

Life Instincts

b. The same opposition—and the same problem—recur on the level of the two principles of mental functioning which corresponds to the two great classes of instincts: the Nirvana principle*, which corresponds to the death instincts, is clearly defined, but the pleasure principle (and its modified form, the reality principle*), which is supposed to represent the demands of the life instincts, is hard to understand in any economic sense, and Freud reformulates it in 'qualitative' terms (see 'Pleasure Principle', 'Principle of Constancy').

Freud's last formulations on the question—in *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (1940a [1938])—indicate that the principle underlying the life instincts is a principle of *binding**: 'The aim of [Eros] is to establish ever greater unities and to preserve them thus—in short, to bind together; the aim of [the destructive instinct] is, on the contrary, to undo connections and so to destroy things' (2b). It is clear therefore that from the economic standpoint too the life instincts fit badly into the energy-based model of the instinct as a tendency towards the reduction of tensions. In certain passages (3) Freud goes so far as to oppose Eros to the general conservative nature of the instincts.

c. A final point is that when Freud claims to see the life instincts as identical with what he had formerly called the sexual instinct*, we are justified in asking whether this conflation does not reflect a shift in sexuality's location in the framework of Freud's dualistic conception. Up until this point, sexuality had played the part of an essentially subversive force, represented by the first components of the major antitheses recognised by Freud: free energy* as opposed to bound, primary* as opposed to secondary processes, the pleasure principle as opposed to the reality principle and—in the 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (1950a [1893])—the principle of inertia* as opposed to the principle of constancy. With the advent of the final instinctual dualism, the death instinct takes over as the 'primal', 'demoniac' force which is of the essence of instinct, while sexuality—paradoxically—goes over to the side of the binding process.

(1) FREUD, S.: a) G.W., XIII, 66n.; S.F., XVIII, 60n. b) Cf. G.W., XIII, 62-63; S.E., XVIIII, 57-58.

(2) FREUD, S. *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (1940a [1938]): a) G.W., XVII, 71; S.E., XXII, 149; b) G.W., XVII, 71; S.E., XXIII, 148.

(3) Cf. FREUD, S. *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930a), G.W., XIV, 477n.; S.E., XXII, 118, n. 2.

M

Manifest Content

= D.: manifestes Inhalt. - Es.: contenido manifiesto. - Fr.: contenu manifeste. - I.: contenido manifiesto. - P.: contenido manifiesto or paciente.

Designates the dream before it receives any analytic investigation, as it appears to the dreamer who recounts it. By extension, we speak of the manifest content of any verbal product—from phantasies to literary works—which we intend to interpret according to the analytic method.

The expression 'manifest content' was introduced by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900a) as a correlate to 'latent content*'. The unqualified 'content' is often used to refer to the same thing and contrasted with the 'dream-thoughts' or 'latent dream-thoughts'. For Freud the manifest content is the opposite type of the dream-work*, while the latent content is the product of the opposite type of work—interpretation*.

This account has been criticised from a phenomenological point of view. Politzer holds that the dream, strictly speaking, can only have one content. On his view, what Freud understands by the manifest content constitutes the descriptive narrative that the subject puts forward at a time when he does not have the full meaning of his dream at his disposal (1).

(1) Cf. POLITZER, G. *Critique des fondements de la psychologie* (Paris: Riédier, 1928).

Masculinity/Femininity

D.: Männlichkeit/Weiblichkeit. Es.: masculinidad/feminidad. Fr.: masculinité/féminité. - I.: masculinidad/feminidad. - P.: masculinidad/feminidad.

Antithesis taken up by psycho-analysis, which shows that it is much more complex than generally thought: the way the subject situates himself vis-à-vis his biological sex is the variable outcome of a process of conflict.

Freud pointed out the variety of meanings covered by the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine'. First, they have a *biological* significance, which relates the subject to his primary and secondary sexual characteristics; here the concepts have an exact sense, but psycho-analysis has shown that such biological data do not suffice in accounting for psychosexual behaviour. Secondly, they have a *symbolic* significance, which varies according to the real and symbolic