vicissitudes, we were able to obtain a first insight into the machinery of the mental forces.

2/ //The term 'ego-interest', sometimes in the alternative forms of 'egoistic interest' or simply 'interest', occurs frequently in this lecture; Freud had first used the term in his paper on narcissism (1914c). Standard ed. 14, 82, and it also appears several times in the metapsychological papers of 1915. The term is used regularly in those passages (as it is in the present one) to distinguish self-preservative

forces from the libido. The introduction of the ~~concept of narcissism made this distinction less clear-cut~~; but it is evident that all through this lecture (see, in particular, its last paragraph) Freud was at pains to keep ego-libido (or narcissistic libido) separate from ego-interest (or the self-preservative instinct). Not long afterwards, however, he abandoned this attempt and declared (in Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920g), Standard Ed., 18, 52). that narcissistic libido 'had necessarily to be identified with the "self-preservative instinct"'. He continued to believe, nevertheless, that there were object-instincts other than libidinal ones--namely those which he described as destructive or death instincts. But after the present work the term 'interest' ceased to appear. A fuller account of this is given in the Editor's Note to 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes', ibid., 14, 113 ff.7/

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We began at an early date to extend psycho-analytic observations to these other illnesses. Already in 1908 Karl Abraham, after an exchange of thoughts with me, pronounced the main characteristic of dementia praecox (which was reckoned among the psychoses) to be that in it the libidinal cathexis of objects was lacking. But the question then arose of what happened to the libido of dementia praecox patients which was turned away from objects. Abraham did not hesitate to give the answer: it is turned back on to the ego and this reflexive turning-back is the source of the megalomania in dementia praecox. Megalomania is in every way comparable to the familiar sexual over-valuation of the object in normal erotic life.1/ In this way for the first time we learnt to understand a trait in a psychotic illness by relating it to normal erotic life.

over/

1/ // This is discussed in the first of Freud's Three Essays, (1905d), S.E. 7, 150ff.7/

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I may tell you at once that these first explanations of Abraham's have been accepted in psycho-analysis and have become the basis of our attitude to the psychoses. We thus slowly became familiar with the notion that the libido, which we find attached to objects and which is the expression of an effort to obtain satisfaction in connection with those objects, can also leave the objects and set the subject's own ego in their place; and this notion was gradually built up more and more consistently. The name for this way of allocating the libido--'narcissism'--was borrowed by us from a perversion described by Paul Näcke (1899) in which an adult treats his own body with all the caresses that are usually devoted to an outside sexual object. 1/



~~1/~~ //The term is in part due to Havelock Ellis.  
~~See a full discussion in an Editor's footnote~~  
~~to Freud's paper on narcissism (1914c),~~  
~~S.E., 14, 73 n., which is Freud's main~~  
~~exposition of the whole subject.)~~

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On the contrary it is probable that this narcissism is the universal and original state of things, from which object-love is only later developed, without the narcissism necessarily disappearing on that account.

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We may now add, on the lines of the libido theory, that sleep is a state in which all object-cathexes, libidinal as well as egoistic, are given up and withdrawn into the ego.

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This is the place for two remarks. First, how do we differentiate between the concepts of narcissism and egoism? Well, narcissism, I believe, is the libidinal complement to egoism. When we speak of egoism, we have in view only the individual's advantage; when we talk of narcissism we are also taking his libidinal satisfaction into account. As practical motives the two can be traced separately for quite a distance. It is possible to be absolutely egoistic and yet maintain powerful object-cathexes, in so far as libidinal satisfaction in relation to the object forms part of the ego's needs. In that case, egoism will see to it that striving for the object involves no damage to the ego. It is possible to be egoistic and at the same time to be excessively narcissistic--that is to say, to have very little need for an object, whether, once more, for the purpose of direct sexual

satisfaction, or in connection with the higher  
~~aspirations, derived from sexual need, which we are~~  
~~occasionally in the habit of contrasting with~~  
~~'sensuality' under the name of 'love'.~~

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Here is a quotation from Goethe's Westostlicher Diwan:  
1/

Zuleika

The slave, the lord of victories,  
The crowd, when'er you ask, confess  
In sense of personal being lies  
A child of earth's chief happiness.

*Hand seen this*

*As narcissism*

There's not a life we need refuse  
If our true self we do not miss,  
There's not a thing we may not lose  
If one remain the man one is.

1/ The translation is from Ernest Dowden, West Eastern  
Divan, 1914. The word 'divan' in its original  
Persian sense, which was adopted by Goethe, meant  
'a collection of poems'.

Hatem

~~So it is held, so well may be;~~  
But down a different track I come;  
Of all the bliss earth holds for me  
I in Zuleika find the sum.

Does she expend her being on me,  
Myself grows to myself of cost;  
Turns she away, then instantly  
I to my very self am lost.

That day with Hatem all were over;  
And yet I should but change my state;  
Swift, should she grace some happy lover,  
In him I were incorporate.

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We should proceed further with applications of this kind and see where they will take us to. The only thesis which is not an immediate precipitate of our analytic experience is to the effect that libido remains libido, whether it is directed to objects or to one's own ego, and never turns into egoistic interest, and the converse is also true. This thesis, however, is equivalent to the separation between the sexual and ego-instincts which we have already considered critically and to which we shall continue to hold for heuristic reasons until its possible collapse.

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But it is quite a different thing when a particular, very energetic process forces a withdrawal of libido from objects. Here the libido that has become narcissistic cannot find its way back to objects, and this interference with the libido's mobility certainly becomes pathogenic. It seems that an accumulation of narcissistic libido beyond a certain amount is not tolerated. We may even imagine that it was for that very reason that object-cathexes originally came about, that the ego was obliged to send out its libido so as not to fall ill as a result of its being dammed up. If it lay within our plan to go more deeply into dementia praecox, I would show you that the process which detaches the libido from objects and cuts off its return to them is closely related to the process of repression and is to be looked at as its counterpart.

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Experiences of this kind in ever increasing numbers led us to conclude that paranoia persecutoria is the form of the disease in which a person is defending himself against a homosexual impulse which has become too powerful. 1/

1/ Cf. the third section of Freud's Schreber analysis (1911c), S.E. 12, 59ff.

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Homosexual object-choice originally lies closer to narcissism than does the heterosexual kind.

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Object-choice, the step forward in the development of the libido which is made after the narcissistic stage, can take place according to two different types: either according to the narcissistic type, where the subject's own ego is replaced by another one that is as similar as possible, or according to the attachment type, 1/ where people who have become precious through satisfying the other vital needs are chosen as objects by the libido as well. A strong libidinal fixation to the narcissistic type of object-choice is to be included in the predisposition to manifest homosexuality.

1/ 'Anlehnungstypus.' This has sometimes been translated 'anaclitic type.' This is fully discussed in the second section of Freud's paper on narcissism (1914c), S.E.14,87ff. Cf. above, p.329.





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From the analysis of delusions of observation we have drawn the conclusion that there actually exists in the ego an agency which unceasingly observes, criticizes and compares, and in that way sets itself over against the other part of the ego. We believe, therefore, that the patient is betraying a truth to us which is not yet sufficiently appreciated when he complains that he is spied upon and observed at every step he takes and that every one of his thoughts is reported and criticized.

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How would it be, though, if what was responsible for the affect of anxiety was not the egoistic ego-instincts but the ego-libido? After all, the state of anxiety is in every instance inexpedient, and its inexpediency becomes obvious if it reaches a fairly high pitch.

