

## INTRODUCTION TO FREUD'S PSYCHOANALYSIS FROM *CIVILIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS*

- The dream is the 'royal road' to the unconscious.
- Dreams cannot be translated mechanically, but only in relation to the past and present life of the dreamer. They are personal symbolic expressions reacting on experiences from the previous day.
- Dreams are wish-fulfillments even when they do not appear as wish-fulfillments and disguises the wish.
- Dreams carry out a struggle between two levels: A) The level for desire—the deepest level which is unconscious but logically organized, also called the *dream-thought*. This level also represents the meaning of the dream. B) The dream as it is represented to the dreamer, the manifest dream or the *dream-content* which is incomprehensible, confused, illogical, and nonsensical: "The dream-thoughts and the dream-content are presented to us like two versions of the same subject-matter in two different languages. Or, more properly, the dream-content seems like a transcript of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression, whose characters and syntactic laws it is our business to discover by comparing the original and the translation." Freud: *The Interpretation of Dreams*
- The transcription from the original dream-thoughts to the dream-content accounts for the unconscious *dream-work*,
- Elements in the manifest dream are typically *condensations* or *displacements* of elements in the latent. Condensation implies that the manifest dream has a smaller content than the latent, because several latent elements are compressed into one single element in manifest dream. Displacement implies that the dreamer shifts psychological emphasis from an important figure to an unimportant one in the dream.
- The hysteric or neurotic symptom is as dreams read as a text, following a syntax by which patients repress the meaning of their symptom, making their irrational and obsessive behavior incomprehensible to themselves.
- Neurotic disorder is caused by unconscious self-imposed denial of sexual activity. Like the dreamer, the neurotic essentially 'thinks' about pleasure
- Distinction between Ego-instinct and Object-instinct. Ego-instincts concern the individual and his self-preservation. Object-instincts are directed towards exterior objects, as in love. In the neurosis these two instincts exist in conflict, the investment of libidinal energy in an object of love is prohibited by the subject itself. The ego has restricted its sexual impulses to such an extent that all energy is withdrawn from the outer world.
- Freud begins revising his theory of the psyche in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *The Ego and the Id*. These writings are also the theoretical foundations for *Civilization and its Discontents*.
- Neurotics seem to have a compulsion to repeat disagreeable situations. However, in a model of the psyche where everything strives for pleasure this compulsion is puzzling.
- The compulsion to repeat unpleasant experiences springs from a drive independent of the appetite for pleasure, and in conflict with it, indicating an original urge to self-destruction. With this there is not just sexual drives in the service of life, but also drives in the service of the destruction of life. Freud introduces the concept of a death-drive.
- Beyond the pleasure principle there is an instinctual dualism where Eros and Thanatos are locked in eternal fight, and where Thanatos in the end always is seen as the victor.
- A new model of the psyche: What previously is called unconscious is now called 'the Id.' What previously is called conscious, is now called 'the Ego.' The unconscious part of ego is called 'the Super-ego.'
- Now the Ego is situated between two powerful unconscious forces, first the Id, as a reservoir for untamed drives. Secondly the Super-Ego, as an agent for internalized moral imperatives, sometimes conscious, but often unconscious.
- *Civilization and its Discontents* is a synthesis of the idea of the death-drive and the idea of the super-ego, now applied in a political analysis of the necessities and impediments of civilization.
- Civilization is indispensable to restrict the work of the death-drive, and as such the civilization-process is viewed as a process in service of life, *apparently* in service of Eros.
- Aggression is internalized in form of a strict and demanding super-ego directed towards the ego itself. This is how civilization obtains mastery over man's natural aggressiveness. It disarms man by setting up an agency within him to watch over him.
- The internalization of a strict super-ego restricts the subject in both its aggressive and sexual behavior. Society only serves *institutionalized* 'Eros.' By means of society man achieves order, but at the price of 'happiness.'