

Fragment of an Analysis of the Mother in Freud

A thesis

submitted in fulfillment

of the requirements for the Degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Psychoanalysis and Gender Studies

in the

University of Canterbury

by

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University of Canterbury

2012

I am compelled to go my own way, often a roundabout way, and that I cannot make any use of ideas that are suggested to me when I am not ready for them.¹

¹ Freud in a letter to Fritz Wittels in E. Freud, 1960: 346.

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Acknowledgements

‘Everything would be all right were it not for this and that and t’other’ (Freud in Jones, 1957: 496).

Acknowledgements are funny things somebody or something always gets left out. And given that this is a thesis engaged with psychoanalysis and therefore the unconscious, one wonders if the leaving out is deliberate.

The journey of this thesis has been rather long and somewhat arduous. Less dream journey and royal road and more nightmare and deserted thoroughfare, in the sense that thoroughfare gives as a ‘rite’ of passage. And while Freud’s dream journey and his theory in general seems to be stopped by a ‘burning bush’ and the biblical reference to Moses is deliberate, my travails have been held up by life. But as Freud puts it ‘we must live in the world after all’ (SE 20: 203).

As I said, a long journey with few open spaces and quite a lot of falls, metaphoric as well as literal. This has been a journey accompanied by two little boys, born at the onset and ready to see this ‘thing’ depart. But they have had a ‘good enough mother’ who turned away from her thesis to mother them and then back again when she could. Add two ‘sometime’ daughters, grown now and left the nest and perhaps an understanding towards the length and winding road of this thesis becomes clearer.

But it also had its own problems, less a metamorphosis and more a mutation. I began this thesis with Dr. Victoria Grace, who at the end of this thesis is now a Professor. Initially a different thesis entirely but she realised my heart wasn’t in it and told me to go away and write what it was I wanted to think and write about. Even at this early stage she stressed the journey of a thesis and the need then to write about something that you were passionate about. I came back with something so different to my initial inquiry Victoria had to ‘depart’. So it was that I was looking for another supervisor. Here then Associate Professor Rosemary du Plessis stepped in. Warmed by her encouragement I wrote a proposal and handed it in as my sons reached their six-month mark. My supervisor taking a good look at me, declared I needed to be kind to myself, to not imitate superwoman and go home, be a mother as she sensed that was

what I wanted to be. And it was, and for a time I enjoyed that role, adding in teaching at the University and time went on. But always those scratches in my mind, the wayward thoughts, the 'what ifs'. ... So I began again and as I started to write I realised that where I thought I wanted to go was not where I wanted to go at all. Telling me that talking to me was like having Julia Kristeva and I on one side of the room, a compliment as I saw it, and her on the other, Rosemary also had to leave. Psychoanalysis was not an interest for her, maybe the mother but definitely not psychoanalysis. I was told several times by several people that the thesis I wanted to undertake was unpopular – the mother – and unfashionable – psychoanalysis. And then Dr. Nabila Jaber stepped in. I had taught in her classes for several years and had a rapport with her – my academic mother I sometimes called her. And she has been with me ever since. I'm not sure that I can express the gratitude of having someone who just wanted me to finish and believed that I could. Victoria came back briefly and I thank her also, because on her return she brought with her a new, well perhaps enlarged, interest in psychoanalysis. It was lovely to have someone at last that I could talk to about the theory of psychoanalysis even if she was a Lacanian and I a Freudian (a bigger difference than you can imagine). We also parted but I think of that time fondly (mostly) because it was here, in conversation with Victoria that I began to get a sense of what this project could mean.

But I can go no further without thinking back to that brief period of a group of us, a coven really, a solid group of four that opened up to others as they passed through the corridors. For a small amount of time we worked and 'lived' together on the fourth floor of the History building. Allowed to develop undisturbed we shared crisis, crunch-times and ideas. But more than that, we had a sense, as four PhD's of companionship and of a knowledge of what doing a PhD entailed. The University broke us up, restructuring they called it and 'our' floor was given over to another department and we were spread far and wide. Sharon and Tanja have finished now with only Sally and I, almost in conjunction, to complete our theses. To all three I owe gratitude; on the 'Kant' floor we learnt the strength of each other and the knowledge that we would all get there in the end.

Freud once said that the *Interpretation of Dreams* was written in 'splendid isolation'. And I could say the same with this thesis, but without the splendid, mostly the

isolation. Because it is to be isolated to be doing something that has no department or school or people that you can discuss ideas with or to wonder where the ideas are going and what do they mean. And the people around me...well, 'Freud is just that man that talked about sex wasn't he'? And the mother, well *she is* such a loaded term, concretised and ephemeral at once, how could we ever untangle or even think such a concept. To quote Freud once again, 'we must live in the world after all' (SE 20: 203). And as a mother, however the term is loaded, however the world of theory and also the lived world, the everyday world judges you, you just keep going.

My biggest companion throughout this thesis has been Freud himself. I saw a commonality between us from the start. Perhaps small commonalities, but then psychoanalysis is about the small, the insignificant, the forgotten. His migraines, his fear of poverty, his abhorrence of authority – he has 'a learnt expression to it' he says. Freud told Fliess that regarding poverty, he had a 'constant fear of it', having known 'it' and compared poverty to the 'certain nervousness' that one has for life. I understand then when Freud says that his state of mind depends on his earnings – 'a certain prosperous livelihood improves his style!' But for some reason, one of those unknown quantities in life, Freud reminds me of my mother. Reading Freud I hear my mother. Now I would not be so bold to confess that a small amount of Jewish blood may offer an inherited tendency towards some kind of knowing, an understanding perhaps. But I would ask, how big is small? And how strong are inherited, perhaps archaic knowledges?

On the closing of these acknowledgements (of this thesis really) I thank my family who wondered 'why' more than once I am sure. To Brent, who hasn't been here for a lot of it but who has the ability to make me smile, to make me laugh. To my funny little boys, with their quirky senses of humour and there often direct, more often that not complex way of looking at the world. They were born at the onset of this thesis and it was their growth that let me see the stages Freud wrote of, from the 'bundle of id' upwards. Of course Freud's writing 'out' of the mother will be addressed in the following thesis but I still remember the little boy who wanted to find something similar about us (he'd tired of seeing if I had a penis), who finally said, with great relief and real excitement, 'we both have hands'.

And finally, in the context of last but not least, my mother. This thesis would never have been written without my mother, in the sense as Freud wrote it that we owe a depth of gratitude to the mother, after all she brought us into the world. But also my way of thinking, my ways of being really, mirror my mother a great deal.

Acknowledgments are in some ways a place to reflect on how this project got to where it was and who helped to get it there. And when I say whom, I wonder about the possibility of the other, perhaps archaic voices that exist in the unconscious. And why I say this, is that when I was reading over, and editing my thesis, I was struck by the date I used in Chapter Two to explain the temporal locator, here enacted in a 'fall'. The date I used, 'I/We fell pregnant on the 6 August 1907' is my maternal grandmother's birth date. A grandmother I have never known but who I have been compared to throughout my life; I look like her, I have her eyes I am told. It is reiterated tirelessly and sometimes my looking like her is offered as a 'fright'. As in, I have become the walking dead it seems (at my Uncle's funeral I gave my Aunty, whose name I carry, as a second name but my favourite name, a fright. She thought her mother was standing there in front of her; her mother who had been dead for over 50 years). Freud showed us, that these uncanny and seemingly unremarkable coincidences mean something. It could be said, they 'make' us to a degree. It seems such an unremarkable fact that I was supposed to be born on this day, the 6th of August so many years later, but because I obviously liked my first 'home' too much I wasn't (and I was induced!).

To end then, I thank my 'mum', and my dad, my sisters and brother, 'my' Brent, my children (and here wee Lacy I remember you with my cups of tea, my salvation) my friends and supervisors but mostly my mother and Freud.

Abstract

It was for the longest time that the mother in Freud troubled me. Unlike some feminist psychoanalysts such as Julia Kristeva who argue that the mother/maternity in Freud is finally to be thought of as a 'massive *nothing*' (Kristeva, 1987: 255), I knew that the mother was there/*da*, but it was how she was there that concerned me and forms the basis of this thesis. Freud shows us the mother in his work when he argues that the child's first love object in its truest sense is the mother, 'and all of *his* sexual instincts with their demand for satisfaction have been united upon this object' (SE 18: 111). I highlight the 'his' because Freud's focus on this first love object is primarily male. And although Freud does not differentiate between the little girl and little boy at this early stage, thereafter the girl's relationship to the mother, argues Freud, ends in 'hate'. She cannot be forgiven for not giving the little girl a penis. But the mother as a primordial 'object' not only becomes lost (and thereafter we are all involved in a search to 're-find 'it'/'her') but she seems also to be, uniformly *Mater*/matter to be overlooked. To use a rather explosive analogy, it is as if the mother and Freud are together yet separated in a double-barreled shotgun, with the misfiring of one barrel obscuring (obliterating) the other. Freud in fact used a similar analogy in an explanation for anxiety. Here the rifle is pointed at the 'wild beast' a description that Freud uses to describe the unruly forces of the libido in the unconscious. A fitting parallel then because the mother has a relation to anxiety and the unconscious that might best be described as central.

Thus Freud writes and the mother is 'shaded'. Again an apt analogy one that Freud himself uses to describe the Odyssean like shades that invade the unconscious as ghosts and taste blood. If the mother is indeed the dark-continent, a simile for the unconscious, or at least her sexuality, which after all is what is important in Freud's Oedipal theory, then the question might be asked, 'is the mother a ghost that haunts our living lives'? Of course a living mother is not a ghost, but then a literal explanation neglects the repression that accompanies the developing ego, an ego no less that is subject to childhood amnesia during the middle years of childhood.

The Prologue introduces us to Freud the man. It seemed to me at the onset of this thesis that the mother is both universalised but also personalised. If Freud did not

mourn his mother, why might this be so? And how is Freud himself mourned, remembered, outside his work? Chapter One is an introduction to Freud's work, asking where the mother might be, and even why she may or may not be recognised in areas that seem peculiar to a space that mothers might occupy. Chapter Two looks at feminist psychoanalysts and asks how they engage with both Freud the man, and Freudian psychoanalysis and thereafter the later schools of psychoanalysis. Chapter Three engages with Freud and Freudian theory, offering an in-depth engagement with particular psychoanalytic concepts and places where the mother might be, or should be, but for some reason is not. Chapter Four explores the concept of anxiety, itself singled out as somehow having an integral relationship to the mother but again, Freud by a less than careful sleight of hand writes the mother out. And yet this is not a direct writing out, because Freud circulates around the point, the navel as it were, offering a kind of adverse reckoning, the mother is there but also, she is not. Chapter Five concludes this thesis by looking at several different theories, including Christopher Bollas's 'clowning mother', and asks how might they offer alternative ways of understanding the mother, both within Freud and as an extension of Freud.

A Note on Abbreviations and the word Mother

Abbreviations

SE: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols., ed. James Strachey, trans. in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson (1953-74).

CP: Sigmund Freud, M. D., LL. D., *Collected Papers*, 4 vols., ed. Ernest Jones, trans. vol., 1, 2 and 4, Joan Riviere, vol., 3 Alix and James Strachey (1949).

PE: Sigmund Freud. *The Uncanny. The Penguin Edition*. Adam Phillips ed. (2003).

A Note on the usage of the word Mother

Throughout this text I use mother instead of the current popular usage of 'primary care-giver'. It will be seen in Chapter Two that I am quite critical of this renaming of the mother in such a 'politically correct' manner. It denies the mother of a position that is itself always already undermined. Given that in most cases mothers raise infants and children it becomes an unnecessary and clumsy appellation, which also undermines the very meaning of mother. Of course, the meaning of 'mother' is itself under scrutiny, and I think that this is a good thing. Mother in all her guises, most often heavily loaded ones that determine her position as some kind of all-giving and all-forgiving everything needs to be 'unpacked'. That being said, 'The Mother' in its abstract form and mother in her visceral grounded shape have a history, longer in some cultures, shorter in others that combines all the obvious and hidden things, even things as yet unknown, that by changing her title, 'mother', we lose. And really, who is going to introduce their mother as, 'this is my primary care-giver?' While I am, of course an advocate of mothers being people first I want to stress the importance of what seems to be an unknown quality attached to the idea (perhaps even the lived experience) of mothers, of mothering. If we lose the title then we lose the tangled, sweaty, unwieldy somethings that are caught up in the very filaments, the very bones perhaps, of the word mother. It would be a shame to lose this and I would ask how can you build onto something when its foundations, however unstable, even as unsavory as they maybe, have been stripped away?

Prologue: 'Prelude for the Reader'

'...my good old lady'.²

'Let me speak, then, and find relief'

(*Job*, 32:20).³

Freud famously said that he did not grieve when his mother died. And perhaps more famously with the death of his father, psychoanalysis was born. A lot is being said in these two sentences. They point to an importance given the father and a lack thereof afforded the mother. And yet neither of these statements is quite true. In a letter to Sándor Ferenczi on the eve of his mother's death, he states her death 'has affected me in a peculiar way, this great event. No pain, no grief, which probably can be explained by the special circumstances—her great age, my pity for her helplessness toward the end; at the same time a feeling of liberation, of release, which I think I also understand. I was not free to die as long as she was alive, and now I am. The values of life will somehow have changed noticeably in the deeper layers' (in E. Freud, 1930: 400). With my mother's death says Freud I am 'free', to live but also 'free to die'. This 'great event' is something that 'I' think 'I' understand writes Freud to Ferenczi. And yet in the 'deepest layers' life has changed. With the suspicion of the worst, when first diagnosed with oral cancer, Freud asked his doctor 'for help to "disappear from this world with decency"' (Kramer ed., 1996: 13). But then he remembered his mother. Referring to her as the 'old lady', an expression of fondness he also used for his nurse and an elderly patient, Freud says, 'It would not be easy to do that to the old lady' (Kramer ed., 1996: 13). Inexplicably says Kramer, there is

² Freud in a letter to William Fliess (in Bonaparte, A. Freud, Kris ed., 1954: 334). This 'good old lady' had just died, but had been a patient of Freud's for several years and is the old lady whose medicine/eye-drops he 'buckles' in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6). In this 'bungled action, Freud drops morphine into the eyes of his 'good old lady' who is a 'medical patient' that he visits twice a day, instead of the collyrium he is supposed to use. As he had performed the task so often he completed it automatically but on this morning, 'the automaton had worked wrong' (SE 6: 177). His feeling of fright he thinks must have some other source as a few drops of morphine will not harm the eye. In fact he links it to the dream of a young man, a patient who he cures, and who offers him the Oedipus myth, which later becomes Freud's Oedipus Complex. The young man dreams he has sex with his mother, a phantasy Freud suggests that 'fluctuates' between two periods the infantile as the return of the repressed and the 'right now'.

³ Also quoted by Yosef Yerushalmi (1991: 81).

always something, “an inseparable bond for Freud between the words “my mother” and “my death”” (Kramer ed., 1996: 13).

In contrast the death of Freud’s father, Jacob has been cited as the point from which psychoanalysis grew. Freud told Jones it ‘revolutionised my soul’ (Jones, 1957: 21). What has been called Freud’s seminal work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4-5) is intertwined with stories of fathers, absurd fathers, stern fathers, strong and weak fathers, forbidding and forbidden fathers. In a letter to Fliess three days after the death of his father he says his father ‘bore himself bravely up to the end, like the remarkable man he was’ (in Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris ed. 1954: 169-170). Further Freud writes, ‘By one of the obscure routes behind the official consciousness, the old man’s death affected me deeply. I valued him highly, understood him very well indeed, and with his peculiar mixture of deep wisdom and imaginative light-heartedness he meant a great deal in my life. By the time he died his life had long been over, but at a death the whole past stirs within one. I feel now as if I had been turned up by the roots’ (Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris ed. 1954:170-171). This ‘remarkable man’ Freud described as being rather Micawber-like ‘always hopefully expecting something to turn up’ (Jones, 1953: 3). And yet, Freud writing to Ernest Jones states that he has no time for ‘the exaggerations on the occasion of death’ which he found, ‘particularly distasteful’ and was ‘careful to avoid them’ although he could truthfully say on Karl Abraham’s death, ‘*Integer vitae scelerisque purus*’ (‘He whose life is blameless and free of guilt’) (in E. Freud ed., 1925: 363). In fact, even on the death of Jones’s first son Freud wrote and suggested ‘a piece of Shakespearean research in the hope of distracting me’ states Jones. When Jones reproaches Freud for his lack of ‘consolatory wisdom’ Freud replies ‘When I did not write to you what you had expected I had good reasons for it. I know of only two consolations in such a case. The one is bad, since it robs life of all its value, and for young ones like you and your poor wife. What this second is you may easily guess. ... As an unbelieving fatalist I can only let my arms sink before the terrors of death’ (in Jones, 1957: 149).

‘I am uprooted’ with the death of my father says Freud, and yet I feel ‘the whole past stir within me’. In the ‘deeper layers’ I feel the death of my mother, but now I am free to live, and free to die says Freud. His mother, he writes to Max Eitingon on the death of Eitingon’s mother, ‘bars my way to the longed-for rest, to eternal

nothingness’ and comments, ‘The loss of a mother must be something very strange, unlike anything else, and must arouse emotions that are hard to grasp’ (in E. Freud, 1960: 392). When Freud is honoured with a plaque on the house in which he was born, he writes to the Mayor of Příbor-Freiberg thanking him. He states that he left his birth place at the age of three and returned only once, when he was sixteen but ‘one thing is certain’, ‘deep within me, although overlaid, there continues to live the happy child from Freiberg, the first-born son of a youthful mother, the boy who received from this air, from this soil, the first indelible impressions’ (in E. Freud, 1960: 407-408). ‘Deep within me, although overlaid’ lives the happy child, the first-born son of a youthful mother’. Freud states in the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* ‘that in being in love with one’s own mother one is never concerned with her as she is in the present but with her youthful mnemonic image carried over from one’s childhood’ (SE 6: 178). For Freud, his mother is no Jocasta ‘mistakenly’ undertaking an incestuous relationship with her son. She is a representation of the Madonna, ‘a charming, sympathetic nursemaid, not from the celestial world but from ours’ as he writes in a letter to Martha Freud (E. Freud, 1960: 82). Jim Swan argues that Freud cleaves his mother in two, *mater* and nannie (Swan, 1974). And yet the two will inevitably become one: ‘If during a child’s prehistoric epoch, his nurse has been dismissed, and if soon afterward his mother has died, the two events are superimposed on each other in a single series in his memory as revealed in analysis’ (SE 4: 255). Freud’s mother did not die, although we could argue that this youthful mother saw a lot of death, felt a lot of grief. Freud’s eleven-month younger brother Julius dies of an intestinal problem around eight months old. A few months before Julius’s birth Amalie’s⁴ (Freud’s mother) brother dies. This then is a house of grieving. It could be

⁴ Ernest Jones and Ernst Freud spell Freud’s mother’s name, Amalie, although I have seen it spelt Amalié and perhaps more commonly by authors writing on Freud, including Peter Gay (1988), Amalia. I will follow Jones and Ernst Freud in their spelling because Ernst is the grandson and editor of an edition of letters written by Freud and one would think he would know the spelling of his grandmother’s name. And Jones was familiar with the Freud family as a whole and I expect he would, given the three-tiered biography on Freud, spell her name correctly. It seems a little thing to note but after all, Freud following Goethe pointed out that a ‘man’s name’ is important to him. Freud states ‘Goethe, I recalled, had remarked somewhere upon people’s sensitiveness about their names: how we seem to have grown into them like our *skin* (SE 4: 207). Freud had preceded his comment on Goethe’s name by stating that “*Freud*” is the German word for ‘joy’” (SE 4: 207 n 2) and that his ‘playing about with names’ which has ‘a kind of childish naughtiness’ to it, is a reaction to all the

said that Freud's *Spaltung*, between *mater* and nannie has as much to do with a mother in mourning, to a Catholic nurse that tells him of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' and the fulfillment of the wish of a jealous infant, 'dethroned, despoiled, prejudiced' against his usurper, his baby brother.

Perhaps it is not as simple as this and if Freud taught us anything he taught us to look beyond the obvious. When Freud's mother died he had experienced several deaths of people close to him. His daughter Sophie, the mother of little Ernst of the famous psychoanalytic game the *fort/da* (the Sunday child Breger calls Sophie in light of her beauty (Breger, 2000)), and then Sophie's son, (Ernst's younger brother) Heinrele, of who Freud declared he had never loved another human being so much. This 'enchanted little fellow' was always sickly 'a bag of skin and bones' (Jones, 1957: 96). Freud states that Heinrele was one of those children whose mental development outgrew his physical growth. To Kata and Lajos Levy Freud wrote, 'I don't think I have ever experienced such grief' (E. Freud, 1960: 343-344). And Jones argues it was

'feeble witticisms' that his own name had encountered on numerous occasions (SE 4: 207). To this point it is interesting that Freud wrote in a letter to Martha, (during the early days of their courtship), and trying to impress on her (and himself) the importance of her family history, 'The Jew is made for joy and joy for the Jew' (E. Freud, 1960: 21). Freud has a teacher in this, an 'Old Jew' who he refers to as a 'Nathan the Wise' (after Lessing's character in a play of the same name, who pleads for religious tolerance). Freud tells Martha that 'when I took my leave I was more deeply moved than the Old Jew could possibly guess' (E. Freud, 1960: 21). Freud had used a pseudonym, a Dr. Wahle, a friend and former admirer of Martha, and a different destination, Prague instead of Vienna to order monogrammed paper from this 'Old Jew'. Freud tells Martha that while the 'joy' that the 'Old Jew' speaks of with such reverence in relation to the 'Holy Days', is not for them, 'no longer offers us any shelter, something of the core, of the essence of his meaningful and life-affirming Judaism will not be absent from our home' (in E. Freud, 1960: 22). Thus, Freud who is often depicted as a 'joyless Jew' (he has a 'cheerful pessimism' he tells Jones), in fact shows that the 'joyful' teachings of his 'Old Master' had some meaning, incorporated some element that related in some way to the meanings he had attributed to his own name, even if here, Freud (although I do not know why – no reason is given. I suppose he was trying to keep the paper a secret from Martha. Perhaps making some sort of point to Martha?), is using the name of another. Freud then, if we are to employ our own 'playing about with names', which means 'joy', seems to suggest something about his relationship to Judaism, to his own sense of being a Jew, to some sort of 'core', an 'essence' of/to Freud, 'many dark emotional powers all the stronger the less they could be expressed in words' (E. Freud, 1960: 367) that is in fact, carried throughout Freud's work.

‘the only occasion in his life when Freud was known to shed tears’ (1957: 96).⁵ To Jones he said, that the loss of Heinrele ‘killed something in him for good’ (Jones,

⁵ Peter Rudnytsky in his book, *Rescuing Psychoanalysis from Freud and Other Essays in Re-Vision* (2011) has Freud ‘bursting’ in on William Stekel and his Viennese colleagues, who sought to oust Carl Jung from the position of Freud’s ‘true son and heir’, with ‘tears streaming down his cheeks’ (in Rudnytsky, 2011: 37). This is an account given by Stekel, who Rudnytsky will whole-heartedly believe, even engaging an account by Ferenczi of Freud, who received an honorary doctorate from Clark University ‘almost with tears in his eyes’ (in Rudnytsky, 2011: 37) as confirmation of Stekel’s story. Rudnytsky takes sides, and in this book (the only book of his I have read) he sides with Stekel of whom Freud called ‘worse than swine’. In fact, Rudnytsky, who Brett Kahr states in the foreword, ‘loves Freud’ seems to be involved in the worst kind of gossiping, that which would strip the last shred of dignity from the bones of the dead (which is interesting as Freud in a letter to Fritz Wittels (of who Rudnytsky quotes in support of Stekel) states that when one knows as little about the subject of their biography as Wittels does of Freud, they should wait ‘till the person is dead, when he cannot do anything about it and fortunately no longer cares’ (E.Freud, 1960: 350)). Far be it for me to suggest that the dead should get to rest easily, but Rudnytsky’s scholarship, in this book at least, builds on very tenuous associations, those of the supposed Minna Bernays/Freud affair, here taking Jung’s account as a truth, rather than addressing the fact that Jung had several affairs, and perhaps was deflecting from these. And why would Minna Bernays, Freud’s sister-in-law, tell Jung on their first meeting that she was having an affair with Freud. It makes no sense. And even if there were an element of truth to it, why would you build an argument around something so tenuous, and ultimately non-consequential? Perhaps if there was ‘good’, that is to say ‘adequate’, as in, verification from the man himself evidence for an affair we could suppose that it might have had some bearing on Freud’s work. Although admittedly I am not sure why, or even how much impact it would have. Rudnytsky will say, ‘In today’s world, Freud’s authority is no longer exercised through his personal charisma but solely through the enduring power of his texts’ (2011: 39). Which is slightly disingenuous as Rudnytsky himself argued ‘all Freud’s psychoanalytic writings may be read as fragments of his interminable self-analysis’ (2011: 34). Thus Freud the man it would seem is Freud the text. I was disquieted by Rudnytsky’s empathic account of Winnicott’s affair, which is in direct contrast to the gossip like nastiness that he attributed to Freud’s apparent affair. And what is it, but hearsay, because it cannot be proven. And the ‘proof’ that Rudnytsky believed that he had is tenuous at best, at worst, it is just ‘horrid’ (as Winnicott says of himself) and ultimately it goes nowhere. To this Rudnytsky wants us to know that Freud ‘wet his pants’ when he and Jung and Ferenczi were in America. For what purpose do we need to know this I ask? How does this aid Freudian scholarship? And again, it came from Jung, so why are we to believe Jung, Ferenczi and Stekel over Freud? The letter to Wittels that I quoted above is twice cited by Rudnytsky to support his argument that Freud was ‘unkind’ and ‘unfair’ to Stekel but he neglects to say that Freud here is expressing disappointment that Wittels ignored the information Freud had given him about his relationship to Stekel and the reasons for the break (from his point of view) in a previous letter (pgs 345-347 in E.Freud, 1960). To engage with Freud, whether we believe his theories are right or wrong does not need to involve stripping him of both his ‘clothes’ or his ‘dignity’ for that matter: ‘they

1957: 97). Jones suggests that perhaps Heinrele stood in some way for ‘little Julius’, something ‘deep in his heart’ (Jones, 1957: 97). Freud was ailing and at 72 was nearing the end of his own life (although admittedly he lived for another decade). But Freud thought he was destined to die young, partly influenced by Fliess’s ‘period theory’ Freud had in fact lived past both the ages he thought he would die, 51 and 62. His farewell to friends was apparently, ‘Good-bye, this might be the last time you see me’ or a variation of this.

It could be said that the death of his father occurred at a turning point in his life. The loss of a father, as Freud describes it is ‘the most important event, the most poignant loss, of a man’s life’ (SE 4: xxvi). This was a ‘liminal’ period for Freud, as Jung referred to it, where one looks back at his/her achievements, or lack thereof and forward to the possibilities of doing something in/with one’s life. Freud was potentially at a crossroads, involved in self-analysis and therefore deeply reflective. His father’s death would have affected him more than his mother’s for these reasons alone. And yet Freud lived in fear that he would die before his mother, knowing that she would not cope with news of his death. To Eitingon he wrote, ‘I somehow could not forgive myself if I were to die before her’ (in E. Freud, 1960: 392). To note, Jones follows his account (which is remarkably brief) of Amalie’s death with a recollection of Eva Rosenfeld’s concerning her anxiety with Freud’s own illness (his recurring operations for cancer of the mouth and upper jaw). In analysis with Freud she could not help showing her tension, and upon telling Freud her ‘unhappy secret’ he said, ‘We have only one aim and only one loyalty, to psycho-analysis. If you break this rule you injure something much more important than any consideration you owe me’ (in Jones, 1957: 163). A strange example to follow Freud’s portrayal of his emotions following the death of his mother: psychoanalysis is all are the words Jones puts in Freud’s mouth (‘Psychoanalysis is Freud’ writes Jones, which begs the question

be grudge the coat I am wearing’ (Freud quoted by Rudnytsky, 2011: 37). Or as Freud writes to Wittels in the earlier letter referring to Stekel’s ‘treachery and ugly dishonesty’: ‘all the buttons of [even my] trousers of patience snapped off’ (E. Freud, 1960: 346). I agree with Rudnytsky (although not in the context he offers) when he states that we should both escape the ‘Scylla of Freud-bashing and the Charybdis of Freudolatry’ (Rudnytsky, 2011: 39). An entirely appropriate metaphor with its mythological Odyssean element, (which I will engage with in Chapter Three) but I would also argue that this would involve a fairer trial than the one that Rudnytsky offers Freud, at least in this account.

argues Phillips, ‘Who, then, is Jones’ (Phillips, 1994: 110)). But who will “fish” these words out? Who will reach into the ‘yawning’, and one might say, as Kramer does, the prosthetic ‘hole’ of Freud’s mouth? Anxiety, cancer/the ‘monster’ (Freud’s name for this prosthetic), death, psychoanalysis and the mother, all hang together ‘in’ the mouth of Freud. And we know the mouth has a symbolic equivalence to the mother/vagina/womb. Here then, like the Māori legend of Māui, who standing on the South Island of New Zealand, fishes up the North Island with the jawbone of his grandmother, I ‘fish’ out the words from Freud’s mouth, acknowledging the slippage between the terms mother, death, psychoanalysis, all spoken that is from the symbolic equivalence of the vagina/womb, here perhaps more readily acknowledged because of the prosthetic monster, which replaces Freud’s jaw.

Freud will argue that we all desire to return to the womb, but he seems to forget, not a proper forgetting though, that the womb is, importantly *in* the mother. Freud stressed that the importance of the infantile experience was overlooked and yet he would ignore the person who is most loved by the infant in its early years – its mother. He would state that the mother was vitally important to the mental wellbeing of the child and then ‘gloss’ this over with his Oedipal paradigm. The mother becomes a necessary piece of the puzzle and yet a seemingly unimportant prop. Madelon Sprengnether will argue that all the mothers in Freud disappear into footnotes, or asides: ‘be it Dora’s madly cleaning mother, Little Hans’s beautiful, seductive mother, or the Rat Man’s absentee mother, they all appear as silhouettes against the rich background of other relationships, other entanglements’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 42 n 3). And yet Freud sought to give women a voice. He listened to ‘female hysterics’, and by doing so, whatever we may conclude regarding the interpretations (and I will discuss the Little Hans case-study in Chapter Three) he let ‘them’ speak. And this in a time when medicine/science thought women’s mental and physical being was simply tied to biological life-cycles/events. Freud will tell the ‘Impartial Listener’ in *The Question of Lay Analysis* (SE 20) that medicine conceived of ‘women’s problems’ as something that ‘nature or time will finally take care of it’: ‘With women there is first menstruation, then marriage, and later on the menopause. Finally death is a real help’ (SE 20: 232). In his ‘chimney sweeping’ or ‘talking cure’ as Anna O. (Bertha Pappenheim) called psychoanalysis (then the Cathartic method) Freud took women’s ‘troubles’ seriously.

But what of Freud's own relationship to his mother. He refers to himself as the first-born son of a youthful mother, but we might ask, where does Amalie Freud go to after that? Robert Kramer asks, 'Who, exactly was this powerful and fearsome mother to whose *Imago* Freud seems to have been chained, eternally, in his unconscious?' (Kramer ed., 1996: 44 n 4). He continues by stating that we know almost nothing about Freud's mother except for a few scattered memories. The mother who referred to her son as '*mein goldener Sigmund*' ('my golden Sigi') has all but been forgotten. This is the mother that Freud visited every Sunday for lunch, all his adult life, up until her death and yet, argues Kramer, *Nichts* (nothing). Of Freud's colleagues continues Kramer, not even Otto Rank with his belief that the mother was 'All' seemed to question Freud's relationship to his mother. Except one, later in his life Sándor Ferenczi did so, but only in the privacy of his diary. A year before his death Ferenczi considers Freud's motives for abandoning the seduction theory for his Oedipal theory (I will explain these theories in Chapter Three). In Ferenczi's own work he had been increasingly drawn back to the so-called seduction theory and argued that the 'sexual abuse' of children 'was far more common than Freud admitted' (in Kramer ed., 1996: 45 n 4). Ferenczi wondered at the ease with which Freud 'sacrifices the interests of women in favour of male patients' and considers that this might have something to do with his relationship to his mother. Ferenczi suggests that Freud 'recoiled' from a 'sexually demanding mother' and that her passionate nature may have repelled him. In italics Ferenczi writes,

Castration of the father, the potent one, as a reaction to the humiliation he experienced, led to the construction of a theory in which the father castrates the son and, moreover, is then revered by the son as a god. In his conduct Fr[eud] plays only the role of the castrating god, he wants to ignore the traumatic moment of his own castration in childhood; he is the only one who does not have to be analysed' (Kramer ed., 1996: 45 n 4).

Ferenczi's depiction of Freud's relationship with his mother is at odds with Jones's biographical account. Jones states that it is from Amalie that Freud gets his 'passion', his temperament. From his father, Freud 'inherited his sense of humour', 'his scepticism about the uncertain vicissitudes of life', his custom of quoting a Jewish anecdote to emphasise a moral, 'his liberalism and free-thinking, and perhaps his uxoriousness' (Jones, 1953: 4). His intellect, argues Jones was his own. Freud offers

a lovely little vignette, a recollection of his father's to illustrate in what high regard his parents held Freud's intellect, his genius. One day, Jacob Freud comes upon a friend and his son arguing in the street. Freud senior 'laughingly' reproves the son, with the expression, '(w)hat, are you contradicting your father? My Sigmund's little toe is cleverer than my head, but he would never dare to contradict me!' (Freud cited by Jones, 1953: 21).

Reflections on Freud

But in looking to understand where the mother is for Freud, in his work, given that this might be the only place we can locate the mother of/for Freud we need to understand Freud the man. Freud referred to himself as a 'conquistador' an archeologist and also an architect of the psyche. In a letter to James Putnam he says, 'I have always been dissatisfied with my intellectual endowment...[and] if I were ever to meet the Almighty, I would ask Him why He hadn't endowed me with a better intellectual equipment' (E. Freud, 1960: 307-308). Freud might have been 'one of those people that disturbed the sleep of mankind' but in doing so he made a place in our 'psyches/soul' that is impossible to resist. Peter Gay will state that 'Freud is inescapable' and 'it may be a commonplace by now that we all speak Freud whether we know it or not, but the commonplace remains both true and important' (Gay, 1989: xi). Even if you believe that Freud's theories are essentially wrong-minded argues Gay, you cannot escape from talking about your unconscious or your friend who you think is incredibly narcissistic or even catching yourself or others in a 'Freudian slip' – a slip of the tongue, where your unconscious reveals something that you were not expecting to say.

Georg Groddeck argues that Freudian discoveries, of the unconscious, of resistance and transference are comparable to Copernicus. '...Freud did something that can only be compared to the work of the founders of religion' (Groddeck, 1977: 5-6). Adam Phillips argues 'Freud is the writer for people who want to find out what words may have done to them, and may still be doing' (Phillips, 2006: vii). Freud he states changes our reading habits. Even if you don't like Freud argues Phillips, 'you can't stop reading him' (Phillips, 2006: viii). Jonathan Lear quotes Thomas Mann (who exchanged correspondence with Freud): 'Has the world ever been changed by anything save by thought and its magic vehicle the Word?' (in Lear, 1990). Lear

continues calling Freud a 'revolutionary' (Lear, 1990: 1) and argues that the psyche Freud was attempting to 'speak' is also to be called the soul. Bruno Bettelheim finds the translation of Freud's *Seele* into psyche contemptible. The soul included the whole person argues Bettelheim, psyche/soul and body. In a similar vein Diana Jonte-Pace argues that 'Freud referred to his project as an investigation of the unconscious in the *Seelenleben*. Although Strachey translates the term as "mental life" a better translation for *Seelenleben* is "psychic life" or "the life of the soul" (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 14). Again Jonte-Pace quotes Harold Bloom as calling Freud the 'dominant mythologist of our time' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 24). And Kristeva called Freud 'The Galileo of the unconscious' (Kristeva, 1995: 180). Helene Deutsch stated that Freud was the 'greatest revolutionary of the century' (in Kristeva, 1995: 191).

In a lovely wee book, called *Freud off the record... an informal conversation* the author exclaims, 'Freud faced his own demons, fearlessly, and wished us to face ours' (D.M Thomas, 2010: 9). Rank states that the 'unspoken insight is Freud's great accomplishment, for he himself is a myth creator in the grandest style, in Plato's sense a real philosopher' (Rank in Kramer ed., 1996: 229). Ernest Jones argues quoting Leopold Bellak, 'Sigmund Freud had no Newton before him. If the theory of relativity is said to be the greatest feat the human intellect has achieved, it is difficult to find words for the attainment of Freud' (Jones, 1956: 39). And finally, in Stanley Messer's and Nancy McWilliams commentary on Freud they argue, 'not since Jesus has there been a master of the use of the parable' (Messer and McWilliams, 2003:75). This is my favourite description of Freud: the 'Godless Jew' has become the Jesus of our time!

But these are affectations, of which Freud was disinclined. When Princess Bonaparte wrote that he 'combined the powers of Einstein and Pasteur' Freud replied, 'Do you really think so?' 'I'm very flattered. But I can't share your opinion. Not that I'm modest, no. I have a high opinion of what I have discovered, not of myself. The great discoverers are not necessarily great minds. Who has changed the world more than Christopher Columbus? Now who was he? An adventurer' (in Edmundson, 2007:76). But Freud could laugh at himself, at his theories even. On discussing a young scientist with Jones, who Freud thought might be advantageous to the future of psychoanalysis Freud bemoans, 'But I can't regard it as normal, you know, that he

married a woman old enough to be his mother!’ (in Jones, 1955: 452). Freud the discoverer of the Oedipus complex was both amused and ‘seriously disappointed’ states Jones. Robert Graves amusingly observed that Freud could have, following Plutarch rather than Sophocles called his infantile sexual theory the hippo complex because Plutarch believed that the hippopotamus was ‘unique in the animal kingdom for murdering its father and impregnating its mother’ (in Kelly, 2005: 47).

But as Freud states himself, ‘The fellow is actually somewhat more complicated’ (in E. Freud, 1960: 402). This is a man who included with his scientific treatises to Fliess, affectionate accounts of his growing children, ‘my worms’ as he referred to them (in Masson, 1985: 244). Freud tells Fliess his children’s dreams, recounts the day to day instances, includes Martin’s (his eldest son of the ‘*My son, the Myops*’ dream (in Chapters Three and Five)) poetry – which Freud felt was very good – and describes the laughter of his first born baby girl as ‘the most beautiful thing that could happen to us’ (Masson, 1985: 21). He tells this laughing baby girl when she has grown and asks for his advice, that ‘I am not going to offer you any illusions’ and ‘I should very much like to talk to you for once’ (E. Freud, 1960: 271). Mathilde of the ‘Hella’ dream,⁶ who Freud argues, ‘I have guessed for a long time that in spite of all your common sense you fret because you think you are not good-looking enough and therefore might not attract a man’. And he tells her, with the words of a father, ‘I have watched this with a smile, first of all because you seem quite attractive enough to me’ and ‘(y)our mirror will inform you that there is nothing common or repellent in your features’. Reassuring Mathilde that in any event, beauty by itself is not enough, a girl needs a ‘whole personality’ and this she has in abundance (in E. Freud, 1960: 272).

⁶ The Hella dream where Freud tells Fliess he dreamt of having ‘overaffectionate feelings for Mathilde, only she was called Hella’ (Masson, 1985: 249). Freud’s summation of this dream is brief: Hella is the name of an American niece whose picture they had just received and correspondingly at this time Mathilde had shown an interest in mythology and had wept over the Greek defeats. Swan (1974) argues that Freud’s interpretation of this dream is very tame particularly when he states himself, that the ‘dream of course shows the fulfillment of my wish to catch a *Pater* as the originator of neurosis and thus [the dream] put an end to my ever-recurring doubts’ (in Masson, 1985: 249). Whatever ‘our’ interpretations of this dream maybe, it is only four months later that Freud gives up his seduction theory for his infantile sexual theory. The father had caught the *Pater* by the ‘tail’ we might say, and then frightened, shocked, disturbed maybe, he turned away as he did at the idea that his father, this ‘tremendous fellow’ might be one of ‘these perverts’ (to Fliess in Masson, 1985: 193).

And while Freud's mother may be neglected in his letters and theory, he wrote faithfully to Martha Freud, and according to Jeffrey Masson the only dream that Freud ever fully interpreted, the so called 'Martha dream' was never published (and is presumed lost or destroyed) because Fliess indicated to Freud that it was too intimate to be made public (Masson, 1985: 10). He refers to her later in life as 'Beloved Old Dear' (E. Freud, 1960: 281) and in Martin Freud's memoirs he remembers his father's preference for alpine flowers, in particular the *Kohlroserl* (*Nigritella nigra*). When Freud returned with a bunch of these flowers for Martha she told a story, one that Martin says is not a 'dramatic story', or even an 'important one' (M. Freud, 1957: 85). This is a recollection of a time before children, when the Freuds are newly married. Martha spotted a clump of this flower on a 'steep, grassy slope' and Freud braved this slope and its potential dangerousness to gather some flowers for her. The sight and smell of these deeply fragrant flowers took Martha back to that happy time when it was just the two of them, when Freud was her 'hero'.

Freud argued:

If I look around for something with which to compare the final form assumed by a dream as it appears after normal thought has made its contribution, I can only think of nothing better than the enigmatic inscriptions with which *Fliegende Blätter* has for so long entertained its readers. They are intended to make the reader believe that a certain sentence—for the sake of contrast, a sentence in dialect and as scurrilous as possible—is a Latin inscription. For this purpose the letters contained in the words are torn out of their combinations into syllables and arranged in a new order. Here and there a genuine Latin word appears; at other points we seem to see abbreviations of Latin words before us; and at still other points in the inscription we may allow ourselves to be deceived into overlooking the senselessness of isolated letters by parts of the inscription seeming to be defaced or showing lacunae. If we are to avoid being taken in by the joke, we must disregard everything that makes it seem like an inscription, look firmly at the letters, pay no attention to their ostensible arrangement, and so combine them into words belonging to our own mother tongue' (SE 5: 500-501).⁷

⁷ Lacan suggests that 'To interpret the unconscious as Freud did, one would have to be as he was, an encyclopedia of the arts and muses, as well as an assiduous reader of the *Fliegende Blätter*. And the task is made no easier by the fact that we are at the mercy of a thread woven with allusions, quotations, puns, and equivocations' (Lacan, 1977: 169-170).

The *Fliegende Blätter* argues Freud uses Latin inscription to fool us, a little joke. Freud in contrast as we will see in the following chapters employs Latin when something appears too close, makes him uncomfortable, thus his mother is always ‘*Matrem, nudam*’ and ghosts are *revenants*. Here then might be a good place to understand ‘what and why’ Freud does with to/the mother. By rendering her position as too uncomfortably close in Latin is Freud trying to cover over *lacunae*? And if so, what specific *lacuna* is most troubling to him? Is most in need of concealment? We might also ask ‘whether and why’ Freud might be trying to fool us? This thesis will follow Freud’s imperative and ignore the ‘enigmatic inscriptions’ that Freud offers in relation to ‘the mother’ and instead try and find ‘our own mother’ here rendered as the ‘mother tongue’. Itself inclusive of the all-important oral stage, and thereafter our access to the Symbolic through the acquisition of language, importantly that of the mothers *tongues*.⁸

And finally...

Jones states, ‘There comes to my mind here a remark the philosopher Ludwig Klages once made in my presence. Someone had asked him whose writings one had best read to get a grasp of Freud’s doctrines. He answered unhesitatingly: “His own”’ (Jones, 1956: 132). For that reason I have relied on Freud’s own material as first and foremost the ‘foundation’ of this thesis. Like Yosef Yerushalmi, while I am ‘bereft of professional training and experience in psychoanalysis’ I ‘have some contribution to make in various areas of applied psychoanalysis’ (Yerushalmi, 1991: xvi). It is from Yerushalmi that I have borrowed the words ‘Prelude for the ‘Reader’’ although here Yerushalmi writes ‘Listener’. Because while this work will open with an engagement between Freud, Freudian theory and ‘the mother’ ‘it must introduce itself along the way’, raking over old ground and introducing the new in response to my own feminist engagement, previous feminist engagement and an overall engagement with, and appreciation of the Freudian *oeuvre*. I find myself in agreement with Michael Billig

⁸ And here I include all meanings that ‘speaking in tongues’ might suggest. The obvious biblical (read Holy) meaning but also the nonsensical dialogue of early childhood, although the child/ren know (but don’t know) what they are saying themselves. ‘A’ psychoanalysis is after all, about acquiring meaning from the lowering of resistances so that the repressed unconscious has a chance to speak. That the ‘free association’ (the talk of the unconscious) does not make sense, or is at least, not often very clear is shown by Freud in both his case-studies and his dream analysis.

who argues 'I have never been able to grow out of the pleasure of reading Freud. ...I found myself entranced by the beauty of Freud's writing and the monument of his intellect. But I am not a 'silent', passive reader: I want to argue back' (Billig, 1999: 3). Hugh Haughton states that Freud 'puts childhood and the legacy of childhood fantasy and experience at the centre of mental life' (PE, 2003: xiv) and yet the mother seems to be but a neglected and marginalized figure in Freudian theory. To this point Freud's rather exasperated, 'What does woman want?' to Princess Marie Bonaparte is echoed in my own exasperated, 'Where is the/*your* Mother?'

And just one more thing...

Samuel Weber concludes his preface to *The Legend of Freud* by explaining that his 'return' to Freud, which involves a going back to Freud's German is written in juxtaposition to James Strachey's Standard Edition, which positions itself argues Weber as the 'original' text. A startling suggestion but the Standard Edition presumes to 'know what it is talking about' states Weber (Weber, 1982: xvii). Presumes that is, to know Freud better than Freud himself. In Yerushalmi's splendid book, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (1991) that I came to rather late but which I have enjoyed thoroughly, he writes that 'Strachey's devotion and achievement are not to be minimized' but that a return to 'Freud's original German' will lead us to discover 'how misleading Strachey's translations can sometimes be' (Yerushalmi, 1991: xxiii). While I find the Standard Edition of Freud an invaluable resource I would like to experience the 'privileged theater' (*sic*) of Freud's work in his 'Mother Tongue'. My figure of Freud according to Weber is *disfigured*. But more than this, it has become familiar in a way that loses the uncanny and less comforting visions of Freud argues Weber. This thesis begins then, not only with the uncanny and *disfigured* 'body' of the mother but equivalently if I am to follow Weber's precept the uncanny and *disfigured* figure of Freud himself.

The following thesis then, although only having Freud's words in English to guide me attempts to make the unknown figure of the mother, whom we have 'known' all the time to quote Weber, 'but of which we think less and less' visible in Freud's texts (Weber, 1982: xvii). Not visible as in a sum of parts put together to make a whole, although this is after all what some feminists involved in psychoanalysis have attempted (most often) to do. But as a presence, uncanny perhaps, a 'Witch' maybe, a

Fate even, well as Freud was fond of repeating states Jones, ‘...it is no use quarreling with fate’ (Jones, 1957: 154). After all, it is too the three Fates, as a Lear-like figure that Freud finally and importunately ‘holds up his arms’: the Goddess of Death, Mother Earth, who receives him once more: ‘But it is in vain that an old man yearns for the love of woman as he had it first from his mother; the third of the Fates alone, the silent Goddess of Death, will take him into her arms’ (SE 12: 301).

Chapter One

Freud and the Mother

The following thesis seeks to explore, understand, make sense of the figure of the 'Mother' in Freudian psychoanalysis. The mother has been variously denoted as 'missing', sidelined, forgotten, negated, neglected, as pre-Oedipal, spectre, phantom and shadow by feminist psychoanalysts (and other theorists) writing on Freud but there is something in Freud's description of the mother, an importance that does not seem to get realised that is relevant and important to the Freudian *oeuvre* as a whole.

To achieve this I need to 'know' Freud, not only theoretically but also biographically. If we do indeed drag our 'epistemological baggage' throughout our writing as Elspeth Probyn would have it, or as Ruth Blier declared 'we don't leave our life histories at the door' then Freud's would appear to be tainted/coloured with the figure of his mother.⁹ This immediate relationship of Freud and his mother is not what I will be looking at directly, after all how does one get privileged access to this relationship? But there is something in Freud's writing that seems to take us - on a royal road maybe - back to the Mother. One of the complexities of writing on or about the mother is whether to universalise her 'the mother', or to give her the singularity that she may well deserve. Also complicating this is the concept of the 'other' itself caught up in the guise of the 'big Other' hence the capital 'O' or the 'other' as representative of something outside ourselves although seemingly having a direct

⁹ This is not surprising, as Jung argues, 'I know well enough that every word I utter carries with it something of myself—of my special and unique self with its particular history and its own particular world. Even when I deal with empirical data, I am necessarily speaking about myself. But it is only by accepting this as inevitable that I can serve the cause of man's knowledge of man—the cause which Freud also wished to serve, and which, in spite of everything, he also served' (Jung, 1933: 136).

connection with/to us. Lacan utilises these differences in his work, and I will touch on some of Lacan's theories throughout this work. But Lacan, the self-proclaimed heir of Freud is not really of interest here. I want to know Freud, in the old philosophical sense, if knowledge is indeed the path to some truth as Heraclitus or Plato would have it, then the truth I am looking for is caught up in Freud's writing and Freud himself. For a person interested in Freud, there is a wealth of information. We have access to his personal correspondence and Freud was a prolific letter writer, even keeping a ledger of letters sent and received. Within these letters we get a sense of the 'personal' Freud, not that his work does not offer this also. As the Father of psychoanalysis, Freud's personal thoughts, dreams and struggles were on display. Reading Freud's letters alongside his theory of psychoanalysis offers us a deeper understanding of Freud's thinking. Although admittedly as both Freud and Jung point out, one is never able to give a true representation of their unconscious because of their own inhibitions, resistance and repression. Early on in their correspondence Jung was able to say to Freud in response to the analysis of his own dream, 'The analysis and use of one's own dreams is a ticklish business at best; one succumbs again and again to the inhibitions emanating from the dream no matter how objective one believes oneself to be' (in McGuire, 1974: 15). Freud was of the opinion that anyone who is a good dreamer and not too abnormal could analyse their dreams (SE 14: 20). In the Fliess correspondence Freud argues, 'Genuine self-analysis is impossible; otherwise there would be no [neurotic] illness' and towards the end of his life, he wrote, 'In self-analysis the danger of incompleteness is particularly great. One is too soon satisfied with a part explanation, behind which resistance may easily be keeping back something that is more important perhaps' (SE 14: 21 n. 2).

This 'more important' is suggestive. Why might a resistance to something be too great to analyse? And could this 'more important' be somehow tied into Freud's deferral of a greater exploration into femininity? Femininity for Freud was a 'riddle', something mankind have knocked their heads against for eons. And correspondingly, female sexuality is a 'dark continent' (SE 20: 212). For Freud the original relationship to the mother 'seemed to me so difficult to grasp in analysis – so grey with age and shadowy and almost impossible to revivify – that it was as if it had succumbed to an especially inexorable repression' (SE 21: 226). Freud said in *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (SE 23) that the child brings to the world, *before* any

experiences an “*archaic heritage*” (167 and 240-241)). The ‘before’ that attaches itself to the infant would seem to have an immediate relationship to the mother – she is after all the womb that carries ‘it’. She is also the child’s first ‘seducer’ and first ‘love-object’. It is the mother that gives to the child his/her first experiences. By designating the mother as a ‘before’ she becomes ‘grey with age and shadowy’, something unknown and possibly unknowable. It is the object of this thesis to try and understand Freud’s positioning of the mother as a ‘before’, and yet at the same time as a figure who is ‘without parallel’ and as ‘the prototype of all later love-relations – for both sexes’ (SE 23: 188).

Psychoanalysis was, to a greater degree, Freud’s brain-child, but as such, it was dependent on his relationships with others. That is, his letters to Fliess offered him a means of discussing the ideas he was formulating in his dream work and his analysis of hysteria. I think that Freud’s own example of the amoeba is useful here. After all he utilises the amoeba to explain the libidinal transfer in narcissism and he explains that while the body of the amoeba is the ‘ego’ the protrusions, the pseudopodia are the ‘substance of the body’, the libido if you like. His idea that the psychical apparatus is much like a prehistoric organism that sends out sentinels to find sustenance is a highly appropriate metaphor for the processes involved in the creation of the understanding of ‘something’. Thus Freud is the amoeba/ego itself, that sends out protrusions/pseudopodia that latch onto other protrusions/libido, amoeba/egos creating a chain of transference, a form of prehistoric feeding. After all, if narcissism is ‘the universal and original state of things’ (SE 16: 416), then it has an integral relationship to the oral stage, which is of course about the appeasement of one’s own needs (even if we, as a infant, do not really realise it as such), and this relationship we know is also explicitly about our first and originary relationship, that is the relationship to an ‘other’, our mother. Freud indicates this in his paper on narcissism stating ‘The development of the ego consists in a departure [*Entfernung*] from primary narcissism and gives rise to a vigorous attempt to recover that state’ (SE 14: 100). The formulation of a pre-ego by Hans Loewald (1980) helps expound this primary narcissistic relationship with the mother, which can be seen in the struggle the psyche seems to endure when pressured to give her up. This will be engaged with more fully in Chapter Three.

Throughout Freud's work the mother as our first love object, as the womb we desire to return to, as the symbol of death, explicated in the Māori myth of Māui, who crawls into Hine-nui-te-pō's vagina in a return to the womb that will cheat death (the womb being variously connoted as the place of birth and therefore death) and give Māui immortality, is bought to the fore only to be subsumed under the imago of the Father in what might be called the vanguard of psychoanalysis, the Oedipal complex.¹⁰ I will not go into any depth about any of this here but rather continue with the question 'Why Freud?' and importantly, 'Why Freud and the Mother?'

I have long held an interest in Freud, and perhaps a longer interest in this 'thing' that we call a Mother. I don't use 'thing' here in a derogatory sense, but in the sense that Freud used it, the thing is the object and the object is also subject if we are discussing the narcissistic self caught up as it is in the self-preservation instincts. As a younger academic I came to Freud through feminist engagements with psychoanalysis in the context of feminist theory. Given that Freud is not usually depicted in a kindly manner within feminist psychoanalysis – although there are some feminist authors who are sympathetic, Juliet Mitchell is one example – my initial response to Freud was to see him as somewhat misogynistic and yet I understood even then that this was probably a skewed picture of Freud and psychoanalysis, and so my journey into the realms of this depth-psychology began.

To take a step back, I have long held an interest in 'the mother'. Whether this is because I am a 'mother' or more simply that I have been, am continually mothered is perhaps less clear, and I question whether this distinction really matters. I have been perplexed at the feminist agenda of writing the story of mothers and daughters, this in itself a reaction to the historical significance of the mother/son relationship a relationship privileged by Freud, as the most conflict-free of all relationships and perhaps of secondary importance only to the father/son relationship, which is after all

¹⁰ In Māori mythology, Hine-nui-te-pō is the goddess of death and Māui is a demi-god seeking immortality. Māui's attempt to kill Hine-nui-te-pō, by climbing into her vagina and exiting out her mouth is thwarted by the cry/laughter of the moho pererū (banded rail) who awoke Hine-nui-te-pō, who closed her legs so tightly together she crushed Māui to death. In some versions of this legend it is a tīwaiwaka (fantail) that alerts Hine-nui-te-pō of Māui's ploy, the tīwaiwaka being viewed in Māori mythology as a harbinger of death.

the dominant story of psychoanalysis. But it was the story, or stories behind Laius and Oedipus, the story of the mother, Jocasta that held my interest. Not in the sense that I wanted to privilege Jocasta's story over that of Oedipus but more that Jocasta, at least in Freud, figures only as the body/mother who Oedipus fathers children with and who kills herself in discovering that Oedipus is in fact her son. Popular films will often have long-lost children and mothers being reunited and here I am thinking of a movie theme, which has a mother and son reunited after a significant period of time and there is no sexual reunification, no element of it at all. Which is not to say that I am disagreeing with Freud's Oedipal theory, in fact I find elements of it entirely convincing, more that I have often wondered why Jocasta at least did not sense a familiarity with Oedipus, a sense of having known him from somewhere. Perhaps she does, and this is one aspect of the story we are not told. The myth in several of its guises seems to suggest, at least to me, a sense of disquiet felt by Jocasta and Oedipus whose retelling of the prophecy gives him sense to pause. Again, perhaps popular film as well as myself romanticise the mother-child bond in such a way that we imagine that even given a period of time so long that the child is itself now a parent the mother will always recognise her own.

This is kind of the blood-lust of old that I recognised in Freud's *Das Unheimliche* (SE 17). This has long been a favourite text of mine, a text that I return to repetitiously. For there is something in this text that 'unveils' the mother in Freud's work that is significant, and yet always we are presented with the turns, the travails, the riddles that encompass Freud's writing. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4-5) Freud tells us that there is always a part of the dream that is 'unplumbable', a 'navel' if you like. This is a part of the dream that is impossible to untangle, it is a spot that 'reaches down into the unknown' (SE 5: 525). Like Diane Jonte-Pace, I see the 'dream navel' as having a direct correlation to the human navel, our first bodily link to an (m)Other, which marks the bodily transposition from our mother's body to the outside world. Forty years after *The Interpretation of Dreams* the *Medusa's Head* (SE 18) is published posthumously. Seemingly an uncomplicated account of castration anxiety as the source of the myth of Medusa along the lines of the Oedipal masterplot (Jonte-Pace, 2001) it becomes much more than this because once again we are presented with a 'turning away' from a tangle, from something too frightening to be known. This of course is the mother's genitals, that Freud suggests the young boy catches

sight of, surrounded by hair and turns away in horror (SE 18: 273). In fact Freud adds a footnote to his paper on *Infantile Genital Organization* (SE 19) with the words, ‘I should like to add that what is indicated in the myth is the mother’s genitals. Athene, who carries Medusa’s head on her armour, becomes in consequence, the unapproachable woman, the sight of whom extinguishes all thought of a sexual approach’ (SE 19: 144 n 3). Thus the mother, or at least the mother’s genitals, the entrance to our ‘uncanny home’ is unapproachable because she is too frightening, fills us with horror – at least for boys – and so he/we turn away. Madelon Sprengnether recognises this in Freud’s writing arguing that ‘the pre-oedipal mother, like medusa, cannot be looked at directly’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 6). And further she suggests that the mother seems to exercise a kind of fatal attraction for Freud, but one that sees Freud create a “multitude of defensive strategies” to cope with her (Sprengnether, 1990: 6).

What fascinates me so with Freud is his turning away from the absolute significance he attributes to the mother but which he seems to find impossible to write, assigning her a position, in most cases, to the footnotes, or turning away, as he suggests Faust does, when offered the key that unlocks the ‘Mothers’. I want to interrogate this turning away. If the female genitals both frighten us, are *unheimlich* and yet draw us in, are our first *heim*, a phantasy that Freud depicts as filling us with ‘a certain lustful pleasure’ (SE 17: 244), if the mother is our first love object, to whom we compare all other love objects, then why is she not given the importance she appears to demand? An importance that Freud himself recognises although cannot seem to grasp in his own self-analysis (SE 14: 21 n 2). The alternating presence and absence, the haunting quality of the mother in Freud’s writing positions her at the forefront of developmental stages but equally appears to minimise her role in this development. Sprengnether argues that these fluctuations can be seen in object-relations theory as an ‘original maternal presence from which, infant subjectivity must differentiate itself’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 6). But also in Lacan’s ‘Imaginary’, a term invented contends Sprengnether as an over-arching concept for the pre-oedipal¹¹ period that makes of the mother an ‘abstract necessity’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 6).

¹¹ Andre Green points out that for Lacan there is no ‘pre-Oedipal’ as a child comes into the world with always already Oedipalised parents, thus by association the child is Oedipalised at birth (Green, 1999).

Our ego as Loewald argues is constituted with the loss of our mother. Comparatively our sense of having a *doppelgänger* is linked by Freud to the original – one might say primordial – split, the *Spaltung*, which Freud has incurred in front of a mirror (as does Lacan) and in a game, the *fort-da*. When Leonardo da Vinci gazed at the world of nature with wonder, Freud held the wonder to correspond to the ‘tender, kindly mother who had nursed him’ (PE, 2003: 93 and SE 11: 122). While the female genitals, the womb may be the ‘uncanny home’ (SE 17) heaven as Freud depicts it in *The Future of an Illusion* (SE 21) is the ‘home of the uncanny’. Again, these important propositions, that allude to the cornerstones of Freudian psychoanalysis, are underwritten it seems with reference to the mother. Jonte-Pace calls these ‘hesitant non-Oedipal speculations’ in Freud a counter-thesis, it may well be, but it does not quite grasp this sense in Freud of something ungraspable, and it is this something ungraspable that I aim to explore.

I have trawled through feminist psychoanalytic texts over the years finding aspects of particular writers thought provoking. Some of their theories still resonate and I can recall them with ease. Luce Irigaray’s question, ‘Is language a replacement for the womb?’ still gives me a moment’s pause. Maybe it is. Maybe our turning away from the unplumbable navel, from the unknown and unknowable is because once we get to the ‘womb’ (the hole, the gap, the void) we can go no further, in fact, we cannot return. Our only out – and Lacan suggests this, although not in this language – is to acquire language, to access the Symbolic, to learn the Mother Tongue. Our turning away from the mother then, which occurs with the constitution of the ego, in the frame of mirroring, is in part about saving ourselves. If we do not turn away, look away, we will become psychotic – too much closeness suffocates. My question then is, did the young Sigmund turn away from his mother because she was too close and is this what occurs for all of us, although in different ways at an individual level since we are all individually mothered? And is this turning around in his text, when it comes to directly engaging with the figure of the mother a response to this? And how can we know? Who gets to write about mothers? If feminist psychoanalysts – not forsaking the Kleinians, who may or may not identify as feminist – rewrite the psychoanalytic classic of father and son as a story of mothers and daughters what gets lost in the rewriting? What – or who – gets written out? Forgotten? These questions

are not dissimilar to the questions asked by Jacqueline Rose in her essay, *Of Knowledge and Mothers: On the Work of Christopher Bollas* (2004). Rose asks, 'What does thinking about mothers do to thinking?' and further, 'Can we think about mothers and keep an open mind?' (Rose, 2004: 151). Utilising Christopher Bollas's 'most famous formula – the 'unthought known'¹² Rose asks through Bollas, if the 'unthought known' is the place 'where the mother, the imprint of her care on the being of the subject, is once and for all to be found?' (Rose, 2004:151). This raises the question, in the (re)finding of the mother have we moved *beyond* thinking? If the mother represents both birth and death to us, and here we are closely following Freud, does she return us to some kind of truth? Given that psychoanalysis ousted the idea of one truth early on in its development, having a figure that returns us to 'the status of only truth or rather the only place' (Rose, 2004:151) as the mother appears to do, is too troubling, to unthinkable. And so the mother as the place of truth gets relegated to the 'dark continent' – out of sight, yet not out of mind.

And yet the call to the mother, and this is how a reminiscence of her is often depicted, appeals to her as a place of truth. The Wolf Man famously said, 'Life makes me so unhappy! I must get back into the womb' (SE 17: 100), and Tolstoy wrote at the end of his life,

Felt dull and sad all day. Toward evening the mood changed into a desire for caresses, for tenderness. I wanted, as when I was a child, to nestle against some tender and compassionate being and weep with love and be consoled ... become a tiny boy, close to my mother, the way I imagine her. Yes, yes, my Maman, whom I was never able to call that because I did not know how to talk when she

¹² Nancy Chodorow argues that Bollas takes Freud's 'most famous formula' (one of them I would say), 'the shadow of the object falls on the ego' and argues that 'the shadow' is an 'unthought known' that influences and structures the self but is [itself] unavailable to consciousness' (in Chodorow, 1999: 252). Working from the idea of Winnicott's 'true self' as opposed to the 'false self' the 'unthought known' is the 'human subject's recording of his early experiences of the object or the mental representation of the mother's logic of intersubjectivity' (Chodorow, 1999: 252). Robert Kramer argues that throughout the 'Standard Edition of Freud' the powerful or 'bad' mother is Freud's 'unthought known'. This 'unthought known' is a 'ghostly phantom, invisible and unthinkable but ever present between the sheets of the text' (Kramer ed., 1996: 38). Kramer explains Bollas's conception as 'anything that we "know", but for any variety of reasons cannot actually think about.

died. She is my highest image of love – not cold, divine love, but warm, earthly love, maternal. ... Maman, hold me, baby me! ... All that is madness, but it is true (in Troyat, 1967: 14).

The ‘hallmark’¹³ mother, ironically fantasised through the act of writing is the accepted image of the mother: a fantasised portrayal of the mother, as the all-giving, all-encompassing Mother Nature. Freud suggests in his *Autobiographical Study* (SE 20) that this image of ‘the mother’ with its limitlessness was the reason he chose medicine over law. Hearing Goethe’s¹⁴ ‘beautiful essay on Nature’ coupled with Darwin’s revolutionary views ‘strongly attracted him’ (Freud, 1989: 4). Peter Gay argues in, *A Godless Jew* (1987) that the Nature that Freud responds to, and that the essay describes is one of beneficence, describing a ‘nourishing, never exhausted, and never denying mother—a sensual and maternal deity wholly different from the cruel, heedless, destructive Nature he would delineate in his late writings’ (Gay, 1987: 59). Could our difficulty in writing about the mother be because our closest relationship with her is *before* words, beyond words even? Freud argued that, ‘Writing was in its origin the voice of an absent person; and the dwelling-house was a substitute for the mother’s womb, the first lodging, for which in all likelihood he still longs, and in which he was safe and felt at ease’ (SE 21: 91). Klein argued that the mother’s body was understood by the child’s unconscious as representing a ‘treasure-house of everything desirable’ and that to have access to the knowledge that ‘she’ offered the mother’s body must be kept well and unharmed (Klein, 1948: 259). This seems to beg the question, if writing and reading have some relation to the mother’s body but also the unconscious, and perhaps more importantly *her* unconscious, then whose voice do we speak with when we speak from the unconscious?

This is something children are aware of according to Anna Freud (1970) and Dorothy Burlingham.¹⁵ Burlingham argues that children are naturally responsive to the mother’s unconscious and their perception of this can be seen in the empathetic

¹³ The ‘hallmark’ mother refers to the ‘universal’ brand of cards that depicts mothers as omnipresent and eternally loving.

¹⁴ Peter Gay comments that the author of this essay was not Goethe but G. C. Tobler and that Goethe later mistakenly included this emotional hymn to nature among his own writings (in Freud, 1989: 4 n 2).

¹⁵ Anna Freud’s companion, friend and associate. Burlingham did extensive research with children and case-studies on blind children. She was psychoanalysed by Sigmund Freud.

relationship that mother and infant develop (or fail to). Thus when my six-year old son asked me – and it is important to note that he would be on the threshold of Oedipalisation – ‘If you eat my soul, does that mean you have my voice?’ he was responding to what may well be perceived as a threat to his ego/psyche/unconscious by my own. This is nothing new, Freud said as much in his paper on *The Unconscious* (SE 14) ‘It is a remarkable thing that the *Ucs* of one human being can react upon that of another, without passing through the *Cs*’ (SE 14: 194). Rose suggests that we are close here to telepathy, which like femininity remains an undercurrent to Freud’s work, not as a “wild fringe” but something whose links with the discoveries of psychoanalysis are unavoidable but difficult because in each case they push it over its own theoretical edge’ (Rose, 2004: 156). Thus while the mother in Freud is relegated to the sidelines, to the footnotes, as the arbiter of death according to Jonte-Pace, as pre-Oedipal and haunting according to Sprengnether, she nevertheless says something, something too difficult to decipher because it is not in the language of the Symbolic perhaps?

There is something circuitous to these questions, which echo Freud’s own work. I have time and time again come back to Freud’s suggestion that there is ‘something else besides...’ (SE 15: 153). The ‘something else besides’ here stands in for the primal act, the primal scene, given significance by Freud but later left to languish by psychoanalysis as too troublesome. But the ‘something else besides’ which Freud used as an expression of the unknown, as an exemplar of the riddle has become a kind of springboard from which I approach (and understand) the mother in Freud. My sense is that the mother is a ghost of types that haunts Freud’s writing, that guides his hand. But not in the sense that she is *just a* spectre as in the explanation that one is *just a* mother, but in the Loewaldian sense that she is bloody and vengeful, that she ‘tastes blood’. So while the mother may indeed be relegated to the unconscious, after all, she is the ‘dark continent’, she haunts the individual in a ‘flesh-like’ way – as a genuine ghost as Girard might say (Girard, 1987: 14). When Freud writes on the tailor’s dream in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 5) he notes a similarity between them, one that he comments on by drawing on the tailor’s statement that ‘I have for many years dragged around with me, like a ghost from which I could not set myself free, the shadow of a tailor’s life’ (SE 5: 473). My sense is that the shadow as ghost is in fact the mother, something we all ‘drag’ around with us, and the shadow after all,

for Jung at least is part of the complex designated as female, as primordial. Jung is important when aligned against Freud because he offers the mother up, literally almost, although as the mother of myth and archetypes. The need to elaborate the role of the mother, as progenitor of libido among other things was articulated throughout Jung's letters to Freud. Jung asked Freud the question: 'Where does the libido detached from the mother go?' to which Freud answers, '...to autoerotism' (in McGuire, 1974: 65). And in a much later letter Jung still trying to follow Freud's reasoning argues, 'In certain circumstances, indeed as a general rule, the fantasy object is *called* "mother"' (Jung quoting Rank, in McGuire, 1974: 512).

Jonte-Pace suggests that "Woman" has come to be a metaphor for otherness, for marginality, for writing, for the demise of the autonomous subject, for the unconscious, for God, and for the unrepresentable' (Jonte-Pace, 1992: 1). Kristeva emphasises this by stating that 'woman' is 'something that is not said, something above and beyond nomenclature and ideologies' (in Jonte-Pace, 1992: 2). Jonte-Pace states that contemporary understandings of 'woman' are different to those of early psychoanalysis. Freud she argues may despair over 'what women want' but he had knowledge of what 'woman' means, as mother and as daughter within the Oedipal framework. Also, and as Gilman makes explicit the fixed categories of 'empowered male' to weak and 'powerless woman' were changing at the turn of the twentieth century. This of course did not alleviate the stereotype of woman as a conceptual category one that 'straddled' two sides of the proverbial coin. Woman was either whore or Madonna, and as Gilman argues the conceptual categories of 'woman' were inherently collated in the image of a 'bad' Other to the image of the 'good' (m)Other (Gilman, 1993: 8-9). How these images are understood by Freud, even though at times he may use them 'unconsciously' will be engaged with in the following chapters.

To return to the relationship between Freud and Jung, Jung saw an analogy between psychic phenomena and the unconscious while Freud doubted the existence of the supernatural, ghosts, God(s) and magic and yet he could attribute magic to words. He argues that 'Words were originally magic and to this day words have retained much of their ancient magical power' (SE 15: 17). And further '...for the words which we use in our everyday language are nothing other than watered-down magic' (SE 7: 283).

The infant as polymorphous and perverse was (is) also magically omnipotent; repression is enacted as magical intent and the undoing of repression is a kind of 'negative magic' (SE 20: 119). The 'symbolic action...[is] more correctly, a *magic* action' (SE 17: 152); and of course magic is linked inextricably to *das unheimliche* – 'the uncanny'. For human beings in what Freud referred to as 'the stage' called 'animism' magic was a weapon, 'the earliest fore-runner of the technology of to-day' (SE 22: 165). The magic attributed to words was later to be taken over with the word of God, but residues remain such as the infant's belief in its own magical omnipotence: a belief that persists into the world of the adult and which manifests according to Freud in the infantile need for religion. Freud argues that after infancy 'man' 'cannot conceive of a world without parents and makes for himself a just God and a kindly nature, the two worst anthropomorphic falsifications he could have imagined' (in McGuire, 1974: 283-284). Freud tells Jung that this persistence arises from the self-preservation instincts and not the sexual instincts. This would suggest that the infant's need for a 'protector' develops in response to the 'loss' of the mother. The mother may well be surmounted by the father but the self-preservation instincts of hunger, love and fear are squarely placed in the realm of the mother and say something about the mother's relationship to the later need of human beings for a big Other/object. Jung's earlier response to what he called Freud's 'alarming positivism' seems to have resonance in Freud's framing of the expression of these 'infantile needs' as 'self-preservation instincts'. These ideas will be developed in Chapters Three, Four and Five, suffice to say, the perseverance, and this is indeed the right word, of psychic phenomena (magic) with its relation to God and salvation has an originary relationship with the mother and it might be said, the unconscious and that Jung recognised this.

In a long letter to Fliess, dated December 6, 1896 (SE 1: 233-239), Freud is giving Fliess an update on where his theory is leading, and in the last paragraph gives a brief explanation of the hysteric's action as a means to reproduce the pleasure associated with the repressed 'trauma'. What is interesting here, and which I am going to use for my own pleasure and purpose is that the hysteric according to Freud, repeats – after all her/their attack is aimed at *another person*. Freud puts it like this, 'Attacks of giddiness and fits of weeping—all these are aimed at *another person*—but mostly at the prehistoric, unforgettable other person who is never equalled by any one later' (SE

1: 239). I am not sure whether Freud means the father or the mother here, as at this stage he was still developing his seduction theory and the father for Freud held an importance that he did not assign the mother—well not directly. But my sense is that perhaps it is the mother, after all Freud uses the world prehistoric to explain the infantile bond to the mother elsewhere and calls her our first love object. In this same passage he gives the example of one of his patients who ‘still whimpers in his sleep as he used to do—to be taken into bed by his mother, who died when he was 22 months old’ (SE 1: 239). Loewald suggests that these earliest forms of experience are part of the original, primal unity we have with the mother which allowed no differentiation between inside and outside, self and other, actuality and fantasy, past and present (Mitchell, 1998: 826). In fact he states that these dichotomies that we come to think of as givens are complex constructions built up over our early years and which operate as an overlay between ourself and an Other, our mother.

Loewald’s analysis is compelling and he takes Freud to task for differentiating so strongly between inside and outside, between self and other arguing instead that they are not as strongly differentiated as Freud perhaps posits. After all, our first sense of being ‘inside’, *in utero* is as parasite to the mother’s body as host.¹⁶ We cling on literally to the walls of our first *heim* as Freud so poetically puts it, we in fact cling on for dear life, because any good host will try and get rid of the parasite that lingers and makes her feel ill. This is why Lacan’s *Hommelette* (*lamella*) is so interesting. Lacan suggests that we imagine, as in a story, a fable if you like, that at birth, when the amniotic egg sac breaks and the baby is pushed out, that something else other than the afterbirth comes out with the baby. This something else, which is intimately bound to the egg and therefore the infant, is immortal and to it Lacan gives the name ‘Hommelette’ – a pun on *l’homme*, French for man, and omelette – ‘You can’t make an Hommelette without breaking eggs’ (Clement, 1983: 97). This Hommelette is what Freud called the ‘libido’ which in itself means a kind of ‘hunger’. A hunger then that attaches itself to the infant, covers it like a liquid vampire that ‘begins slowly and

¹⁶ Of course our sense, if indeed we can call it a sense of being a parasite or of being continuous with the mother’s body is itself contentious and how could we ever know what the embryo/ foetus feels. Certainly different studies have indicated that the foetus responds to noise, stress, fear and Rank held that anxiety was first felt *in utero*. For the sake of this argument I follow the theorists, medical or otherwise that suggest the foetus and the mother share more than just a womb.

calmly to eat away at the newborn babe' (Clement, 1983: 97). I find this interesting given that initially one could refer to the growing foetus, the embryo as a parasitical vampire, 'sucking' the mother dry, taking *all* that it can get from its host body. Interesting because the battle begins here: the baby takes from the mother, but at birth, with the breaking of *their* egg the mother gets the baby back. She lets the something else, a hunger, escape with the baby. She lets 'it' pervade the baby. In fact, given that the *Hommelette*/libido comes out of the mother's body with the baby, she literally then coats the baby with herself – the 'hunger' is the hunger of herself for the self that is her infant. Perhaps the infant realises this. It looks away from the mother when she looks too closely, too deeply (something that Winnicott, Bowlby, Klein, and Horney all discuss). Perhaps it knows that she wants to eat it up. Perhaps this is the battle the infant experiences for the rest of its life: a need to escape/separate from the mother with an unconscious, perhaps uncomfortable knowledge that 'it' can never escape/separate. In this sense the mother is 'All' because she encases/encapsulates the baby's body with herself and in Zwinger's words, 'How are we going to get out alive' (Zwinger, 1992: 83).

The *Hommelette/lamella* as Lacan's fable shows it, is therefore resolutely linked to the self-preservation instincts and thereafter to primary narcissism. And is this not what Lacan is implying in his comparison with the *Hommelette* to the amoeba? It is primitive – primordial? – and it moves about everywhere. Lacan's *Hommelette* is immortal and has some relation to the soul. Freud's amoeba is 'prehistoric', sends out sentinels, everywhere to find sustenance, to feed. To reiterate, it is not difficult to see why Jung wanted to use the word 'hunger', with all its implications, instead of libido, which came to mean the psychic transfer of sexual energy. In point of fact, and as Jung suggested, they coalesce psychologically. Freud uses the prehistoric feeding apparatus of the amoeba to describe how the libido operates in narcissism but for Freud the amoeba stood in for the ego. Of course I am not suggesting that Freud, Jung or Lacan cannot use the same terminology to describe different things but that Freud and Lacan use the amoeba to explain some early – prehistoric, relationship. That Freud figures this amoebic mechanism as the ego and its libido and Lacan describes it as covering the body at birth but with an inbuilt ability to move about everywhere seems a fitting description for Freud's later illustration of the ego as first

and foremost a bodily ego.¹⁷ But more than that, these descriptions appear to signal something that occurs of which we have little or no knowledge. While all three may agree that narcissism is the ‘universal and original state of things’, and for Jung this had to do with the archetypal mother, a melting pot of psychoanalytic tenets is formed (as a gap maybe). It is both what goes into this melting pot and to whom it may be attached that is interesting. A haphazard guess would position both squarely in/on the body of the mother, given that the act of birth, the development of the ego, the constitution of the ‘I’, primary narcissism, the idea of the ‘object(s)’, and love all have some primary relation to this ‘originary state of things’. I will develop this in later chapters, suffice to say, what gets left out in Freud’s and Lacan’s descriptions, and rather rigidly apportioned into archetypes in Jung’s explanations, is the literal body of the mother.

This thesis then finds in Freudian theory, including in the later schools of object-relation theory and Lacanian theory, something so vitally important concerning the mother that for some reason or another it keeps getting written out of the main story. How it gets written out or even why it gets written out might bring us to something that was too difficult, too obscure perhaps for Freud to articulate. Sprengnether suggests this with her designation of the mother as spectre. And again, Benjamin illuminates it with the question, ‘what prevents the representation of the mother is thus linked to the problem of omnipotence’ (Benjamin, 1995: 85). This omnipotence seems to have some relation to the ‘melting pot’ of psychoanalytic tenets I referred to above and I will discuss what Benjamin means by this in Chapter Two of this thesis because this appears to be a crucial statement, one that I have considered myself. If the mother is always already everywhere, in a postmodernist sense at least she ends up nowhere, with no place to call her own and therein may lie the worm/womb. As I stated at the start of this paper the concept of mother is, and possibly always was, a universal, a universal that begins as a singularity given that she is caught in a fragment of a mirror that only *we* have eyes for. Kristeva has argued that the maternal body cannot be neatly divided into subject and object (something she argues Freud suggests in his discussion on instincts and narcissism), it is an identity ‘that splits,

¹⁷ It is important to note that Lacan is not positing something prior and primordial in any ontological sense – this ‘Thing’ in Lacan’s terms is fantasmatic – is an effect of the Symbolic, its meaning and its power is formulated retrospectively.

turns in on itself and changes without becoming other' (in Oliver, 1993: 4). Notice this is the other, not the Other, a position the mother always already has according to Kristeva. Kristeva will argue that 'maternity is the bridge between nature and culture, the drives and the Symbolic' (in Oliver, 1993: 5). Further, she states that the 'mother's body guarantees the continuation of the species and yet her questionable identity threatens the Symbolic unity' (in Oliver, 1993: 5). And finally it is her view that the 'maternal is the ambivalent principle that is bound to the species, on the one hand, and on the other stems from an identity catastrophe that causes the Name to topple over into the unnameable that one imagines as femininity, nonlanguage, or body' (in Oliver, 1992: 5). I quite agree with Kristeva, but there is something else happening here. And Freud, and to a lesser degree Lacan, remembering that Lacan was initially a Freudian, are two theorists who recognise this within their writing. Perhaps this recognition then is because they are not trying, not even thinking of ceding importance to the mother. I am not even sure that it is as obvious as this. There is 'something else besides' that is present in Freudian theory, which feminist theorists as diverse as Sprengnether, Kristeva, Chodorow (later Chodorow, after she became a practising psychoanalyst) and Irigaray identify, but differently from the way I view it. There are of course linkages, there always are but in their need to name they actually in fact leave the mother in the unnameable, which Kristeva associates with femininity, the presymbolic and the body.

Finally I conclude this 'Introduction' thinking of a children's movie I have seen recently. *Coraline* (2009) is an animated movie about a small girl, who, bored with her world, finds entrance to a parallel world through an appendage that takes her through one small door to another. Interestingly there is only one key to both these worlds and this key is initially held by Coraline's 'real' mother. The appendage which looks remarkably like a cervix takes Coraline to a world where her 'mother' is represented as a better version of the 'real' mother, the only major difference being that this mother has button eyes as do all the people in this world. Coraline loves these parents to begin with as they want to spend time with her and feed her nice food, but she realises something is amiss when the mother with the button eyes tries to enforce her to stay by offering to replace her eyes with buttons. Coraline rejects this idea and the button-eyed mother throws her into a cell of types, which is kind of like the liquid mirror we imagine in *'Alice Through the Looking Glass'*. Coraline meets

three other children in this 'cell', three ghost children with button eyes. They tell her that they are stuck here in this world because the taking of their eyes means that their souls can't go to heaven. They beg for Coraline's help and suggest she play a game with the button-eyed mother who we find out is an Evil Witch. Actually the children refer to her as the Beldame, which initially meant 'grandmother', but has come to mean 'hag', 'old woman', 'witch'.¹⁸ Coraline is saved from the 'cell' by a boy she has befriended in the real world and who in the button-eyed universe has button-eyes and cannot speak – he is an improved version of the too talkative boy according to the Witch. She is aided in the game to save the children by the cat that can move through both worlds without being changed. Coraline finds the eyes of the children, which are hidden in children's toys as the button-eyed world collapses around her. What she took for better is actually only a caricature of the 'real' world and the button-eyed mother is a spindly spider like old woman who needs the eyes of the children – their souls – to stay alive, to exist. Coraline is also presented the task of saving her parents who are trapped in a snow globe. She manages to outsmart the Evil Witch mother, escaping as the parallel world collapses around her only to find that the spider-like metal hand of the Witch has managed to get through to the 'real' world and can act independently from the Witch. Trying to escape the hand she remembers the closed-up well, which magically reflects the tunnel in which she had initially moved from world to world. With the help of 'Why were you Born' (Wyborn – the too talkative boy) she swaddles the hand and throws it down, deep into the well. And finally the garden blooms at the 'Pink Palaces' and everyone appears to have a modicum of happiness.

I finish with this because I was struck by the Freudian elements that kept appearing and which I will engage throughout my thesis. The little girl wishing for a better family (*Family Romances*, PE, 2003), the castration complex, which looms large, in fact could be the mainstay of the film. The children's souls cannot escape without their eyes, and their eyes have been taken by a mean Witch Mummy. One must play a game, a game of discovery and chance to escape, the *fort-da* and the Mirror Stage otherwise one is forever trapped within the world of the 'psychotic' Witch, the

¹⁸ Hélène Cixous argues that in fairy tales 'there are great men but no great women: there are Grand-Mothers instead. And grandmothers are always wicked...' (Cixous, 2000: 233).

mother. Even the differentiation between Real and real is here. The ‘key’ that unlocks the mystery of the mothers, the number three, the overabundance of food, Freudian elements all. To see them presented in such a recent movie made me think that the universality that Freud ascribed to and which has been ridiculed throughout these long years is indeed still contemporary after all this time – even if we don’t always *see* it.

Freud argued with reference to Charcot, that one needs ‘to look at the same things again and again until they themselves begin to speak’ (SE 14: 22). By looking at the mother in Freud ‘again and again’ alongside other theorists who talk about the mother in Freud, perhaps we can get the mother to ‘speak’. To speak then, would suggest that the mother is given more space, no longer relegated to the sidelines, as phantom or ghost, but embodied. In a sense then, the mother needs to be put back together. If she is not haunting from the periphery, she is cut up in bits and pieces as she is for the object-relations theorists, but she is never whole. I question whether this is the problem with depictions of the mother, she is always already a hole of types and being so is too readily equated with the gap, the space, the void. But she is also, although maybe inadvertently equated to the theory of drives or instincts.¹⁹ Freud said of the

¹⁹ ‘Drive’ which is the English translation (by “superficial resemblance” according to Strachey (SE 1: xxv) of the German word *Trieb* is translated as ‘instinct’ in the Standard Edition. This has been universally renounced because of the association of instinct with ethological and biological theories. And indeed, because Lacan who modelled himself as somewhat the Freudian expert *par excellence*, and with his emphasis on language, argued that Strachey...got it wrong. I predominantly use instinct in this thesis, partly because instinct was approved by Anna Freud (who it might be said, especially in the later years, was closest to Freud) and also because I imagine that if Freud had first of all requested Strachey to translate a paper (after two weeks in a psychoanalysis with him) then I imagine he had faith in Strachey’s ability. That being said, Freud was notoriously unconcerned regarding the translation (and even copyright at times) of his work. This is of course the problem with reading translations of original works – something gets lost. John Reddick in the translator’s notes for the Adam Phillips Penguin edition of ‘On an Introduction to Narcissism’ argues that Strachey’s translation of Freud seems to be saying that Freud’s writing ‘is not to be presented as a hot and sweaty struggle with intractable and often crazily daring ideas, but as a cut-and-dried corpus of unchallengeable dogma’ (in Phillips ed. 2006). Reddick is quite vituperative of Strachey’s translations calling them “systematically flawed” and naming him a “boulderizer” of Freud’s work. Jean Laplanche would agree, arguing that not only is *trieb* mistranslated it is also then used willy nilly, one might say, by the subsequent schools of psychoanalysis and here he cites the Kleinian school, the object-relations school and the ego psychology school (it is interesting that he makes a distinction between Klein and the object-relations school – I would have thought they were one and the same. Unless the distinction is between

theory of instincts that it was the one, which had the longest and hardest labour, and yet of course, it was the one most 'indispensable to the whole structure' (SE 21: 117). Without 'its' birth, the part would not become 'whole'. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (SE 18) he argued that the instincts were 'at once the most important and the most obscure element of psychological research' (SE 18: 34). And further, '(h)unger and love are what moves the world. Hunger could be taken to represent the instincts, which aim at preserving the individual; while love strives after objects, and its chief function, favoured in every way by nature, is the preservation of the species' (SE 21: 117).²⁰ If 'hunger and love meet at the woman's (mother's) breast' (SE 4:

the Kleinian and British object-relations school (the so-called 'Middle-School') that grew out of the Kleinian school). As a consequence of this, says Laplanche these schools hold onto the idea of a biological basis to infantile sexuality, which correspondingly expresses itself through developmental stages. Laplanche will emphasise that thus 'the whole of Freud's discovery is forgotten' adding although 'Freud sometimes forgets it too, in fact' (interview with John Fletcher and Peter Osborne, 1999 (online)). And yet, like André Green I am troubled by the neglect, in fact, the denial of Freud's biologism. The *trieb*, drive, instinct debate seems to highlight this. But this disregards Freud's own belief and ironically in the paper cited above, *On Narcissism: An Introduction* (SE 14) Freud will say of the ego-instincts and sexual-instincts – the libido theory, that it 'derives its principal support from biology' (SE 14: 79). That being said, just because the instincts/drives divine their support from biology of course does not mean that they are biological in aim and Freud's argument suggests this also. Jung also supports Freud's distinction here stating in his book, *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1919) 'The incest prohibition places an end to the childish longing for the food-giving mother, and compels the libido, gradually becoming sexual, into the path of the biological aim' (254). Again, to quote from the Narcissism paper, Freud said, 'we must recollect that all our provisional ideas in psychology will presumably some day be based on an organic structure' (SE 14: 78). Lastly, as an English reader of Freud and a writer on Freud, I have only had the English translations to rely on. That being said, I have read the Collected Papers, Standard Editions, Penguin Editions and various miscellaneous translations, including Peter Gay. I return to Strachey's preface to the Standard Edition and note that not always have the German editions of Freud's works been trustworthy either. It might be said then, that a "bowdlerization" of Freud has taken place, but that it might not be what we think. The wholesale neglect of Freud's *Anlehnung* 'leaning on' of biology is taken as a truism. In the following work then, and mindful of arguments circulating against the use of instinct, I will, following Strachey's translation, and the discussion given above, predominantly use instinct and on occasion I will use drive. In doing so, I do not necessarily see a problem in transposing one for the other. I simply use instinct when it appears right to do so, *vis-à-vis* drive. Whether this is either correct or right ultimately relies on ones own interpretation.

²⁰ Jung who left Freud because he felt the sexual theory was too constricting, argued that the words 'food', 'hunger' and 'eating' were equivalent to the importance

205), if the mother as the three Fates is associated with life, love and death; if the mother is by definition the primarily narcissistic object and also the being from whom the self-preservation instincts originate, then why is she so neglected – forgotten – in the Freudian story of ego-development?

Freud argued that ‘repression is the cornerstone of psychoanalysis’ and that in the first attachment to the mother this repression is especially inexorable (SE 21: 226). Being so, he continued it was ‘difficult to grasp’, ‘shadowy’, ‘and archaic’. But what this ungraspable seems to point to, as I have argued above, is the mother. What this thesis will ask is, if the mother is subject to both an ‘inexorable repression’, if she is only, or mostly designated a place in the unconscious then how can we uncover/recover her? She is locatable though, and this thesis will explore and engage with the areas in which she is ‘seen’; as anxiety, the construction of the ego, Eros/love and hate (ambivalence), castration and Oedipal complexes, death and religion (God), phantasy and magic. It seems to me, at the onset of this thesis, that the primary narcissistic relationship to the mother is paramount to an understanding of the mother in psychoanalysis. If the ego must be developed, if it is not present at birth, then what part does the mother play in this construction? In Freud’s second topographical system of id-ego-superego, the id, which is correlative to the unconscious, is also understood to have an innate part; something archaic while the ego is seen as having a part (and Freud thought that it was a reasonably big part) that is unconscious. Freud insisted that the id-ego separation should not be taken too rigidly and the concept of narcissism was introduced to bring together the sexual and ego drives which were seen as the id and ego representatives. Since the drives are ‘our mythology’ they are unknowable and unconscious. But they are also ‘insufficiently understood’ and involve said Freud a ‘groping in the dark’ (SE 18: 51). More than this, Harold Bloom

accorded to ‘sex’ in Freud’s theory. Jung suggested that ‘food’, ‘hunger’, and ‘eating’ denoted a primordial instinct with sex which was deeply rooted in the unconscious and which played a role in the formation of the archetypal images depicted in myth and religion. Thus he would argue that they represent the spiritual side of instinct and also that instinct and image combine to form the same archetype. While I find Jung’s archetypes confusing there is something in his depiction of instinct and image that resonates. His example of the old mythological or archetypal idea of impregnation by eating is clearly evident in young children’s belief that their ‘stools’ are babies, although Freud suggested this also. But Jung’s argument seems to highlight the ‘womb envy’ that some feminist psychoanalysts have suggested has been subsumed under the Freudian ‘penis envy’.

argues that for Freud, as for the archaic Greeks, the drive was also a god, just as the daemonic was also a drive (Bloom, 1995: 115 ('daemonic' and 'uncanny' (*unheimlich*) have the same meaning in Arabic and Hebrew (SE 17: 221)). That narcissism was the concept that both prefigured the reconfiguration of the drives and stands as a locution of these drives would seem to suggest that the mother should be pivotal in an analysis that brings all these disparate strands together.

'We need our mothers' argues Maggie Mackellar in *When it Rains* (2010) because they stand as witnesses to our lives.²¹ There is a question in Mackellar's analysis, a question that suggests, without a mother the 'myriad of instances' that make up our lives are not recorded and in being so lost, does this make our existence less? (Mackellar, 2010: 159). Chapter Four looks at anxiety as one of the places we might locate this 'lost' mother. It tells a story of the Holocaust where the idea of the witness is important in the definition of the 'I'. Here the mother as witness to the boy's life is lost even though she is still living. As a death camp survivor she is unrecognisable and the little boy who has remained resolute throughout her incarceration by praying to her photograph, 'falls apart' when mother and son are reunified (Laub, 1995). For the young boy without a tangible mother or even a phantasy mother as witness to his life he begins to have nightmares that trouble him for the rest of his life. In this way it might be said that anxiety was the concept that most troubled Freud. It was both the 'reproduction of an old event' and linked to the self-preservation instincts (SE 22: 85). It was a nodal point, central to the psychology of the neuroses and the stuff of nightmares (SE 16). In Freud's earliest exposition on anxiety he suggests that the act of birth is our first experience of anxiety and also the source and prototype of the affect of anxiety (SE 5: 400-411). He concludes *Das Unheimliche* (SE 17) by saying that infantile anxiety, aroused by solitude, silence and darkness remains with us throughout our lives, it is 'something that most of us never wholly overcome' (PE, 2003: 159). Anxiety then, is infantile at bottom and in being so has a relationship to the mother that Freud points to but never fully elaborates. It may well be that Freud's anxiety surrounding the figure of the mother merged with his engagement on anxiety and it is this that troubles the concept of anxiety so much.

²¹ Weber argues that 'the role of witness is, in Western societies at least, generally (but not always) assigned to the mother' (Weber, 1991: 119).

To suggest then that there appears to be ambivalence to the mother and the mother's body in Freudian psychoanalysis and perhaps in psychoanalysis in general would seem to be the proverbial understatement. Chapter Three will engage with Freud's work, his personal letters, his theory and biography. In this way I hope to offer a way of viewing the mother in Freud that unlike Sprengnether's mother is less haunting and more 'solid'. Chapter Two looks at Feminist engagements with Freudian and post-Freudian analyses. Finding in some of their work both a nod to the mother and a turning away from her. This might be as I suggested through Rose above, that to speak about the mother in Freud one needs to find a place from which one can speak. If this place is unconscious, then we need to ask whose voice is speaking? Perhaps even, if the place of the mother is the unconscious how does one have a voice of one's own? Chapter Four will try and locate the mother in the areas I have highlighted – anxiety, castration and repression which, in turn emphasises the Oedipal complex, self-preservation and narcissistic drives. Lacan's mirror stage and his object *a* are discussed alongside Winnicott's transitional object/phenomena and Ferenczi's magical omnipotent stages. What is it about the mother that while she may inform all of these 'complexes' she does so without recognition and only from the sidelines? Chapter Five looks to theorists like Bollas who offer an alternate view of the mother in psychoanalysis, one that may well hark back to Freud's own work. This thesis then, will attempt to explore and engage with Freudian texts where possible and uncover the meanings inherent to the mother who is both *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, homely and unhomely.

Chapter Two

Feminism and Freud

While this thesis is about the mother in Freud's writing it perhaps took its initial foray into this field by reading feminist (and sometimes not feminist) authors who had engaged in psychoanalysis or possibly were psychoanalysts. In particular feminist authors involved in psychoanalytic discussion around the mother. One of the things I took from these authors is that in fact they rarely said anything that Freud had not already said. Freud of course had suggested a pre-Oedipal stage he had just not allocated it the importance that most feminist authors involved in psychoanalysis did. Nor would he have, when by definition the pre-Oedipal suggests the Oedipal structure. André Green, arguing through Lacan puts this well, 'when the child arrives in the world, he is already structured by the Oedipal conflict of his parents' (Green in Kohon ed., 1999: 47). And further, 'So before even the child experiences the first smile the mother has already a complete programme of fantasies, and the father too; there is a relationship between the three players in the drama ... even before the baby was born' (Green in Kohon ed., 1999: 47). The importance then given the pre-Oedipal which was an importance ceded to the mother, and was possibly articulated most forcibly by Melanie Klein and the subsequent Kleinian school of which objects-relation-theory emerged, became a symbiotic enclosure extant from the Oedipus complex and the importance that 'orthodox' psychoanalysis gave the Father. One of the problems that arose from what Kristeva has called the semiotic, the place of mother and baby before the Symbolic or the Oedipus complex is that this space has been glorified as something strictly maternal and outside the phallogocentric systems of patriarchy. Thus the semiotic then is '*before*' language, which raises the question of just what sort of voice the mother and infant might have in this non-differentiated space. Given that feminism has argued for the right or even the need for women to be heard and importantly seen, articulating a maternal space *before* language could be viewed as problematic. This of course does not suggest that it does not exist (and as I stated in Chapter One Freud suggested that the baby brought to the world a '*before*', – '*before any experiences an "archaic heritage"*' (SE 23: 167 and 240-241)), but that the theories resting on a kind of fusion between mother and infant may need rather to be seen as an impasse between a desire to elevate the mother to a similar level as the father or as seems to be the case bury her in a space where her relationship with the

‘baby’ is seen as a *before*,²² before language, society, culture. Again, I do not want to suggest that the importance given to the mother-infant engagement was, or is, problematic *per se* but that how this ‘bond’, this space has been enunciated, has been carted through arguments with out recourse to its initial intent is problematic. The following chapter will endeavour to outline some of the authors who articulate this *before*, in particular, it will focus on Nancy Chodorow, Luce Irigaray, Jessica Benjamin, Julia Kristeva and Melanie Klein. It might be noted that this chapter on Freud and Feminism looks only to ‘feminist’ psychoanalysts and their engagement with Freudian concepts.

Much has been said on motherhood by a wealth of respected academics from various schools of thought. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy in her hefty tome *Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants, and Natural Selection* (1999) offers a compelling read on motherhood that spans the fields of anthropology, primatology and evolutionary theory, among other disciplines. She refers to the analysis of motherhood as the proverbial minefield without a map, or let us say ‘royal road’ from which we might get direction. That her own motherhood is weaved throughout her account that spans ages, species, cultures renders it a personal and relatable read (for those of us that are mothers and academics and also for those of us that are not). She was an important source for my early ‘academic’ understanding of motherhood. While her account does engage with Bowlby’s ‘Attachment’ theory she has little to say on Freud or Freudian psychoanalysis. Rather unflatteringly and wrongly she compares Freudian psychoanalysis to the Behaviourist school suggesting that Freud like B. F. Skinner and J. B. Watson believed in the ‘cupboard love’ theory. In fact, Blaffer Hrdy suggests that Bowlby argues this about Freud. Perhaps my reading of Bowlby is not as extensive as it could be but I do not remember seeing Bowlby refer to a Freudian expression around mother love as ‘cupboard love’. Unless Blaffer Hrdy is referring to Bowlby’s discussion of Freud’s well-known ‘screen memory’ in which, his older half-brother pretends his mother is locked in the cupboard only to open it and she is not there. This engages a long and reasonably complicated remembering of his mother and his nurse, which were both ‘*Kasten*’, that is ‘boxed’ up/locked up – his nurse for

²² This *before* is interesting as Jean Starobinski quoting La Rochefoucauld suggests ‘There are people who would never have been in love if they had never heard tell of love’ (Starobinski, 1966: 82).

stealing from him, and his mother ‘confined’ – pregnant (Freud’s mother had only recently given birth. The infant Freud resenting this intrusion was preoccupied with his mother’s insides, he says. Also his nurse that he was quite fond of had been sent away (put away) for the theft (SE 6: 49-51)). Of course this ‘reminiscence’ does not quite convey what Blaffer Hrdy is saying here. But I would argue that Freud was definitely not a Behaviourist, even if Skinner himself suggested that he had just simplified Freud’s typography – made it accessible for people. In fact, Freud referred to Behaviourism as ‘naïve’ and an abuse of psychoanalysis in his *Autobiographical Study* (Freud, 1989: 33). And while Freud coined the idea of the baby as the ‘bundle of id’ and somehow kept writing the mother out of the main story, she is always there, in the background, sometimes even foregrounded, as haunting, as spectre as first love object.

I cannot begin this chapter without reference to Adrienne Rich’s *Of Woman Born* (1977). She has little to say on Freud and what she does say is not necessarily negative but not often has such an honest and almost visceral account, of mothering, her own mothering been written. Her journal accounts, that alternate between a passionate love for her infant sons coupled with a burning rage and hatred show clearly the ambivalence that Freud pointed to and Klein attempted to make clear. I am not sure that either of them has ever conveyed quite as well the ambivalence that the mother feels when faced with ‘the bundle of id’. Freud’s terminology here says it all, after all how can one survive when confronted with ‘chaos, the seething cauldron that is the id?’ And yet mothers do and have done so through out the centuries. Why work like Rich’s and Blaffer Hrdy’s are important is that they make the task of mothering both explicit and explicitly human. The following chapter then while acknowledging the importance of this type of engagement with mothering looks instead to feminist authors involved in psychoanalysis, in particular Freudian psychoanalysis to understand where the Freudian mother might be in their work, where she might even be for Freud.

Chodorow

In a thesis on the mother it seems impossible not to look at Nancy Chodorow’s popular work of the late 1970’s, early 80’s, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (1978). I confess a dislike

for this book, finding it tedious on the few occasions I made an attempt to read it. But read it I did, and found Chodorow's question, 'Why are mothers women?' (Chodorow, 1978: 11), possibly an epitaph for the entire work. It rests on a social constructionist analysis of the mother, so that the question of 'Why are mothers women?' suggests that fathers can be mothers too. This is a rather simplistic approach to the complexity of women as/becoming mothers and Chodorow's later work including *The Power of Feelings: Personal Meaning in Psychoanalysis, Gender, and Culture* (1999) states something similar in relation to her earlier work. She suggests that in *The Reproduction of Mothering* 'I describe empirically discovered, not theoretically deduced, connections' (Chodorow, 1999: 110). And that her goal was, 'to explain prevalent observed gender differences in psychological life and personality without relying on biology, without centering on genital difference, and without assuming that women are failed men' (Chodorow, 1999: 111). But as the authors of *From Klein to Kristeva: Psychoanalytic Feminism and the Search for the "Good Enough" Mother* (1992) state, 'It would be hard to exaggerate the centrality of Nancy Chodorow's *Reproduction of Mothering* and the extent of its influence on American contemporary thought' (Doane and Hodges, 1992: 33). In particular they cite feminist authors, Carol Gilligan, Sara Ruddick, Jane Flax, Robin West, Evelyn Fox Keller, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Marianne Hirsch and Claire Kahane, as being exponents of Chodorow's thesis, albeit in diverse ways but who all, finally, 'hope to define an authentic female voice' (Doane and Hodges, 1992: 33). Doane and Hodges argue that in fact Chodorow is more complex than these authors disseminate and acknowledge that Chodorow's own analysis of her work suggests that it is grounded in object-relations theory, in particular using the work of D.W. Winnicott, Michael and Enid Balint, W.R.D. Fairbairn, Margaret Mahler, Harry Guntrip and others (33). Chodorow in *Powers of Feeling* argues that she is influenced by Klein, British Independent object-relations theory, Hans Loewald and Erik Erikson, among others, and that she is not concerned that these authors are often viewed as incompatible with each other (Chodorow, 1999: 3). Doane and Hodges argue that Chodorow's stance that it does not matter which school of psychoanalysis or in this case object-relations theory she utilises founders on the principle it seeks to change – that is the patriarchal bias of the socio-cultural system that we inhabit. This because the heavy influence of Winnicott in *The Reproduction of Mothering* belies Chodorow's insistence that object-relations theory can be made into a feminist theory simply by exchanging the

boy into a girl. Winnicott himself articulates the need for a 'good enough' mother above all else. That this mother is in fact almost always, and most possibly needs to be a woman, is overlooked by Chodorow in her transposition of one system for another. What Chodorow does, Doane and Hodges argue is conflate Freud and Klein (although she distances herself from both), 'orthodox' psychoanalysis and object-relations theory. These are not the same thing and while they may indeed overlap the underlying tenets of each 'school' are quite different. Which they argue in fact problematises the dichotomy that Chodorow wished to subvert, nature verses culture.

While I am not quite as critical of Chodorow's endeavour as Doane and Hodges, seeing in their own work a misreading of Winnicott (Catherine Clement who they discuss writes on an overlap between Lacan and Winnicott something Doane and Hodges neglect. They also use Winnicott's texts specifically written for a lay audience, mothers, which are quite different in content to the texts written for a psychoanalytic/psychiatric audience), they return to the question, 'Why are women mothers?' as an example of something Chodorow gets right, whereas I view it as something rather obvious that needs no social prescription to enforce it and through a different looking glass would argue that it is something Chodorow gets wrong. I will return to this question shortly but Chodorow's analysis finally falls into the classic feminist (and repetitious) story of mothers and daughters. This story then gets picked up by other feminist authors who glorify the story of mothers and daughters creating a utopian field where 'within the mother's embrace all feminists can identify with each other' (Doane and Hodges, 1992: 45).

Chodorow's analysis in *The Reproduction of Mothering* has become a 'truth' for some schools of American feminism and perpetuated from feminist authors as diverse as Ann Kaplan to Jane Gallop. Gallop, who identifies with the Lacanian school writes, '...as becomes clear in object-relations theory and particularly Chodorow, the mother is the site of something which is both other and not quite other, of the other as self and the self as other' (in Doane and Hodges, 1992: 45). Gallop attempts to marry object-relations theory to Lacan and Chodorow that in the words of Doane and Hodges works against itself to produce 'a single, unified story of motherhood' (1992: 46). Sprengnether agrees with Doane and Hodges critique of Chodorow, writing that 'scores of her readers... have fastened on her account of femininity as quasi utopian'

and ‘unwittingly’ Sprengnether states, ‘they’, ‘recuperate the very categories which serve to inhibit women’s progress in the social sphere’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 146).

One of the overriding concerns that Doane and Hodges express in regard to Chodorow’s treatment of the mother is her desire to make of the mother an origin, an origin that is ‘key to her own oppression (the sexual division of labour)’ (1992: 38). This positioning of mother as origin is burdensome to women according to Doane and Hodges but it is only so because the origin given to mothers in Chodorow’s account at least is amended from a socio-cultural perspective in which a psychological prescription comes with an unconscious as descriptive as it is fixed.

Diana Tietjens Meyers (1994) says something similar in regard to Chodorow’s endeavour that she attempts, in Chodorow’s own words, ‘to get psychoanalytic theory right’ (in Tietjens Meyers, 1994: 78). In fact, argues Tietjens Meyers, Chodorow ‘calls our attention to the activity of mothering, not the status of motherhood’ (78) and by doing this, suggests Tietjens Meyers, she erodes the passivity that Freud and others apply to the mother and the mother’s procreative role. Tietjens Meyers is certainly not the first author to confuse Freud’s definitions of masculine and feminine. In fact, applying passivity to the role of mothering is not something Freud does, or indeed has written on.²³ Freud noted that the mother breastfeeding the baby is *actively* breastfeeding the baby and part of the Freudian thesis is that we are born with a bisexual disposition, socio-cultural mores and language (among other things) position us as masculine or feminine (although quoting Napoleon, Freud also argued that ‘Anatomy is Destiny’). Freud queried our corporeal representations by imagining the ability to divest ourselves from them: ‘If we could divest ourselves of our corporeal existence, and could view the things of this earth with a fresh eye as purely thinking beings, from another planet for instance, nothing perhaps would strike our attention more forcibly than the fact of the existence of two sexes among human beings, who,

²³ Although as Jessica Benjamin rightly points out, Freud’s writings frequently rely on references to maternal activity and feminine passivity, a paradox, as I have stated, he seemed to be aware of. The equations, masculine=active, feminine=passive, is alternately expounded and criticized and perhaps represents, according to Benjamin the ‘defensive reversal of complementarity, whereby the boy says to the mother, “You are now the helpless baby, which I no longer am.” The vulnerable dependency of the baby is projected onto the mother, who must accordingly hold the position of both feminine passivity and maternal activity’ (Benjamin, 1995: 101).

though so much alike in other respects, yet mark the difference between them with such obvious external signs' (SE 9: 211-212). Tietjens Meyers states that Chodorow privileges the pre-Oedipal where mother and child exist in a symbiotic space. As I noted in the introduction of this chapter, there has been a privileging of this 'space' by particular feminists. Irigaray, Kristeva and Klein point to a pre-Oedipal period with the mother that they argue Freud neglects and further that this pre-Oedipal period of mother and child is vitally important to the psychical health of the growing child. This thesis will argue that the pre-Oedipal – this somewhat undifferentiated space – is obviously important to the mental health of the child, indeed Freud said as much. But what surprises me is that so many feminist authors, and indeed ones who should know better (and here I am pointing to the practising psychoanalysts that would (should) have read Freud's work) argue that Freud neglects this 'wholesale'. Freud did privilege the Oedipal, but I am hesitant in suggesting that he did so at the expense, well at least without acknowledging the pre-Oedipal. While he does not assign the pre-Oedipal the significance that he offers the Oedipal the pre-Oedipal haunts as Sprengnether might say, his *oeuvre*. And while he did not elevate the mother to the same position as the father he constantly reinstates her importance as first love-object, as integral to the mental life of a child, as having a major role in the castration complex and so on. Obviously this thesis will explore the positions Freud both allocates to the mother and which he also, perhaps by a less than careful sleight of hand, neglects. It might also be noted that for Freud the phallic mother was both pre-Oedipal and whole, i.e., the child believes his/her mother has a penis. And as Jane Gallop argues much of the feminist argument for the recognition of the pre-Oedipal may be a desire to keep the mother as whole rather than 'hole', which by comparison represents lack.

Freud said in a discussion of a patient's obsessional neurosis, that the act of putting his feet into his socks disturbed him so much because 'he must pull apart the stitches in the knitting, i.e. the holes, and to him every hole was a symbol of the female genital aperture' (SE 14: 200). Freud questioned the diagnosis of obsessional neurosis instead suggesting that 'something different must be going on here', linking the 'whole' schizophrenic symptomatology too the castration complex (SE 14: 200), and in turn aligning this to another patient's obsessional squeezing of blackheads. Here Freud argues, 'As far as the thing goes, there is only a very slight similarity between

squeezing out a blackhead and an emission from the penis, and still less similarity between the innumerable shallow pores of the skin and the vagina; but in the former case there is, in both instances, a 'spurting out', while in the latter the cynical saying, 'a hole is a hole', is true verbally' (SE 14: 200-201). For Freud, what dictates the similarity here is not that the 'thing' is the same but that the expression, the words, used to describe it are. Gallop's argument for a feminist privileging of the pre-Oedipal then is a resistance to the position of 'hole' at the expense of the 'whole'. This thesis will engage with this distinction throughout the following chapters noting as J. B. Pontalis argues that what psychoanalysis has got wrong is 'to mistake the part for the whole' (Pontalis, 1998: 86). Pontalis's point was directed at the school of object-relations theory where the part/breast proliferates as somehow representative of the whole/mother – albeit, for object-relations theory, (in most cases) a phantasy mother. Freud's argument in contrast is an argument concerned with explaining the unconscious. The unconscious is not a language as such and it is only when the thing is made conscious and has a word attached to it – a word that belongs to it – that the unconscious is made conscious. Freud does use the expression a 'hole is a hole' elsewhere and yet he will argue 'sometimes a cigar is just a cigar'.²⁴ Surely this

²⁴ There is a lot of discussion on whether Freud actually said this. And yet I am sure I have read it somewhere, attributing it to a footnote in the Standard Edition or alternatively to Peter Gay (in fact Peter Gay in *A Godless Jew* (1987) argues that this – sometimes a cigar is just a cigar – 'seems to have been wished on him by some anonymous phrasemaker. But he might well have said it. Sometimes a cigar *was* just a cigar, even for Freud' (Gay, 1987: 18)), or in Ernest Jones trilogy on Freud's life. Regardless, the emphasis in this argument is concerned with the placement of women, the mother in the oral stage, which infantilises her and corresponding the attribution of 'word' to 'thing'. That this association can be read explicitly in Kipling's poem, 'The Betrothed' illustrates well Freud's meaning. Here Kipling is a young man musing on the benefits of marrying his Maggie, or staying true to his 'brides,' cigars. The line, 'And a woman is only a woman, but a good Cigar is a Smoke' makes clear his decision. Also in an introduction to Otto Rank's 'American Lectures' Robert Kramer suggests that Freud's "almost sexual craving" for cigars was something Freud was both unwilling and unable to master. His brief exegesis on masturbation could have been explored further but Kramer argues that Freud was his own obstacle, writing in a letter to Fliess, 'The role played by [masturbation] in hysteria is enormous and it is perhaps there that my major, still outstanding obstacle is to be found, wholly or in part' (Kramer ed., 1996: 13). In a letter to Ferenczi, Freud wrote that being without a cigar "was an act of self-mutilation as the fox performs in a snare when it bites off its own leg. I am not very happy, but rather feeling noticeably depersonalized" (in Gilman, 1993: 177). Sander Gilman writes that without his cigars Freud's sense of self was challenged, including his self-control and his ability to work. Without smoking Freud felt that – 'he ceased being completely human'

would beg the question then, that if a cigar can be just a cigar then why can't a hole just be a hole and not a vagina – not the entranceway to the womb? Given that Freud had made the sucking of the breast analogous to the sucking of the penis thus effectively assigning them, and therefore the body that was both sucked and according to Freud, sucked (women in fellatio (SE 10: 7 also SE 7: 52) to the oral stage, it is interesting that the phallic shaped cigar that is also 'sucked' is excluded. More important to this argument is the knowledge that the thing may be different but the words we use to describe it are similar, have the same root. Freud explores this throughout his work but most explicitly in *The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words* (SE 11) and *The Uncanny* (SE 17). I have included an appendix that describes all the words that 'mother' is both associated with and has an etymological relationship to. It should be no surprise then that mother and mud have the same meaning etymologically and therefore the same connection verbally.

(Gilman, 1993: 177). To Stefan Zweig he wrote, 'I ascribe to the cigar the greatest share of my self-control and tenacity in work' (in E. Freud, 1960: 403). In this his father was his role model, who was a "heavy smoker" and remained so all his life. Gilman suggests that Freud's cigar smoking was more complicated than it seemed. Initially cancer of any type was seen as part of the pantheon of "Jewish" diseases. But by Freud's generation cancer of the palate was viewed as "rich man's cancer" because of the cost associated with the cigars. Freud adhered to the belief that cancer of the mouth was due to smoking but his need to smoke was caught up in his need to work and his relationship with his father. Gilman is surprised at Freud's positive association of smoking with his father given the negative internalised representations he offers of his father, including his father's perceived weakness and his lack of economic sense. That these characteristics have an "oral" overlay, usually associated with the mother but here represented in the fantasy of the father as a role model who gives/gifts him his ability to "live and keep on living" through the oral satisfaction of the cigar is staggering. Once again Freud elides the figure of the mother for that of the father. Here the oral pleasures of the pre-Oedipal are transposed onto the Oedipal. Freud's need to masculinize the male Jew, which is Gilman's thesis is seen here in his transposition of the mother for the father, and his emphasis on smoking as the cause of cancer. In a conversation with the writer Thornton Wilder, Freud is supposed to have said, "'it might some day be shown that cancer is allied to the 'presence of hate in the subconscious'" (in Gilman, 1993: 178). Ignoring the exchange of unconscious for subconscious here (Wilding was American where the use of subconscious was more readily used), and acknowledging the "oral" with smoking, then the "hate" buried in the unconscious would surely have some connection with the repressed ambivalence that the baby and young child has to the mother? This is in line with Freud's own argument that "proper" repression attributed to the oral stage is a result of trauma in part through a (mis)recognition that the mother never gave "us" enough love.

To return to Chodorow, she claims argues Tietjens Meyers that children are originally matrisexual rather than, as Freud would have it bisexual because their love fastens on the person who cares for them. Thus to illuminate one of Chodorow's most enduring arguments, the 'caretaker' of babies could just as easily be male as female. Of course this somewhat negates her pre-Oedipal which is about the importance of the mother in what she terms as a primordial fusion with the mother (Tietjens Meyers, 1994: 123). Perhaps finally what is important in *The Reproduction of Mothering* is that Chodorow tries to initiate motherhood as an enduring human good, but not without showing that too much mothering is detrimental to the psychical health of the child. By utilising Winnicott's standard of the 'good-enough' mother she attempts to illustrate that mothering is something (most) women want to do and most mothers do it well enough. Where she differs from Winnicott is to suggest that men could mother just as well as women, anatomy is not destiny, and her argument that the self-sacrificing mother is just as harmful as the neglectful mother, from a socio-cultural perspective that is, rather than the psychoanalytic perspective she utilises.

Later Chodorow

Chodorow's later thesis, in *The Psychodynamics of the Family* (2000) and *The Power of Feelings* (1999) offers a more complicated argument than *The Reproduction of Mothering*. In particular these later works do adopt a broader psychoanalytic approach, still concentrating on object-relations theory, but with the emphasis on analysis of the roles people, in particular mothers might play in the psyche of children and adults. In *The Psychodynamics of Family* she argues that '(m)others experience daughters as one with themselves; their relationships to daughters are 'narcissistic', while those with their sons are more 'anaclitic' (Chodorow, 2000: 112). While I don't necessarily agree with how Chodorow is using the concept of narcissism here, in a Freudian sense this primary narcissism would be experienced similarly regardless of sex, the argument that she builds from this statement has a lot more psychoanalytic engagement with the mother and motherhood than in her previous work. Thus she will argue, not unlike Kristeva, that the mother-child relationship completes a relational triangle for the mother, not with the father but with the mother's mother. And that the act of coitus cannot return the mother to her mother as straightforwardly as it can for men but that through pregnancy a symbolic return can occur through identification with the child in her womb. Chodorow quotes Helene Deutsch as

confirmation of this theory stating, 'Ferenczi's "maternal regression" is realized for the woman in equating coitus with the situation of sucking. The last act of this regression (return into the uterus) which the man accomplishes by the act of introjection in coitus, is realized by the woman in pregnancy in the complete identification between mother and child' (Chodorow citing Deutsch, 2000: 117). Chodorow argues that because of this psychological identification it is logical that women turn their marriages into families and to be more involved in their children's rearing than men. In some way then the woman/mother as 'the mother' has returned to her first love-object, which importantly has now become herself. It is this return, reasonably neglected by feminist psychoanalysts and psychoanalysis itself (although Kristeva and Irigaray, albeit quite differently, certainly engage with this) that troubles the self/other dichotomy that persists in object-relation theories, socio-constructionalist theories and perhaps even psychoanalysis itself.

Irigaray

While I may have out grown Luce Irigaray finding in her work, a battle that she has unsuccessfully sought to subvert, her own *corps-a-corps* with Freud and Lacan, her earlier work on mothers and mothering most evident in *Sexes and Genealogies* (1993a) has been important to my approach in questioning the position of the mother in psychoanalysis. In this work Irigaray states that 'the relation to the mother is a mad desire, because it is the "dark continent" par excellence. It remains in the shadow of our culture, it is night and day' (1993a: 10). Irigaray argues that the woman-mother, and she conflates them intentionally arguing that the only position in culture and society for women is as mothers and that this is no position at all given that mothers have had their 'power' stripped from them by the patriarchal 'invasion' of mothering, is relegated to the dimension of need. She points to the political questions of contraception and abortion as illustrating how the maternal function underlies the social order. Turning Freud's Oedipal theory on its head she argues that everyday events in our culture and society operate on the basis of 'an original matricide' (1993a: 11). This matricide is of Clytemnestra by her son Orestes. Like the story of Oedipus this matricide is decreed by the Oracle and in Greek mythology prophecies must be fulfilled. But Clytemnestra is murdered by her son for killing Agamemnon who in turn sacrificed their daughter Iphigenia to secure his position as a military ruler. For this murder Orestes is driven mad by the Erinnyes who haunt Orestes 'like

the ghosts of his mother' (1993a: 12). Orestes is saved by Athena, the faithful daughter of the patriarchy according to Irigaray, born as she is from the head of Zeus (but only because Zeus swallowed her mother). Thus patriarchy argues Irigaray is founded on the death of a mother at the hands of a son who is saved by a daughter of the patriarchy (a daughter denied her mother no less). In the meanwhile Orestes' sister Electra is left to her madness in the wilderness, she is not saved with an Oracle, in fact she seems to be forgotten. With the Erinyes though she continues to haunt as both ghost and as hysterical revolutionaries, this original matricide.²⁵

Freud's revision of the Oedipus myth, argues Irigaray, reactualises the madness of Orestes. When faced with the mother whom he has married and with whom he has borne children, he goes mad and blinds himself – the proverbial maxim of, if I cannot see it then it cannot be real (Freud's *derealisation* – an accurate term because derealisation suggests that a piece of reality is strange to 'him'. Although Freud does argue that *derealisation's* and there counterpart *depersonalisations* are 'remarkable phenomena of which little is understood'. They are also defence mechanisms invoked by the ego in response to an 'intrusion'. For Freud, it is not the existence of the 'real' thing you doubt, it is whether the 'real' thing exists outside of one's imagination (in SE 22: 244-245)). The ambivalence that Oedipus feels towards his father, from which all theory and practice in psychoanalysis is derived, according to Irigaray, seems to forget or to negate his relationship with his mother. Of course by now Jocasta has committed suicide but she does so in part because her own horror in the act is reflected back to her twofold, she is doubly guilty because she takes on Oedipus' guilt as well as her own. Oedipus seeing this guilt reflected back to him blinds himself as if by blinding himself he no longer participates in the incest.

²⁵ In *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* (1993b) Irigaray suggests love among women is a matter of rivalry 'practiced through substitution'. Irigaray's 'one plus one' is here substituted for '*either the one woman or the other*'. Freud's perfect relationship, that of mother and son is elaborated by Irigaray as the foundation on which 'man' builds his world: 'If we are to be desired and loved by men, we must abandon our mothers, substitute for them, eliminate them...' (Irigaray, 1993b: 102). Man's relation to the maternal, a relation that is equally denigrated and held sacred accords a position of *the unique one*, a position unachievable for 'real' women. Thus the place rendered as 'Holy' in both a biblical and adjectival (holey) sense can neither be occupied or filled: 'Since the mother has a unique place, to become a mother would supposedly be to occupy that place, without having any relationship to the mother in that place' (Irigaray, 1993b: 102).

Maria Torok, Barbro Sylwan and Adèle Covello (1998) argue that Freud is 'famously' silent about the father's silence in the Oedipal myth. Believing a prophecy that foretells his death at the hand of his son Laius 'pins' Oedipus' ankles together and orders Jocasta to 'expose' him to the wilderness. But Freud is also silent about Jocasta's compliance with this order. The mother willingly or not, hands her baby Oedipus to the shepherd to dispose of. In hearing the story repeated by a drunk, although thinking that Polybus is his father, Oedipus leaves and begins his journey towards the fulfilment of the prophecy. He kills Laius at the crossroad with three paths and answering the riddle set by the Sphinx frees the people of Thebes and becomes their King. In doing so he marries his mother and in time completes the prophecy. Thus, while Laius and Polybus merge quietly in the background and Oedipus is foregrounded he is only so by dint of his marriage to his mother. It is the act of incest in the story that cements the murder. What Freud plays on and recognises in this story argue Torok, Sylwan and Covello, are the universal, instinctual and unconscious themes that permeate his works (1998: 61). The acts of the fathers and the mothers in this story remain silent. And they do so because of what Torok calls the 'phantoms' that reside in Freud's unconscious (an unconscious they identify in Freud's written work because obviously there has been no psychoanalysis with him!). Utilising Nicolas Abraham's definition of the phantom, 'a formation of the unconscious that has never been conscious' (in Torok, Sylwan and Covello, 1998: 53), which is different to dynamic repression, Torok suggests that Freud's phantoms, passed through the parental unconscious into the child's and have a function not unlike the secret. Different to the symptom formation that arises with the return of the repressed this is the ventriloquist's dummy, speaking for us without our knowledge. The phantom is a fascinating idea and yet, maybe not so different to what Freud had called our 'personal complexes' in a passage on the forgetting of proper names (SE 6: a note on the word 'complexes', while it is in ready use today Freud praises Jung for his 'indispensable' word, 'complexes' in 1910 in the paper, *The Future Prospects of Psychoanalytic Therapy*, CP 2: 288 see my comment on page 39 of this chapter regarding the changing meaning of terms). Freud argues that the forgetting of proper names, or for that matter first names, can be motivated by repression (SE 6: 7-8 n 2). While we can forget because of tiredness, drunkenness or general illness the repression is familial at bottom states Freud. In suggesting this Freud uses the same

language he used to describe the uncanny, 'long and familiar' (SE 6: 24). He continues, that to get to this forgotten name, one must take associative pathways where words, sound, smell even, has some archaic personal reference. He argues that this is not conscious but a 'continuous current of personal reference of which generally I have no inkling but which betrays itself by such instances of my forgetting names' (SE 6: 24). Further he suggests that this comparison to oneself with others must be a general means of understanding something other than ourselves (SE 6: 24-25). It may well be that I am doing Abraham's 'phantom' an injustice, after-all this is something that Abraham suggests, '*returns to haunt [and] bears witness to the existence of the dead buried within the other*' (cited by Torok et al, 1998: 53-54 (italics in the original)). While Torok's engagement here is not to foreground mothers, she makes the point that Freud's death instinct bears all the hallmarks of 'phantoms': 'it has no energy of its own; it cannot be 'abreacted', merely designated' and 'it pursues its work of disarray in silence' (Torok et al, 1998: 54). Torok argues that 'phantoms' elude rationalization and give rise to endless repetitions (54). Again, I may be misunderstanding Abraham's 'phantom' but it resonates with Freud's 'unlaid ghost' something Freud himself linked back, to our earliest memories of the mother. Coupled with this, Abraham's 'phantom' also sounds a lot like Rank's/Freud's *doppelgänger*: 'For the 'double' was originally an insurance against the destruction of the ego, an 'energetic denial of the power of death', as Rank says; and probably the 'immortal' soul was the first 'double' of the body' (SE 17: 235). Whether we call 'it' ghost, phantom or double there is something in these passages, in the myth of Oedipus that suggests the mother rather than the 'traditional' story of the son. If we look at the Oedipus myth again and again the incest complex is vanguarded, given that it is the mother's body through which the act of incest occurs. Typically in psychoanalysis the mother's body conveys death. And the mother is variously denoted as spectre, as counter-thesis, as the body through which our immortal soul escapes according to Lacan's *Hommolette/lamella*, thereafter attaching itself to us. It is the purpose of this thesis to foreground the mother through an engagement with each of these ideas. The mother 'appears' it seems but only through her 'disappearance', in the shape of phantoms, spectres, ghosts, *doppelgängers* and perhaps finally, even the eternal soul!

According to Irigaray this matricide set the contemporary scene and the ambivalence we feel towards the mother is a retroactive projection of the ambivalence that should

be directed towards the father. Irigaray argues that while it may be true that analysis may tell us something about the drives and their relation to the mother's body, it is a body cut up into bits and pieces and handed back to the child so that *he* might grow: 'The *partial* drives, in fact, seem to refer especially to the body that brought us *whole* into the world' (Irigaray, 1993a: 13). These *whole*, *partial* and *part* metaphors proliferate in Irigaray's writing. Irigaray argues for the recognition of the *whole* child being held and nourished in a *whole* and originary womb. This she states proceeds all associations of the mother's body cut up into bits and *pieces* for the gratification of the child. The whole child exists after all only through the mediation of *her* blood, *her* body. This may be, in part, what becomes problematic in Irigaray that she argues for a *whole* child in a *whole* mother, which is always already mediated by a part object if the umbilicus can indeed be thought of as such. Irigaray would have the phallic erection – her words – occur at the place where the umbilical cord once was, which would indeed be some erection, as a form of honour to the mother's power. Without sounding facetious it is difficult to see how a 'phallic erection' could reinstate or honour the mother's power and I would argue that Irigaray does not seem to realise that by implication she in fact restores Oedipus to the mother, something she is desperate to undo.²⁶

Irigaray asks an important question, albeit in different words, is language a replacement for the womb? The proper name, be it the family name or a first name replaces the irreducible mark of us all, the scar of the navel. Again, we have these 'echo's' to use an appropriate analogy given that in the Narcissus myth, it is Echo that fades away when confronted with Narcissus' self-love/indifference. I argued above that Freud understood 'personal complexes' as having some relation to the familial and finally when the argument was unpicked, to the maternal. Freud may use 'personal complexes' and Abraham 'phantoms' but both ideas seem to have an 'echo' of the maternal firmly planted within. Both ideas 'haunt', bear witness in some way to what Irigaray will call the 'irreducible mark' of the navel. Irigaray's argument that our first home accompanies our every step echoes Freud's discovery that in most

²⁶ Rank wrote in a footnote on his analysis of birth trauma that 'In dreams at the end of the analytic cure I found the phallus often used as a "symbol" of the umbilical cord' (Rank, 1929: 20).

neurotics and some psychotics,²⁷ there was an accompanying desire to return to their first home, that is, the womb: ‘To some people the idea of being buried alive by mistake is the most uncanny thing of all. And yet psycho-analysis has taught us that this terrifying phantasy is only a transformation of another phantasy which had originally nothing terrifying about it at all, but was qualified by a certain lasciviousness—the phantasy, I mean, of intra-uterine existence’ (SE 17: 244). In fact Freud’s analysis in *Das Unheimliche* (SE 17) continues in what he calls ‘a beautiful confirmation of our theory’, he states that ‘neurotic men often declare that they feel there is something uncanny about the female genital organs. This *unheimlich* place, however, is the entrance to the former *Heim* [home] of all human beings, to the place where each one of us lived once upon a time and in the beginning’ (SE 17: 245). These images argues Jonte-Pace, ‘inscribe a powerful circularity’ (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 68). Freud links the uncanny with birth and death; the terror of death through premature burial is thus diminished or transformed into pleasure by locating its source in the fantasy of returning to the womb. What seems uncanny is actually canny, comforting, pleasant or cosy (SE 17: 222 n 2). Irigaray argues that although our first home, our originary or primordial relationship to the mother accompanies our every step it is undermined by the symbols and language of male culture that drive a stake through the navel into the very place where we once lived in complete bliss, marking out the boundaries of patriarchal traditions. Again what becomes difficult in Irigaray’s argument is the assumption that life in the womb is blissful and fulfilling when in many cases it is not. Irigaray of course is not alone in the fantasy of a *paradisical* ‘before’, this ‘*unio mystica*, the being at one with the All’ (Rank cited by Kramer ed., 1996: 7). Rank argues that the ‘child *weeps*’ to leave its ‘blissful paradise’. The visitation of the Angel of Life, states the Talmudical sages, to the *infans* in utero tells the child that it will be born, as it was conceived, against its Will (Rank cited by Kramer ed., 1996: 7). The in utero, which Irigaray romanticises is, I would imagine, a projection of the phantasy of the omnipotent mother. This returns us to Benjamin’s suggestion that ‘what prevents the representation of the mother is thus linked to the problem of omnipotence’ (Benjamin, 1995: 85). This goes back, according to Benjamin to Karen Horney’s classic essay, ‘The Dread of Woman’

²⁷ Cognisant of the fact that Freud didn’t really work with psychotics as he wrote in a letter to Jung that he didn’t really like them as there was little one could do with them.

which begins with Schiller's poem 'The Diver' 'whose search for a woman doomed him to the perils of the engulfing deep. Horney suggests that man's longing for women is always coupled with 'the dread that through her he might die and be undone' (Benjamin, 1995: 81). The early ambivalence that the infant feels with the mother endlessly repeats itself. This then is an originary feeling whose origin is *in* the mother, and relates to the mystification of motherhood (Horney in Benjamin, 1995: 81). Benjamin suggests that although 'modern disenchantment' has worked to diminish the mystique enveloping motherhood and procreation it has not alleviated the dread of maternal power, this she argues has been banished to the unconscious where even divers may fear to swim.

She continues by noting that Horney's argument parallels Freud's in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (SE 21), although Freud's argument is on the origins of religious feeling he discusses the 'oceanic feeling', which he claims to have little experience of. Again Schiller's diver, 'I am moved to exclaim, in the words of Schiller's diver: "He may rejoice, who breathes in the roseate light"' (Freud cited by Benjamin, 1995: 82). Benjamin suggests that if we read between the lines another meaning surfaces. While Freud offers the Father as the saviour of infantile helplessness it is a rescue from the fear of being engulfed in the maternal depths. The 'oceanic oneness' suffocates, or to keep to the theme, drowns as much as it offers life. This 'oceanic oneness' according to Benjamin, the infant's helpless dependency on its mother from whom s/he must separate or be forever caught in the mesh of a neurosis or more probably a psychosis, 'has guided psychoanalytic thinking ever since Freud's formulations... and has led to the proposition that men had to denigrate or dominate women to compensate for their dependency upon and envy of the mother, who can give birth and nurture the young' (Benjamin, 1995: 82). Male dominance then can be viewed as a need to keep their distance, claiming their independence as separate from their mother, something Irigaray also argues. Benjamin continues claiming that Freud's cloacal theory, that the vagina is unknown to young children is challenged by Chasseguet-Smirgel who argues instead that the young boy conscious of the little girl's lack of a penis is repressing an image of the mother as all-powerful and overwhelming (Benjamin, 1995: 83). The original threat is not castration by the father but suffocation by the mother. Irigaray argues the original threat is incorrect anyway given that when the child is threatened with castration this covers up the first cut of the umbilical cord, our

separation from our mother's body. While Irigaray would have it, that we erect veils to cover up, cover over this first debt to the mother, Chasseguet-Smirgel according to Benjamin contends that if 'children know consciously only of the penis, this stance is actually an effort to repair a narcissistic wound, the sense of helplessness and dependency on the omnipotent mother, whose vagina is too large' (Benjamin, 1995: 83). The horror of the female genitals and the eventual scorn by men is an 'effect of the transfer of power to the father, which at once conceals and assuages fear of the mother' (83). Irigaray states, '(j)ust as the scar of the navel is forgotten, so, correspondingly, a hole appears in the texture of the language' (Irigaray, 1993a: 16). A hole, gap, void that continues to be filled with things so as to suppress the image of the 'all-powerful-mother' behind the veil according to Irigaray. In Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4-5) he argues that there is a spot in every dream, 'a "navel" as it were' that is unplumbable. It is a point that reaches down into the unknown and cannot be unravelled (SE 5: 525). Thus for Freud we could say that the navel, far from being a 'hole' or even a scar, unconsciously represents something obscure, a 'something' that we turn away from, as we turn away from the mother when she gets too close. For Jonte-Pace this turning away both illustrates the limits of Freud's Oedipal paradigm and also an 'uncanny' journey in/to the mother that Freud was unwilling, unable to take (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 30-32).

To return to Chodorow briefly, her argument that men could mother just as well as women is extended by Dorothy Dinnerstein who suggests that the cultural largesse than we are experiencing is in fact because of this paternal rescue which results in the negation of the mother. Dinnerstein argues that there is no antidote for this but that men should shoulder some of the 'envy, greed, dread, and rage' tied to mothers by mothering themselves (Benjamin, 1995: 84). Chodorow differs from Dinnerstein because she argues for a sociocultural projection of the mother, i.e., the mother is still a subject to the child not only an object. This according to Chodorow will counterbalance the omnipotent mother, but the question needs to be, if this is the case, if even young children recognise their differentiation from the mother, then why does the mother constantly lose out? Why is she not given the political and social importance that this recognition should offer? Chodorow does not answer this, her argument is a prescription for good-enough mothering not a revolution, which in any case may end up being the same thing, but Irigaray considers these issues in more

depth. Irigaray's argument that the polis was founded on an original matricide, suggests in opposition to Freud that the primeval horde has already feasted on the body of the mother by the time it gets to the father. The mother according to Irigaray has been turned into a devouring monster to assuage the child/man's guilt for the blind consumption she is forced to submit to (Irigaray, 1993a: 15). This inverted effect according to Benjamin creates 'the inability to symbolically represent that first relation and the separation from it, that makes of woman a dangerous hole into which the individual may disappear. The question of where, precisely, this inversion occurs and what prevents the representation of the mother is thus linked to the problem of omnipotence' (Benjamin, 1995: 85).

Benjamin

Staying with Benjamin, she elucidates the either/or of 'orthodox' psychoanalysis as being rather '*She is...*' following Horney's suggestion that man contains a 'dread of woman: "It is not", He says, "that I dread her; it is that *she* herself *is* malignant, capable of any crime, a beast of prey, a vampire, a witch, insatiable in her desires. *She is* the very personification of what is sinister"' (Horney cited by Benjamin, 1995: 86). The *She is*, is the key to the duality that positions the mother as both omnipotent and another subject, the split signifying a collapse between fantasy and reality. *She is* illustrates the centripetal and centrifugal forces operating within a psychic circularity where self and objects mingle, are omnipotent and yet can symbolically represent real others on an intersubjective register. Infancy theorists, and here Benjamin cites Stern, Beebe and Lachmann (not Winnicott or Bowlby) argue 'that even at four months an attuned mother is not undifferentiated, does not create the illusion of perfect oneness' (Benjamin, 1995: 87). Stern, Beebe and Lachmann according to Benjamin suggest that the infant enjoys otherness, new faces, new places. This is contrary to Freud's argument that 'A child is frightened of a strange face because he is adjusted to the sight of a familiar and beloved figure—ultimately of his mother' (SE 16: 407). What Benjamin raises here is the suggestion that the oceanic symbiosis that Freud questions and which is perpetuated by object-relation theory is perhaps an oversimplified and idealised version of the infants 'real' experiences. In fact the Freudian idea of *Nachträglichkeit* or deferred action, a reworking of early experience is at work here (I will explain the concept of *Nachträglichkeit* more fully in Chapter Three). Benjamin puts it well, '(i)t is a reading backward through the lens of loss, the encounter with

which generates the wish for omnipotence and the projection of the longing for symbiotic oneness upon the mother' (Benjamin, 1995: 87). Again, this is not to negate the early mother-baby bond but rather to question the universal omnipotence ceded to it. Benjamin asks, '(h)ow did the trope of oneness come to inform the whole theory of infancy? If men and women both project the dangerous longing for a return to amniotic life onto the mother, is this not itself a symptom of a breakdown in tension between fantasy and reality?' (Benjamin, 1995: 87-88). Changes in the socio-political arena as a result of new scientific developments create change in the ideologies that underpin motherhood and the status of mothers/women. We may, suggests Benjamin want to create a distance from a paradigm that cedes the mother so much responsibility with minimal concern 'for the conditions of her own subjectivity' (Benjamin, 1995:88). Further Benjamin posits that man's infantile fear of dependency on the mother is not accounted for in the fantasy of the omnipotent mother but is rather to be seen in particular theoretical assumptions around dependency which further encode the 'lost mother as a dangerous object' (Benjamin, 1995: 88). The child's (re)positioning of the mother as *She is*, is facilitated in part through the mother's own desire for independence from the infant, an infant that disappoints because s/he is not the perfect fantasy child that the mother initially idealised. Thus the mother's and baby's disappointments collude and articulate a response within the psyche. Whether as repression or as displacement would be inclusive of the situation and the child's and mothers response to each other. Benjamin's argument here is not unlike Bowlby's, who was castigated by second-wave feminists for his Attachment Theory. What a baby needs is its *own* mother argued Bowlby. In fact Bowlby went as far to suggest that society needed to change and be more attune to mother's: 'Let us hope that as time goes on our society, still largely organised to suit men and fathers, will adjust itself to the needs of women and mothers, and that social traditions will be evolved which will guide individuals into a wise course of action' (Bowlby, 1979: 9).

Benjamin's argument that 'it is a reading backward through the lens of loss, the encounter with which generates the wish for omnipotence and the projection of the longing for symbiotic oneness upon the mother' (1995: 87) needs further engagement. This longing to return to an idealised symbiotic oneness with the mother results in a breakdown between the tension of fantasy and reality according to Benjamin (87-88).

And further, as with Freud, the breakdown of this tension could – would – create an accompanying anxiety. The privileging of a space between fantasy and reality, a space where the trope of oneness appears to proliferate has a strangely Lacanian feel to it but Benjamin's concern is first and finally it seems with the 'real' mother; the mother living in the socio-political arena. This 'space' (loosely connoted as a third term) resonates with the loss of 'something' but this something itself appears to be unknown. An unknown though that takes on the yearning associated with the original (in the medical sense), rather than poetic meaning of the word nostalgia. I make mention of this here because nostalgia, like ambivalence and melancholy, even schizophrenia have mutated to a point that is quite removed from Freud's usage of these terms. Jean Starobinski argued fifty years ago that these terms, among others, have been absorbed into everyday language, thus losing their original meaning. Starobinski maintained that the deprivation associated with nostalgia was one of 'loss of childhood, of 'oral satisfactions,' of motherly coaxing' (Starobinski, 1966: 87). And further that 'the nostalgic did not stop eating his heart out; the wound did not heal!' (94). Thus to read Freud one must consider the difference a century makes to our understanding of language and of things, and therefore perhaps, our unconscious. This does not mean, I think, that the 'universals' Freud discovered are not applicable today, or that we have exhausted the possibilities that they represent. 'Mother' in any language is a universal, irrespective of the fact that we are all individually mothered. And within the context of mothering Freudian ideas, the unconscious transference of material, of love and hate – ambivalence, the family romance, of castration and Oedipus complexes, anxiety and mourning, pleasure and unpleasure abound. Zygmunt Bauman is an academic that that I have long enjoyed but I disagree with his comment that 'Freud's theory of the mind belongs to its own times' (in Billig, 1999: 256). The world and indeed the language we use to describe the world change, but the mind, the afflictions that affect it and the typography that Freud used to 'shorthand' it, the id, ego and superego remain basically unchanged.

The dyad of mother-child must be broken to ensure the child is not s-mothered. This is what psychoanalysis suggests. In contrast Sprengnether argues that this might in fact cause a redirection of anger and loss onto the figure of a rival-father. The omnipotence once attributed to the mother is displaced onto the rescuing fantasy father – as in Freud's analysis of the oceanic in religion (Benjamin, 1995: 97). Thus

the mother is split, she is unattainable, belongs to the father but is also the omnipotent figure of the child's fantasy. The mother according to Kristeva is then located in a 'lost territory', as oedipalised and idealised she cannot then obtain any form of subjectivity (Kristeva cited by Benjamin, 1995: 97). Benjamin argues that Sprengnether makes a compelling case for the way in which Freud's own maternal idealisation, his difficulty in acknowledging loss in relation to his mother, and his reiterated belief in a mother's unambivalent love of the firstborn son contributed to his formulation of the Oedipus complex. That may well be, but the Oedipus complex has its roots in his early work with neurotic patients.

In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) Freud illustrates a series of events that began with a bungled action concerning eyes, a forgetting of the proper medicine and culminating in a remembering of the dream of a young man who dreamt he had sex with his mother. Freud aligns this dream to the Oedipal myth and suggests that the young man's dream is a return of the repressed. Freud argues, 'that in being in love with one's own mother one is never concerned with her as she is in the present but with her youthful mnemonic image carried over from one's childhood' (SE 6: 178). While we know that Freud's dream theory colluded with the death and therefore loss of his father, Sprengnether suggests that this loss, which Freud could not idealise was instead turned outwards as an aggression towards the father, as Oedipus does with Laius. Sprengnether argues that this does not happen with the first love-object, indeed it cannot happen because of the infant's dependency on the mother, for his/her all consuming greed and love for her. The loss that the infant subsequently and sequentially feels leads to a series of displacements that become internalised as anger and anxiety at the unfaithful mother (in Benjamin, 1995: 97). Who it seemed according to Freud never gave us enough milk (SE 22: 122).

A counter-thesis

Sprengnether's earlier argument in *The Spectral Mother: Freud, Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (1990), suggests that the pre-Oedipal mother haunts Freud's writing. In some ways this is not dissimilar from the argument that Diana Jonte-Pace offers. Both Sprengnether and Jonte-Pace are involved with dead mothers of sorts. Jonte-Pace recommends her work as a counter-thesis to Freud, illuminating the 'dead' mother, 'below the surface of the Oedipal masterplot' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 1). Jonte-

Pace contends that the counter-thesis is not pre-Oedipal, this cause has been taken up by the object-relation theorists like Winnicott. It is also not anti-Oedipal like the work of Deleuze and Guattari (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 2). The counterthesis then haunts in a different way to Sprengnether's pre-Oedipal because it challenges the dominance of the Oedipal paradigm rather than trailing after it offering alternatives. Jonte-Pace suggests that the counterthesis can be seen most clearly in the 'images and metaphors which, although intended as support for the Oedipal masterplot, actually decenter it' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 2). I have little argument with Jonte-Pace's text, she offers a compelling and thoughtful 'counterthesis' to Freud's theories, in particular the four major 'cultural texts', *Totem and Taboo*, *The Future of an Illusion*, *Civilisation and its Discontents*, and *Moses and Monotheism* (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 2). Included in what she terms the smaller (although not lesser) texts, she offers a subversive reading of *Das Unheimlich*, *Medusa's Head* and *The Theme of the Three Caskets*. Jonte-Pace trawls through *The Interpretation of Dreams* offering discontinuities in Freud's Oedipal argument, pointing out that Freud was aware of these limitations calling them 'unplumbable'. In his religious texts suggests Jonte-Pace, Freud shows himself as a 'successful mourner of religion in transition' but throughout his texts he appears to be 'an unsuccessful or "melancholic" mourner of the lost mother' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 5). Jonte-Pace argues that in fact 'Freud's inability to mourn the mother is far from idiosyncratic, however, for we are all melancholy mourners of maternal loss' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 5). Jonte-Pace suggests that dangerous and deadly mothers proliferate both in Freud's *oeuvre* and in contemporary society but that they are unspeakable. Part of her counterthesis then is to speak the unspeakable in Freud's work. My only quibble with this interesting and compelling work is that I do not like the term counterthesis. Jonte-Pace offers a reasoned argument as to why she uses the term counterthesis, my sense of the word though is as an inversion of something, to counter something is to oppose it, and Jonte-Pace is not opposing Freud's initial thesis, not even really offering an alternative reading, but illuminating the interstices in Freud's work that account according to Jonte-Pace as a 'shadowy presence of this non-Oedipal counterthesis' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 2). As I said a minor quibble.

Identification

Staying with Freud, Diana Fuss in *Identification Papers* (1995) suggests that Freud's work on identification offers a reading 'where the psychical/social distinction becomes impossibly confused and finally untenable' (Fuss, 1995: 10). In *Group Psychology* (SE 18) Freud examines the process of the group through the concept of identification. This thesis as I have made clear is not about the group *per se* although our identification with the Mother is of singular importance in the construction of a self (which will be addressed throughout this thesis). And the self is first and foremost a construction formulated from a relationship with an other/Other in much the same way as a self relates to a larger group in later development, through kindergarten, school, work and so on. Freud will argue that 'identification is known to psycho-analysis as the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person,' that is to the father (SE 18: 105). The relationship to the mother develops alongside the one to the father as a 'true object-cathexis' states Freud with an *Anlehnung* – literally 'leaning on'- component (the sexual instincts (aim) lean up against the self-preservative instincts). The relationship to the mother is straightforward argues Freud because its aim is sexual.²⁸ But identification is ambivalent from the start Freud suggests because it acts like a derivative of the oral stage of libidinal constitution 'in which the object that we long for and prize is assimilated by eating and is in that way annihilated as such. The cannibal, as we know, has remained at this standpoint; he has a devouring affection for his enemies and only devours people of whom he is fond' (SE 18: 105). The identification is one of *being* or *having* the father. Correlatively of whether 'the tie attaches to the subject or to the object of the ego' (SE 18: 106). This is where Freud's concept of identification becomes confusing (contradictory) because he will argue that the tie to the father as one of *being*, therefore identifying with him

²⁸ A note on the word sexual. In Freud's later writings what he designated as sexual was grouped together under the concept, Eros. But perhaps a fitting explanation for the enlarged understanding of sexual is to be found in the 'American' lectures: 'You will now perhaps make the objection: "But all that is not sexuality." I have used the word in a very much wider sense than you are accustomed to understand it. This I willingly concede. But it is a question whether you do not rather use the word in much too narrow a sense when you restrict it to the realm of procreation. You sacrifice by that the understanding of perversions; of the connection between perversion, neurosis and normal sexual life; and have no means of recognizing, in its true significance, the easily observable beginning of the somatic and mental sexual life of the child. But however you decide about the use of the word, remember that the psychoanalyst understands sexuality in that full sense to which he is led by the evaluation of infantile sexuality' (in Chase, 1910: 181-218).

as a subject is possible *before* ‘any sexual object-choice has been made’ (SE 18: 106). But the ‘sexual object-choice’ caught up in the self-preservative instincts, which Freud has already told us is linked to the mother as a ‘true type’ is constitutive of the oral phase, which is itself explicitly about the mother and is *before*, in the sense that it is the ‘first’ relationship that the infant experiences when s/he comes into the world. Adam Phillips argues in *On Kindness* that ‘The most fundamental tie – one that could easily be taken to be the source if not the blueprint for all human bonds – is the one between mother and child’ (Phillips and Taylor, 2009: 80). This is a historical argument one that claims British and American psychoanalysis changed in response to two world wars, privileging the idea of a mother-child bond that had been relegated to the sidelines (and those that advocated for something like it, for example Rank, with it) in orthodox psychoanalysis. But before this ‘wholesale’ belief in the mother/baby bond Freud finds himself in a ‘tangle’ with identification because he reiterates ‘identification is the earliest and original form of an emotional tie’ and then tells us that where repression breaks through, i.e., the formation of a symptom, for instance a cough – Freud’s example – ‘You wanted to be your mother, and now you *are*—anyhow so far as your sufferings are concerned’ – that object-choice has turned back into identification. ‘The ego’, says Freud ‘assumes the characteristics of the object’ (SE 18: 106-107). Freud attempts to save the concept of identification by suggesting that what happens in the process of identification is that the ego splits, has ‘fallen’ into two pieces, ‘one of which rages against the second’ (SE 18: 109). The second piece of the ego contains the ‘lost object’ argues Freud and is an example of his famous dictum ‘The shadow of the object has fallen upon the ego’. This second piece of the ego seems to be in a protective mode shielding the ‘lost object’ from the wrath of the first part of the ego (later to be ‘identified’ as the super-ego). Freud does say in a footnote that he has not exhausted all the possibilities of identification and links this back to the primal horde and the feasting together, a feasting that Irigaray has shown above forgets its matricidal origins! Again, in Freud’s attempt to keep his Oedipal theory intact, he neglects what is obvious that our first identifications must be with the mother and in a rather convoluted manner tries to make the father the ‘earliest emotional tie’. And even if we accepted the divisions Freud makes between a true object-cathexis which is different to identification but runs alongside identification the fact that Freud compares identification to a derivative of the first oral phase of libidinal development comparable to his argument in *Negation* (SE 19)

‘I take you in and I spit you out’ would suggest that identification is first and foremost to do with the mother.

Diana Fuss makes the point that in fact in Freud’s writings on homosexuality in women, identification and desire/libido intertwine and thus undermine a central tenet of psychoanalysis which holds ‘that desire and identification are structurally independent of one another, the possibility of one always presupposing the repression of the other’ (Fuss, 1995: 67). The homosexual woman as identified by Freud marks not only the woman’s return *to* the mother but the subject’s turn *as* mother (Fuss, 1995: 67). There is something in Fuss’s argument that resonates with this project as a whole and will be explored in brief below.

‘falling’

Fuss (1995) argues through Helene Deutsch that the girl’s homosexual pre-Oedipal attachment to the mother might also be viewed as a post-Oedipal²⁹ regression in that the earlier fixation on the mother as first love object becomes a return (Fuss, 1995: 63-64). In fact Fuss suggests that Otto Fenichel offers a ‘blunt’ analysis of this return by stating that for the homosexual pre-subject, ‘every “pre” contains the spectre of a “re”’: female homosexuality is posited as regressive and reactive, primitive and primal, undeveloped and archaic’ (Fuss, 1995: 64). Fuss’s focus is on the female homosexual a troubled figure in psychoanalysis, in particular Freudian psychoanalysis, according to Fuss, and yet if we were to answer the following question, ‘where is female

²⁹ Post-Oedipal encounters similar issues as pre-Oedipal. All relationships are formulated within pre-existing Oedipal structures. We are, as I stated at the beginning of this chapter always already Oedipalised, which does not mean that some form of undifferentiated space ‘before’ language is not available to us. As this chapter illustrates Kristeva identifies this ‘before’ as the semiotic *chora*, a space where primary narcissism is invoked to cover up/over something. To assign this ‘space’ a name seems particularly pressing for most feminist psychoanalysts, perhaps psychoanalysis in general. Whether it is an intermediary space filled with angels as it is for Irigaray; a counter-thesis as it is for Jonte-Pace; or pre-Oedipal as it is for Sprengnether, Klein and others, it is a ‘space’ where we know the mother seems to have some position of power, of importance – even Freud allocated it as such. Thus, pre-Oedipal while not the ‘best’ term is certainly descriptive of something that remains unknown. Post-Oedipal in contrast seems to be an unnecessary term. If we follow Freud’s reasoning, once we are Oedipalised what else is there? We return, but the return is to this undifferentiated space of the pre-Oedipal. Which as I argued earlier, is according to Green, always already Oedipalised.

homosexuality to be found in psychoanalysis?’ Fuss replies, ‘in psychoanalysis’s very foundations’ (Fuss, 1995: 58). Importantly this troubling female figure gets displaced. Fuss offers an historical treatise that runs through Freud’s case-studies of inversion in women, to Lacan’s dissertation on paranoid psychosis in women (‘attributed by Lacan to their presymbolic, prelinguistic, preseparation relation to the mother’ (Fuss, 1995: 59)), to Kristeva’s lack of interest in female homosexuality positing it as a ‘fall back’ to the ‘ambiguous space of the precultural’ (Fuss, 1995: 59) rather than accession to the position of subject. What I will take from Fuss’s explanation and exploration of this ‘return’ is how this return gets reconfigured as a ‘fall’. And how this in turn, has some immediate relationship to the mother. Because the idea of a/The Fall is beset with the omniscient fall of the biblical story of Adam and Eve. But also because there is something in Freud’s quoting of Grabbe’s *Hannibal* that ‘We will not fall out of this world’ that resonates with this thesis and importantly the mother as a whole. After all, to finish Freud’s expression, ‘we will not fall out of this world’ but only because the ego, through a painful surrender of its boundaries, does not allow it (Freud in a letter to Lou Andreas-Salomé 1960: 310 and SE 18: 65).

Fuss argues that for Freud, a woman’s return to the mother enacts a fall—‘not a prelapsarian fall which was, after all, a fall into heterosexuality, but a postlapsarian fall into homosexuality’ (Fuss, 1995: 65). She suggests that Freud’s own play on the word ‘fall’ which in German means ‘both “to fall” and “to be delivered of a child”’ is important here. In English the construction ‘to fall’ can also be construed as meaning to ‘fall pregnant’ and is commonly used as a temporal locator, i.e., ‘I/We fell pregnant on the 6 August 1907’, or ‘I/We fell pregnant in Spain, Paris, London, New York...’ or ‘I/We fell pregnant in the month of ...’ and so on. Fuss argues that ‘the girl’s fall back into a homosexual desire for the mother actually constitutes a particular kind of maternity in Freud’s reading—a fall equivalent to a deliverance’ (Fuss, 1995: 65). Fuss offers her own return, read through Cathy Caruth, that recounts an early memory of Freud’s of an accident which ‘befell’ him between the ages of two and three years old. This is the childhood memory that Freud added to the *Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4-5) while working on ‘A Case of Homosexuality in a Woman’ (in Fuss, 1995: 65):

I had climbed up on to a stool in the store-closet to get something nice that was lying on a cupboard or table. The stool had tipped over and its corner had struck me behind my lower jaw; I might easily, I reflected, have knocked out all my teeth (Fuss, 1995: 65).

Fuss points out that Freud presents this ‘screen memory’ through the lens of the oral-cannibalistic stage. The cupboard we know is also represented by Freud as the womb, importantly his mother’s womb in another recollection of his childhood which involved a teasing, laughing and one could say menacing older brother and a crying, frightened Freud (SE 6). Freud was attempting to reach in for something nice from his mother’s cupboard only to have the stool fall over and knock him in his jaw. This could have resulted in the loss of his teeth he notes, the symbol of his entry into Oedipality. Freud then offers ‘falling’ as ‘representations of childbirth’, fear of being a ‘fallen woman’ ‘of giving birth’. Freud suggests Fuss, sums it up ‘nicely’ when he states that ‘when a girl falls she falls on her back’ (Fuss, 1995: 66). This has some resonance with Freud’s contention that a ‘hole is a hole’ but Fuss’s argument here is enveloped in the question of why do Freud’s writings on female homosexuals inevitably end up in maternity? In fact she writes ‘it cannot be a matter of indifference to feminist readers of Freud that “A Case of Homosexuality in a Woman”³⁰ begins with the word “homosexuality” and concludes with the word “motherhood” ...’ (Fuss, 1995: 66 and SE 18: 145-172). She states that ‘Freud could be suggesting that homosexuality represents a regressive return to the mother—a desire to have the mother by figuratively becoming the mother—a return achieved through a literal fall enacting a symbolic delivery’ (Fuss, 1995: 67). This would trouble Freud’s analysis of identification because it suggests that the son’s identification with the father does not in fact, precede the child’s identification with the mother. A mother who is not hallucinatory, or part, but whole and who is

³⁰ It is important to note that Freud did not think that the girl was in any way ill ‘she did not suffer from anything in herself, nor did she complain of her condition’ (Freud cited by Gilman, 1993: 136). Freud concluded that the parents were the problem, fixated as they were on the daughter’s sexual orientation. Gilman explores the change in Freud’s attitude where early in the 20th Century the origins of psychopathology and homosexuality were linked and later in a letter in the year 1935 he came to ‘see homosexuality, as having “no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it a variation of the sexual function”’ (in Gilman, 1993: 136 (the letter is titled ‘anonymous’ and was written in English. It was written by a mother concerned that her son was homosexual although Freud is impressed that she never uses the term homosexual to describe her son (in E. Freud, 1960: 423)).

representative of something/somebody that not only do we wish to *have* but we also wish to *be*.

Fuss's explanation of 'falling' in Freud, in a history of psychoanalysis offers the rudiments of a more detailed account of 'falling'. After all, Freud suggested that 'Childish 'romping' [*Hetzen*]', if I may use a word which commonly describes all such activities, is what is being repeated in dreams of flying, falling, giddiness and so on; while the pleasurable feelings attached to these experiences are transformed into anxiety. But often enough, as every mother knows, romping among children actually ends in squabbling and tears' (SE 4: 272). Lacan makes this link in his paper *Anxiety* (1962-63) suggesting that it is precisely the fall of the subject in an orgasm (precipitated by anxiety) – in ejaculation, that anxiety occurs. There appears to be a link between a psychoanalytic understanding of 'falling', 'anxiety' and 'love', which seem to have some relation to the mother. Jeffery J. Anderson in his paper, *The Motif of Falling: Falling and the Loss of the Mother* (1963) argues that 'falling is a symbol of maternal loss' (417) but more than this, falling converges with myths, tropes and biblical imagery to emphasise the mourning of this loss. Sprengnether says something similar in her paper, *(M)other Eve: Some Revisions of the Fall in Fiction by Contemporary Women Writers* (1989), 'and the Fall is portrayed in terms of the loss of the mother' (299). After all Freud argues in *On Narcissism* (SE 14): 'A strong egoism is a protection against falling ill, but in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill, and we are bound to fall ill if, in consequence of frustration, we are unable to love' (SE 14: 85). If psychoanalysis is the cure through love, as Freud once famously wrote to Jung, and this love is a protection against falling ill then our ability to love, to be healthy, normal as Freud might write it, seems firstly, or originally, to have its 'roots' in our relationship to our mothers.

Kristeva

In *Tales of Love* (1987) Julia Kristeva also engages with Freud's theory of identification, but she outlines how narcissism is implicated in identification. It is interesting given the analysis of the mother as omnipotent that Kristeva suggests Freud 'imposes an omnipresence of narcissism which permeates the other realms to the point that one finds it again in the *object* (where it is reflected)—if we assume that an object can be designated, in other words symbolized and loved as such, outside of

chaos, rejection, and destruction' (Kristeva, 1987: 22). Narcissism is far from originary though suggests Kristeva, it is a 'supplement', added or attached to the autoerotic drives and therefore might be called intrasymbolic. Kristeva adds that one problem that arises is that narcissism would appear to be dependent on a third term 'but within a disposition that chronologically and logically precedes that of the Oedipal Ego' (Kristeva, 1987: 22). This returns us to Benjamin's analysis which questions whether the father as third term breaks up the mother-child dyad, or if indeed the third term is not the father, laws etcetera but 'an effect generated by the symbolic space within a social, differentiated maternal dyad' (Benjamin, 1995: 96). In fact Benjamin's argument suggests that if the third term is integral to the mother-child dyad then its collapse would foreclose the negotiation of recognition with the mother, transferring her omnipotence instead of relegating it to a different – psychic, social, political – sphere (Benjamin, 1995: 96). Thus the father would take on, attract somehow, because of his differentiated space maybe, the Oedipal omnipotence of the mother therefore her power as we might understand it in Freudian and Lacanian ideologies, would become the father's. This would leave the mother then in some kind of hinterland without Oedipal power and therefore without Oedipal or Symbolic subjectivity. This *Spaltung* which splits the mother places her as Kristeva says in 'the fantasy of a "lost territory"'. This fantasy is, in effect, less about the maternal relationship than about "the idealization of primary narcissism" (Kristeva cited by Benjamin, 1995: 97). Kristeva then offers a whole host of questions, which are worth repeating here: 'What is this narcissitic "identity"? How stable are its borders, its relation to the other? Does the "mirror stage" emerge out of nowhere? What are the conditions of its emergence?' (Kristeva, 1987: 22-23). Kristeva argues that the ternary structuration of narcissism is different from the Ego-object-Other triangle, which is articulated in the shadow of the Oedipus complex. It has been suggested therefore by some theorists because of the ubiquity of Freudian narcissism that narcissism is in fact a Freudian fantasy constructed out of a mimetic relationship that exists primarily between mother and child. Kristeva argues, '(n)evertheless, it is still a fact that narcissism, caught in a play of rebounds within the Freudian text, in a first stage seem to be a mimetic play that would establish psychic identities (Ego/object), until that play finally, and in the dizziness of rebounds, reveals itself as a screen over *emptiness*' (Kristeva, 1987: 23). Kristeva calls this emptiness, 'the root of the human psyche' which is not unveiled on the psychoanalytic couch but located (if indeed it

can be located) in front of the Saussurian *bar* (an *emptiness* brought about by the arbitrariness of the Saussurian sign) ‘that constitutes the referent/signified/signifier relationship, of which Lacan has merely taken up the “visible” aspect in the *gaping hole* of the mirror stage’ (Kristeva, 1987: 23). Kristeva suggests that from the standpoint of representation Lacan’s *gaping hole* and Saussure’s *arbitrariness* of the sign perhaps illuminate the ubiquity, the uneasiness and inconsistency of Freud’s narcissism (Kristeva, 1987: 23-24). She asks, that if *emptiness* is there at the beginning of the symbolic function, between the not yet *Ego* and the not yet *object* ‘might narcissism be a means for protecting that emptiness?’ (Kristeva, 1987: 24). But what might narcissism be protecting the emptiness from? Kristeva suggests that narcissism is protecting the emptiness from chaos, from indistinct borders that threaten and confuse the limits of the body, words, the real and the symbolic. ‘The child, with all due respect to Lacan, not only *needs* the real and the symbolic—it signifies itself as child, in other words as the subject that it is, and neither as a psychotic nor as an adult, precisely in that zone where *emptiness and narcissism*, the one upholding the other, constitute the zero degree of imagination’ (Kristeva, 1987: 24). This returns us to the notion of ‘identification’ according to Kristeva. Identification as it is explained above, takes us back to the *Ego ideal* (the split ego – later the super-ego) where identification is not really with the object but with the object as ideal. For Freud we know that this primary process of identification was with the Father, although there is slippage for Freud, between ‘father’ and ‘both parents’. Identification is only tenable if one conceives of it as always already within the symbolic orbit, under the sway of language but we know empirically, counters Kristeva, that the mother is the object of the first affections, first vocalizations and first imitations (Kristeva, 1987: 27). Again this troubling of Identification and a recognition of it as an ‘emotional tie’ first and foremost with the mother.

Kristeva’s mother, or maternal space is not like Irigaray’s caught up as it is in the mother-daughter duality, a duality that endorses the rather arbitrary – for Irigaray – position between you and me. Kristeva in contrast is much more the Freudian or Lacanian daughter, arguing that women need the Symbolic to avoid the lack of distinction from the mother and thereafter psychosis. In *Stabat Mater* (1987) which she subtitles, ‘The Paradox: Mother or Primary Narcissism’ she asks,

If it is not possible to say of a *woman* what she *is* (without running the risk of abolishing her difference), would it perhaps be different concerning the *mother*, since that is the only function of the “other sex” to which we can definitely attribute existence? And yet, there too, we are caught in a paradox. First, we live in a civilisation where the *consecrated* (religious or secular) representation of femininity is absorbed by motherhood. If, however, one looks at it more closely, this motherhood is the *fantasy* that is nurtured by the adult, man or woman, of a lost territory; what is more, it involves less an idealized archaic mother than the idealization of the *relationship* that binds us to her, one that cannot be localized—an idealization of primary narcissism (Kristeva, 1987: 234).

This mother is the site of the primary identification and Kristeva’s premise is that the mother’s body is necessary for the continuation of the species and because of this ‘her questionable identity threatens the Symbolic unity’ (in Oliver, 1993: 5). If the mother loves an Other it is her own mother but this love is narcissistic as the love for the mother is also love for herself as mother. In *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholy* (1989) Kristeva argues that the subject by not being able to give up the ‘archaic’ mother, which is understood psychically as the lost object, develops ‘asymbolia’, an inability to use language (Kristeva, 1989: 9). Language, suggests Kristeva, as symbolic function is constituted only at the expense of repressing ‘instinctual drives’ and thus an uninterrupted relation to the mother (Kristeva, 1980: 136). Language begins with a negation – a negation inset with loss and mourning – of the mother argues Kristeva. By recognising her loss as a speaking being, then she is not lost but can be recovered states Kristeva, in the proliferation of signs (in Beardsworth: 2004: 104). Poetic language contends Kristeva is the only way of getting back to the mother, because it unsettles and reactivates this repressed, instinctual, maternal element (Kristeva, 1980: 136). Following Kristeva, Ewa Ziarek points out that it is maternity not poetry, that is the most powerful model of alterity-within because it exists at the heart of the social and the species (Ziarek, 1993: 4).

To return to the argument above Kristeva’s pre-Oedipal, which draws on Lacan’s Imaginary, rewrites the Imaginary according to Lisa Lowe and does so to privilege the infant’s identification with the mother not its specular image stressed by Lacan (Lowe, 1993: 154). Kristeva’s archaic relationship to the mother is reinstated in the child’s relation to the ‘father of prehistory’, the ‘imaginary father’ who exists before the Oedipal father and whose existence may be hallucinatory but who offers the child

the ability to sublimate as might be seen in the reading of Freud's Leonardo da Vinci (in Kristeva, 1995: 121). In this way, continues Kristeva it becomes a love that cannot be represented.

Doane and Hodges suggest that Kristeva is not only influenced by Lacan (and Freud) as many feminist writers have theorised but is in fact indebted to André Green. Green according to Doane and Hodges argues that Freud, Lacan and Lacanians are too concerned with the 'dead father', centralising castration and sidelining or 'castrasizing' other anxieties (in Doane and Hodges, 1992: 57). Green both argues that the 'Lacanian emphasis on language precludes significant analysis of the situation of psychotics and borderline patients whose problems seem to be linked to a space before language where the vicissitudes of the passions are inscribed' (in Doane and Hodges, 1992: 57) and further that 'descriptions of the mother-infant relationship have not been taken far enough' (57). Unsurprisingly Doane and Hodges recognise Green's argument in Kristeva's work. Green contends, as does Kristeva albeit without reference to Green state Doane and Hodges, that Kleinian psychoanalysis elevates the maternal part objects in particular the breast, and the anxieties relating to its loss, that is depressive anxieties (in Doane and Hodges, 1992: 57). Freud's mother was mostly good, although nobody, particularly boys, wanted to look at her genitalia. Klein's mother in contrast is usually pretty frightening, although this is not the actual mother but the infant's phantasised projection of her. It would be left to Winnicott and I would add Bowlby with his Attachment theory, to theorise the 'real' mother. Green though, argue Doane and Hodges gives credence to the actual 'bad' mother in contrast to the 'good' mother of Winnicott (we will return to an engagement with Winnicott in Chapter Four). Kristeva's analysis of the mother as lost object for the child/adult is premised on our ability to enter the Symbolic. Preceding the Symbolic though is Kristeva's semiotic which I introduced above. Jacqueline Rose suggests that discussion around Kristeva's work has been 'notably around the concept of the semiotic which has acquired something of an existence of its own, outside the realm of meaning without which, strictly, it does not make sense' (Rose, 1993b: 48). Feminist readers of Kristeva have both accepted and at times rejected Kristeva's semiotic, to which Kristeva has variously ascribed femininity, colour, music, body and affect. The problem according to Rose is that the semiotic is entangled with the repressed, its attraction is that it rests outside symbolic norms (Rose, 1993b: 48). Rose

also points too Kristeva's reliance on Green's work, in particular his concept of 'affect' again suggesting that Kristeva, like Green, was responding to the primacy of representation and the linguistic sign which ignored and thereafter absorbed the irreducible, drive, affect (Rose, 1993b: 49). While Kristeva argues that the semiotic is not origin Rose begs to differ. After all, according to Rose, Kristeva variously defines the semiotic as 'genetically detected in the first echolalia's of infants' and heterogeneity as the 'archaisms of the semiotic body' which are 'logically and chronologically prior to the institution of the symbolic' (in Rose, 1993b: 49). Further what becomes problematic in the concept of the semiotic is Kristeva's linking of the term *chora* with the semiotic. Why this might be problematic is twofold. On the one hand the term *chora* which in Greek means, 'enclosed space, womb', comes from Plato's *The Timaeus*, 'where it stands for the mediating instance in which the copies of the eternal model receive their shape' (Rose, 1993b: 50). Plato suggested that the *chora* was 'a matrix like space that is nourishing, unnameable, prior to the One and to God, and that thus defies metaphysics' (Plato cited by Kristeva, 1995: 204). Both the problem with, and perhaps the revolutionary capacity of, the *chora* are that it represents the 'flux' of 'maternal' space. There is a contradiction here though, because the *chora* while allocated a name (although seemingly unnameable), is according to Plato 'incomprehensible' (in Moi, 1985: 161). But it also partakes of the 'intelligible' (Plato in Moi, 1985: 161). This sounds remarkably like Freud's *A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'* (SE 19), which contains the shape and form of the words – language – that had been written on it but not the actual words themselves. Or alternatively, in the first of his three papers on the psychology of love Freud in a surprising turn of phrase comments that the imprint of the mother's cervix on the shape of the infant's head is noticeable when the labour is protracted. Here Freud's analogy is of libido that has remained attached to the mother (SE 11). And yet this is what the *chora* is according to Kristeva, a primitive 'before' if you like, something that connects and orients the body to the mother. An undefinable space that is *before* the One and God says Plato – a space yet that 'must needs be in some place and occupy some room' (cited by Kristeva, 1995: 236 n 3). Rose comments that Kristeva writes Plato's *chora* through Freud's statement, 'this rhythmic space without thesis or position, the process where *significance* comes to be, Plato indicates as much when he designates this receptacle nursing, maternal' (in Rose, 1993b: 50). It should be considered though that for Plato, if we substitute the receptacle for the *chora*

(acknowledging the meaning inherent to both words), that the womb, receptacle, *chora*, was an empty vessel waiting only to be filled up with the unborn child. And that in the act of procreation the mother played no part, after all for Plato, she had no soul. Of course, consideration of this point may illustrate why the '*chora*' has proved to be problematic for some feminist readers of Kristeva. To offer the mother a space, an important space, *before* language and the Name of the Father, would seem to fortify her importance in the development of the ego in the infant. But by following Freud and Plato and positioning this space as 'maternal' appears to relegate it once more to some dark hinterland – the unconscious. It might be remembered though that Freud argued that the nursing mother was both active in the act of feeding and passive and that he therefore offers Plato's '*chora*' a significance that Plato does not offer it himself. And more explicitly Kristeva's *semiotic-chora* 'centrally' concerns the mother's body with both the recognition that this is no presymbolic body and correspondingly, that this is a body that is mediator of the symbolic (in Beardsworth, 2004: 44). To write then of the *semiotic-chora*, of a space before, and it might be said, beyond the Symbolic, rather than limiting the maternal, may instead offer the mother a space to *be* a mother. Plato makes the *chora* a 'womb' because in his reasoning it needs a room, but if it is before 'the One and God' then this womb-room has an importance beyond that traditionally – historically – appointed the mother. If in Plato's reasoning, God is the 'crafter of uncreated matter' then how do we understand the mother, bearer of the womb-room and crafter of 'matter' in the shape of a baby? These are questions that neither Freud nor Plato asked, or indeed I imagine even considered. Kristeva with her redefinition of Plato's term seems to be moving towards these types of questions but she limits herself by limiting the concept. This might be because of her adherence to Lacan's 'system' of the real, imaginary and symbolic. In fact the '*thetic*', the '*chora*', and the '*semiotic*', appear to be simply grafted onto this system at times. At other times the insurgency of these terms appears to 'rock' the very foundations on which Lacan and Freud developed their psychoanalysis. Kristeva's reframing of Freud's famous dictum, 'What does a woman want?' to 'What does a mother want?' (in Beardsworth, 2004: 70), is left to languish when one considers the potential of the *chora* because she does not 'push' it far enough. There is 'revolution' in Kristevian psychoanalysis but her adherence to Freud and Lacan's methods (for want of a better word) means she remains the dutiful daughter: although it might be said erring on the side of the *Erinnyes*. Kristeva's

position might be understandable. She is a follower of Freud and Lacan, not necessary a faithful follower, but a follower never the less. She is not 'crafter', in the sense that the *chora* might offer, and that her work *Stabat Mater* (1987) might suggest but a 'crafter' working from the boundaries of a more orthodox psychoanalysis. As a feminist psychoanalyst and academic this might make her position more tenable rather than the *corps-a-corps* of Irigaray or the *écriture féminine* of Hélène Cixous. Both these positions seem to take their authors to some hinterland that is neither (un)conscious or for that matter especially coherent. Kristeva it might be said, more than Klein, and certainly I think more than Cixous or Irigaray attempts to approach the mother, as a mother we could say, but a mother that is always just out of reach. This is both the tantalising aspect of her work and also its limitation. Then again, how does one reach the mother when she is positioned within psychoanalysis, on the periphery, the margin, as spectre, and as pre-Oedipal? It is as if the mother is the space between the fingertips as Michelangelo's depicts it, of God and Adam reaching out to each other – almost there but not quite. Between a man and his God then there is space. It might well be, if we took the revolutionary aspect of the *chora*, that this space is female, is the mother.

Klein

It may seem strange to end with Melanie Klein given the pre-eminence of her object-relations theory in the work cited above but like many people coming to Klein it is difficult to imagine where she might be best placed. While Lacan maybe the self-proclaimed heir to Freud, Klein in contrast argued that nobody had taken Freud further than her – she argued that she took him beyond his climax! (in Stonebridge, 1998: 192-193). In fact she suggests that Freud regressed in his work on anxiety and that his daughter Anna Freud was part of the problem, she 'held him back' (in Stonebridge, 1998: 193). It is not easy to imagine anyone holding Freud back let alone, 'my daughter, the child analyst', as Freud referred to Anna and yet, Klein saw herself as the 'true' Freudian heir. She was both follower of Freud and conquistador of a new field of psychoanalysis, object-relations theory. Klein takes the mother, a neglected and negated object in Freudian psychoanalysis according to her model and places her at centre stage. But Klein's mother doesn't really do anything. She is cut up into bits and pieces by the infant, now good breast, now bad breast and is the body on which the infant's paranoid, sadistic and depressive phantasies are projected and

thereafter the adult's paranoid, sadistic and depressive phantasies or positions are played out. Doane and Hodges will argue that Klein takes the burden of mother-blaming off actual mothers but I am not entirely convinced.

Stonebridge and Phillips call the interest in Klein, mid 1990's on, as stemming from the impetus of feminist theorists and the decision by the publishing house Virago, to publish her work in the late 1980's. Be that as it may, many feminist theorists have steered clear of Klein repelled as Stonebridge and Phillips suggest by the 'uncomfortable proximity between mother-love and matricide' in Klein's work and her unhesitant, incessant heterosexism (Stonebridge and Phillips ed., 1998: 3). Stonebridge and Phillips suggest that Klein has been ignored largely because Lacan's adaptation of Saussure's structural linguistics, which he grafted onto Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* opened up ground breaking possibilities of thought across fields as diverse as science to the humanities and in so doing created a 'large' and sympathetic audience (in Stonebridge and Phillips, 1998: 5). Klein's disturbing view of infant and adult relations was generally ignored as both too difficult and going too far. But, suggests Stonebridge and Phillips, Klein's formulations enable us to see that Lacan's 'linguistic a priori' is both less satisfying and leaves (us) little room to manoeuvre. Klein's infantile development would seem to trouble all paradigms and its negativity, its adherence to what Klein calls the depressive position push us to the very borders of the unacceptable, the unimaginable: the *un* perhaps here being the token of repression as it was for Freud (SE 17).

Juliet Mitchell argues that what Klein did was new, but it is important to realise that the innovation sprang directly from a reading of Freud. Klein's work was primarily with children and she stressed that the treatment of children and adults could use the same psychoanalytic tools. Klein introduced a new psychoanalytic tool into the analytic situation, the 'play technique' and argued, 'Play, like dream-thoughts, can be a manifest expression with a latent unconscious content' (in Mitchell, 1998: 20). Here Klein was following Freud, after all Freud had argued that, '(b)efore there is such a thing as a joke, there is something that we may describe as "play" or as "a jest"' (SE 8: 128). And further, '(d)uring the period in which a child is learning how to handle the vocabulary of his mother-tongue, it gives him obvious pleasure to 'experiment with it in play' (SE 8: 125). Freud did argue that had dream theory or research into

the neuroses not led him to the royal road of the unconscious then a revision of jokes most surely would have. The joke, which is infantile at bottom, grows out of child play and both play with words and with the mother are, little by little, repressed until most play is relegated to the ancient dwelling place of the unconscious to use Freud's expression. Child's play then is the predecessor of the free associations of the traditional analytic situation and Klein realised this. She saw the introduction of toys in her children's sessions as a way to bridge the gap between an external object and the inner world: 'Toys represent the object of phantasy and of object relations' (Mitchell, 1998: 23). But this could be limiting because the 'toy' might represent something 'unconscious' that may well then be *un-representable*. This of course was Klein's purpose, to get to a '*before*'; a '*before*' that is, prior to the division of the unconscious/conscious brought about by repression (Pontalis, 1998: 89). In that way Klein believed she would go back in time – through the child's phantasies as it were – and arrive at the 'birth' of the unconscious (Pontalis, 1998: 89). Winnicott understood this knowledge of the child's unconscious was limited – if not impossible to recognise – so he created, or identified a space that he termed 'transitional' and compatibly the 'transitional object'. He thus blurred the boundaries, as it were, and effectively handed 'play' back to the child, something Klein failed to do.

One of the issues highlighted in Klein's case-studies is that the child has symbolism slammed onto him with complete brutality (Lacan in Evans ed., 1996: 96). Klein speaks for little Dick (the pun is noted) but also, and perhaps tellingly she offers prohibitions. In her analysis of her own children 'Felix/Hans' and 'Fritz/Eric' (Felix and Fritz are the pseudonyms), Klein writes herself as if she were the neighbour next door. Klein as the mother analysing her own children seemed to believe that she 'should' have access, or at least a more intimate knowledge of their unconscious – even acknowledging her role-playing. But as Pontalis makes clear, the unconscious by the very fact that it is unconscious is devilishly hard to understand or for that matter locate.³¹ Pontalis states, 'But any knowledge of the unconscious can only be

³¹ Joan Riviere in a paper written to celebrate the centenary of Freud's birth, 'A Character Trait of Freud's' (1958) offers a tacit understanding of the unconscious that Freud gave during her analysis with him. Freud made an interpretation of something Riviere says and she immediately objects. Freud simply said, 'It is *un-conscious*'. Riviere states she was 'overwhelmed' and repeats, 'I knew nothing about it'. In that instant then states Riviere, 'he had created in me his discovery of the powerful

effectively established if it stands the test of what contradicts it from another place...’ (Pontalis, 1998: 89). Tellingly, Klein ‘stumbles’ as Pontalis notes when ‘Fritz’ expresses his desire for sexual knowledge, but importantly sexual knowledge about his parents. Seemingly embarrassed she replies to his ‘sexual researches’, that ‘every man has only one wife’; when he is big she will be old; the white stuff that Papa makes out of his wiwi, he makes like doing ‘wiwi’ although not so much (Pontalis, 1998: 87). Pontalis calls this, the mother’s prohibition and adds that the further Klein pushed ‘Fritz’ for answers the further he strayed from her prescription of a psychoanalysis. In Klein’s *Contributions to Psychoanalysis* (1921-45) she asks, “What holds the child back?” (Pontalis, 1998: 82). Pontalis argues that in her effort to find the child’s primary unconscious before any intervention, Klein failed to see that she was the intervention, it was ‘she’ then who held the child back. She also failed to take the Master at his word. Freud argued that, ‘After such enlightenment children know something they did not know before but they make no use of the new knowledge that has been presented to them ... They behave like the primitive races who have had Christianity thrust upon them and who continue to worship their idols in secret’ (Freud cited by Pontalis, 1998: 84). In Klein’s analysis of ‘Fritz’, the little boy who gave us the good and bad mother (in Torok, Sylwan and Covello, 1998: 71), while he could be convinced to give up God he would neither let go of the mother as witch or indeed as Freud suggests above, was he prepared to believe ‘her’ stories of enlightenment. Little ‘Fritz’ became increasingly attached to a phrase that he knew to be untrue. To all inquiries he responded with, ‘go to your stomach’ or some variation with stomach as the key word because he believed, although given evidence to the contrary that babies grew in the mother’s stomach, as it were asexually. It might also be argued that given the stomach/womb as a symbol of the mother, that ‘Fritz’ was attempting to hold onto his mother, identify with his mother rather than the neighbour ‘Mrs Klein’. This was a household that allowed no God, no Father Christmas, no Angels or Devils. If the child insisted that they existed the unequivocal ‘No’ was always supplied. And yet just as he held onto his ‘stomach’ (because as Pontalis argues he couldn’t stomach what he was being told) he also held onto the division of

unconscious in our minds that we know nothing of, and that yet is impelling and directing us. I have never forgotten this reminder from him of what unconscious means’ (Riviere in Sutherland ed. 1958: 149). What Riviere reminds us, is that the Freudian ‘un-conscious’ has become a term so overused that it appears to have lost its original meaning.

mother's as witches and queens. The witch according to Klein is merely the negative side of the mother-imago taken up by Fritz/Eric to maintain some kind of order inside the chaotic phantasies of mother with a penis, dead mother, powerful mother and so on. Using Karl Abraham's concept of 'cannibalistic incorporation', Klein argues that the child wishes to cut the/his mother into bits and pieces and swallow her whole.

Mitchell argues that Klein develops a model based on the polar pair love and hate that Klein will argue, the neonate brings into the world. Klein moved away from orthodox psychoanalysis here by dwelling on the conflict between mother and baby rather than the triangular discord adhered to by earlier psychoanalysis. Following Freud, although not adopting a Freudian methodology, Klein states that love is the manifestation of the life drive/*Eros*, and hate, the death drive/*Thanatos*. These two drives are in *eternal* conflict with each other and the infant needs to learn how to deal with these conflicts within the dyad of mother and baby. For Klein, Freud neglected 'his' aggressive instinct and did so because he didn't pay enough attention to the 'phantasy'³²object, the mother. The phantasy mother is not strictly the biological mother but they intercept argues Klein:

My hypothesis is that the infant has an innate unconscious awareness of the existence of the mother. We know that young animals at once turn to the mother and find their food from her. The human animal is not different in that respect, and this instinctual knowledge is the basis for the infant's primal relation to the mother... (Klein cited by Mitchell, 1998: 23).

³² Of note here, while for Freud phantasy can, or does mean imagination – '*Phantasiebildung*' – 'imaginative formation' (SE 5: 491 n 1), for Klein phantasy seems to encompass an 'All' that we are never really made aware of. Thus, phantasy for Klein becomes omnipotent, a weapon states Riviere that cuts both ways (in Rose, 1993: 164). Mitchell points out that the 'ph' spelling is to indicate that the process is unconscious which is important to an understanding of phantasy in Klein (Mitchell, 1998: 22). To note, the 'ph' as opposed to the 'f' spelling of ph/fantasy is also a matter of translation. In German 'fantasy' is spelt with a 'ph.' In the Standard Editions of Freud most often the 'ph' spelling is left intact which refers to something intangible that the 'f' spelling does not seem to convey. Although there is slippage here and both spellings of 'fantasy' are used. Following the English translation of Freud, the Standard Edition, I will most often use the 'ph' spelling of fantasy although if the translation has used the 'f' then I will follow suit. Whenever I refer to Klein's use of 'phantasy' I will use the 'ph' spelling as indicative of the unconscious.

For Mitchell it is finally the development of the ego that interests Klein, in particular how the ego struggles to preserve itself against a relentless death drive. Whereas for Freud the ego precedes the super-ego and has a complex relation to it for Klein the ego takes its shape in relation to internal representations of the mother and the super-ego begins in the earliest relation to the mother not in the resolution of the Oedipus complex as it does for Freud. Klein argued that object-relation's initial starting point emerged from a passage in Freud's *The Ego and the Id* (SE 19 (in fact as Eli Zaretsky shows, Klein believed that had Freud followed up his insight in this paper then he would have become a Kleinian not a Freudian!)): 'the superego is to a large extent due to the sadism projected on to the parents who are thus established in the superego as frightening and persecuting figures. That is, however not just one point, it is *the* point on which my conception of internalised objects has developed' (Freud and Klein quoted by Zaretsky, 1998:38).

Later Klein

The death of her son while mountain climbing led Klein to develop a new idea of the ego, something quite distinct from Freud's. This new ego took mourning as its starting point suggesting that in mourning we identify with lost objects and thus an inner object world is built up. Klein introduced the concept of a 'position' to clarify and conceptualise the specific anxieties and defences integral to this inner world of object relations. There are two positions, the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position. For Klein the whole of life happens in the shift between the two positions. In its earliest phase, the psyche is in the 'paranoid-schizoid position' this position is defined as experiences, which are especially fragmentary and discontinuous where thoughts and feelings happen to the subject but persecutory anxiety predominates. 'The human accomplishment lies in achieving the "depressive position" although persecutory anxiety is never fully supplanted' (Zaretsky, 1998: 39). The mother becomes for the infant an internal object which according to Klein suggests the recognition by the infant that the mother is separate to the infant, not caught in some kind of fusion and importantly constitutes the beginnings of the infant's own subjectivity, a subjectivity that involves mourning, sadness and object loss, which Klein has also called the 'pining' position (Zaretsky, 1998: 39). For Klein at the 'heart of the depressive position is the realisation that security can only be achieved through responsibility' (Zaretsky, 1998: 39). That is, if you hurt an object

on which you depend you need to make reparation. As Klein notes, when the naughty child who has rent a hole in the 'fabric of the world' in Ravel's Opera ('The Magic Word'), whispers 'Mama' everything is restored to order once more (in Klein, 1929: 436-437). The guilt and anxiety that the infant feels in this depressive position is for the damage it has done to the mother in phantasy. Klein is important argues Zaretsky because she argues for a subjective position that is conceived of as being separate to the mother, the phantasy mother, while also being integral to the 'real' mother. Kleinian theory then is understood as mother-centred and perhaps it is although I say this with reservation. The primary relationship the infant has is to the figure of the mother but as part object (good breast/bad breast). The relationship has the quality of being atemporal and the Kleinian 'positions' are supposed to illustrate this. After all, a 'position' happens in a mental space, which intermingles past, present and future and importantly the psychical phenomena, unconscious, conscious and preconscious. Mitchell contends that for Klein the ego is like the contemporary idea of 'self' always and already everywhere and correspondingly nowhere if one takes a postmodernist stance whereas Freud's ego, while never definitive, did not become a psychology of the ego – at least, not by Freud.

A Way Forward

Kristeva's concern regarding narcissism has some similarity to Klein's emphasis on ambivalence. Ambivalence as we know from Freud is the movement between the drives *eros* and *thanatos* but also between love and hate from the infant towards the mother and the father. For Klein this ambivalent fluctuation centred in part, a good (and bad) part, on the breast. But there is something more in Klein's conception of ambivalence because the relationship to the breast is at bottom a relationship to the mother, the infant loves the mother with the good breast and hates the mother with the bad breast (and the representation of these positions is not as simple as I am depicting them) because as Klein sees it, the infant both loves and hates the mother because she saves him/her from the internalised emptiness, an emptiness that Kristeva argues, Lacan saw as taken up by the visible aspect of the '*gaping hole*' of the mirror stage and to which Kristeva attributed primary narcissism. Winnicott might more readily see it as outside the mirror caught up in objects, transferred probably to the 'safety' of transitional phenomena, the transitional object – this then keeps emptiness at bay. For Klein ambivalence occurs in Ferenczi's magical omnipotent stages (which I will

engage with in Chapter Four), but in shorthand are the stages where the infant believes it controls its world *as if by magic* (this is Freud's developing 'Majesty the Ego'). Of course the infant in Klein's paranoid-schizoid position is not at all like the infant in Ferenczi's magical omnipotent stages. Ferenczi's child is developing in a more sequential way and appears to be a happier child for it. Klein's infant caught in the 'vicious circle' as Riviere describes the circularity of ambivalence the child has for its mother, never seems to be 'happy'. This could be that Ferenczi's stages are *magically* omnipotent and he writes them as if the child has some control over them. Klein's position in contrast is one of omnipotence of phantasy, the child never seems to know whether it (or for that matter its mother) will get out alive (Rose, 1993a: 163-164). To return to Kristeva, narcissism is the screen for the emptiness left over in the development of the individual ego, this is the ego separated from the mother using which, ever psychoanalytic 'fable' you like (the mirror, the mother's face as mirror, the paranoid-schizoid position etcetera). Perhaps, then the intensity of the Kleinian ambivalence must be felt more substantially in the covering up, covering over of a part of the child's ego with the mother's own ego – after all isn't this is what primary narcissism is about?

For Klein, love comes from the mother's demand: if 'I' smile and coo engagingly 'thinks' the infant then my mother will love me. Thus the infant in response to *her* (and this could just as easily be *She is* as Horney offers, see above, pages 38-39), pleasure 'seeks out *her* desires and *her* words'. It attempts, argues Rose, 'to fetch the sounds out' of its mother's mouth' (Rose, 1993a: 165). What is unsettling in Klein is we are never sure which mother is at play in the demands of *her* infant. This may seem unremarkable, what matter which mother we could ask, but the very omnipotence of Klein's phantasy mother seems to make the real mother redundant. Pontalis and Jean Laplanche argue that this points to a potential reductionism in Kleinian object-relations theory (in Rose, 1993a: 159). In contrast, Doane and Hodges argue that early Klein does point out to her readers that the presence of a 'real mother is important': 'The presence of the real, loving mother diminishes the dread of the terrifying mother, whose image is introjected into the child's mind' (Doane and Hodges, 1998: 17). But one has the sense, when reading Klein that this mother is an avatar of sorts, and that the phantasy mother takes over *her* three-dimensional capacity. In a very early essay by Klein on 'Weaning', Klein acknowledges the actual

mothering invested in being a mother. Klein suggests that if the mother can she should breastfeed to establish a strong bond between herself and her baby and thus to develop an insight into the baby's personality:

The baby can enjoy his mother's presence in so many ways. He will often have a little play with her breast after feeding, he will take pleasure in her looking at him, smiling at him, playing with him and talking to him long before he understands the meaning of words. He will get to know and to like her voice, and her singing to him may remain a pleasurable and stimulating memory in his unconscious. Soothing him in this way, how often she can avert tension and avoid an unhappy state of mind, and thus put him to sleep instead of letting him fall asleep exhausted with crying! (Klein in Rickman ed. 1936: 49).

For early Klein the subject was created at the moment of weaning. The difficulty here argues Green is that if one believes that weaning is the crucial moment in the constitution of subjectivity then subsequently all separations are founded on this initial loss of the breast (or bottle). Klein does analyse how this loss might be managed in this early paper but her later work attends to the anxieties created because of the loss rather than how the mother might manage or even figure in this loss. Thus Klein finally it seems both undercuts the mother while letting her child analysts cut her up into bits and pieces or perhaps more accurately, 'tear her apart'.

'Black Holes'

Paula Heimann asks in relation to Kleinian theory, 'When exactly does the ego, the differentiation from the amorphous id begin?' (in Rose, 1993a: 171). Rose compares Heimann's enquiry to Stephen Hawking's questions on time and space in his best-selling book, *A Brief History of Time* (1988). Hawking's thesis which is to uncover 'black holes' and to understand the creation of the universe through the Big Bang Theory has him ask, 'What really happens during the very early . . . stages of the universe? . . . Does the universe in fact have a beginning? . . . What were the "boundary conditions" at the beginning of time?' (in Rose, 1993a: 171 and Hawking, 1988: 115, 122). Rose argues that Hawking's theory of the black hole resonates with the very negativity of Klein's 'destructive instinct'. Since for Hawking no-one can know what happens in a black hole because a black hole absorbs everything that enters it (as Rose points out, Hawking amends this to 'Black Holes Ain't So Black' in a later chapter in the same book), and for Klein, 'how can negativity – be thought?'

(Rose, 1993a: 172). The black hole as an allegorical representation of the unconscious is a perfect compliment suggests Rose for Klein's 'theory of negativity': 'too close, it devours you; safely outside, you don't know what's going on' (in Rose, 1993a: 172).

Utilising Sir Roger Penrose's equation, 'God abhors a naked singularity' (in Dawkins ed., 2008: 344 (which Rose mistakenly attributes to Hawking)), 'God' as the 'watchman' here covers up the nakedness of the singularity/ies. Thus you can fall into a black hole, and if you are lucky you might fall out again by falling through a worm-hole but the probability of this is unlikely: unlike Alice, you don't get to step back through the looking glass, you don't get to return. A singularity is thought to be at the centre of a black hole, would defy 'the laws of science', and could be understood comparatively as a 'big bang' at the end of time as opposed to the hypothesis of the 'big bang' at the beginning of time. Time it could be said effectively comes to a standstill. This is what Freud seemed to imply in his 'amoebic equation'. Here the 'discontinuous method of functioning of the system *Pcpt.-Cs.*,' (Perception-Consciousness), which is itself pervious and passes the perceptions received from the cathetic innervations, whose 'feeler like protrusions' (either initiated from the unconscious or from the ego, Freud is not certain (perhaps from the unconscious part of the ego?)), sample the external world in rapid succession, 'on to the unconscious mnemonic systems' (SE 19: 231). Freud considered that this process might lie 'at the bottom of the origin of the concept of time' (SE 19: 231). This raises the earlier question that Rose posed, 'how is the mother implicated in thought?' If she herself is thought to be 'unconscious' or at least relegated to the 'dark continent?' A black hole, like the unconscious, both theoretical propositions I might add, are 'timeless' and can only be known through their effects/affects. Like the unconscious though, the black hole is censored. An arbitrary watchman (God?), who both censors, what enters and also what leaves the 'hole'. Rose aligns Hawking's hypothesis with Klein's, but what Klein lacks I would argue is the censorship/watchman that Hawking argues governs the hypothesis of the black-hole, because in this case, with Hawking's play on the old philosophical treatise, 'Nature abhors a naked singularity' we come closer to Freud.

Rose's argument, that aligns Klein's destructive principle to Hawking's black holes is convincing but I want to push this comparison a little bit further. I want to make of the

black hole a mother – and here I am still in the Rosarian/Kleinian realm – but I also want to make ‘God’ our personal God, the mother as well. Here I step outside the Rosarian/Kleinian black hole. I would argue that this might be where the contradiction, or the contradictory threads of the Freudian tale come apart, or at least find it difficult to stay together, because of Freud’s neglect of the mother. And perhaps it is this that Klein saw and sought to express, albeit in different and not altogether convincing language. Because if ‘God abhors a naked singularity’ and it is this singularity – at the centre of the black hole – the black hole that I want to call the mother (she who covers up – creates? – our own ‘unconscious-ego’, can be rather ‘crushing’) then why can’t the mother as God abhor what she is capable of – the destruction of her infant? Klein does not answer this. She has the infant ‘breaking ruthlessly through into the mother to take out of her everything that is felt there to be good’ (in Winnicott, 1958: 24), but she does not really have the mother respond in kind.

Pushing Hawking’s theory outside its own hypothetical realm for a moment, and instead aligning it to Freud’s Oedipal complex – God as the Father (and God as the Father is an infinitely different proposition), steps in to prevent the suffocation of the infant by the mother. But this is too easy, too simplistic. Might it not rather be, that the infant seduced by the mother, absorbed by her, attempts to free itself by turning away? After all, who wants to be ‘crushed’ by a black hole? The mother, if she is a Go(o)d mother lets this happen. If she is not a Go(o)d mother then the baby never really develops an ego that is wholly differentiated from hers: s/he never really escapes. In Hawking’s terminology, there is no light here at the end of this tunnel – there is no beyond to ‘her’ event horizon. This might be the inherent contradiction. We cannot think outside the need to break-up the mother-baby dyad so we create a third term – Father, God, Law, Language and so on. But these are just supplements to cover up/cover over the (black) hole left because of this separation.³³ Here Kleinian ambivalence, or more appropriately, the depressive position, and Kristevian primary

³³ ‘The trauma of birth’ Rank once confided to a friend, “is really a great vision of the idea of separation governing the universe”...not just the idea of separation from one’s mother or from mental representations of significant others. “And when Freud in his [*Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxieties*] accepted the idea of separation he did not know what he really was accepting because he only thought in terms of individual mother fixation”. ...Difference equals pain’ (Rank quoted by Kramer ed., 1996: 46 n 5).

narcissism as a way to think of ourselves outside this void, this emptiness, are helpful. What Klein perhaps, more explicitly than Kristeva, does is illustrate the anxieties and complexities, the 'repressions' that this 'escape' costs us. This might be why Klein is so unpalatable (to use a good oral metaphor), because just as 'God abhors a naked singularity', "we", a universal "we" abhor the loss – even the acknowledgement of the loss – of our mother: it is not 'she' who is the black hole we might finally discover, it is ourselves.

Hawking argues, why this universe and not another? ('Why this mother and not another?'), and replies by way of the 'anthropic principle', 'If it had been different we would not have been here' (in Rose, 1993a: 173). Thus, 'it is only through fantasy of our being-in-the-world that we can theorize the fact that the world comes to be' (Rose, 1993a: 173). This is what cosmologists call the 'Goldilocks Problem': 'Why is the universe so favourable to life?' (in Dawkins, 2008: 362). In this case, to extend my own analogy, the universe could be said to be the Mother giving birth to other universes in black holes apparently, and so it goes on (and I hesitate to remark that here I reiterate Freud's proposition that a 'hole is a hole'). But as Rose makes explicit arguing through Klein, 'fantasies are always in on the ... act' (Rose, 1993a: 174). Paradoxically this act doesn't really have a beginning, or for that matter does it have an end – this is the principle (if we can call it that) of 'phantasy'. But it is the idea of this that pushes us off the proverbial edge and, which makes Klein hard to swallow (again, the oral metaphor). Kant was right, 'time and space are 'necessary forms of thought'' (SE 18: 28), but time only has meaning "in a sensible world" and "infinite" space is 'that mere vague empty nothing in which nevertheless all things are' (Plato in Ritchie, 1902: 137-141). Thus we can 'think the mother' but only if the thinking of her is within the limits prescribed by positioning her within the boundaries described by these limits: spectre, haunting, phantom, aside, periphery, abyss, hole. Maybe this is the 'crux' of Klein, a kind of enantiomorphism: tweedledum and tweedledee, mirrored but trying to go in opposite directions and always arriving at the same 'space/hole'. The enantiomorphic being an entirely appropriate metaphor given that Freud used the example of a broken crystal, cracked but always already predetermined to describe the psyche of a mental patient: the 'insane' patient has 'turned away from external reality, but for that very reason they know more about internal, psychical reality and can reveal a number of things to us that would

otherwise be inaccessible to us' (SE 22: 59). The insane patient like Alice then, has journeyed through the 'hole'/unconscious, returning with information on the "unknown" ('God's secret'). The only problem being that in Kleinian reasoning, in her desire to get to the *before* of the unconscious as I argued above, she creates more boundaries than she collapses. Her 'black hole' is so effectively shored up that it appears to consume everything in its path (which is after all what a 'good' black hole will do). Thus we have no way of by-passing the censor, through which we might otherwise set ourselves free.

The extension of Hawking's 'cosmic censorship' of the hypothesis of the black hole is as extensive as space and time itself. That the singularity obliterates both of these raises so many, and (im)probable ways of looking at Hawking's hypothesis, as would appear to be endless (I restrict myself from saying infinite). In fact, Dawkins states in response to the unceasing inquiry of cosmologists (and sounding much like Freud), 'The power of the dream is undeniable' (Dawkins, 2008: 363). A black hole is a point in space where space and time are 'infinitely' compressed, where a complex function is undefined but also fixed. This should reassure us that we do in fact have boundaries – that we are effectively boxed in (although this is in opposition to Hawking's new proposal states Rose that there is 'no boundaries' (Rose, 1993a: 175)). This argument revolves because the box is a symbol according to Freud both of the heart and of the womb ('The box was of course the womb' (SE 10: 70 n 1)). The 'point' then of this singularity (perhaps just its etymology), if we are to consider Rose's engagement with Hawking's hypothesis, is the mother, here enacted in a return, because according to Freud, love and hunger meet at the mother's breast. This is what Klein neglects. In her proliferation of good and bad breasts she loses the mother in a black hole of her own making. But if we look at the crossroad of argument between Hawking and Rose, we find that Freud might be right after all – although this in itself is not as simple as it sounds. God is indeed the Father here, because 'He', in whatever guise 'He' might be, breaks up the singularity of mother and baby. Leaving the singularity of a black hole aside for the moment, the question might be why does God abhor a naked singularity in the first place? If in fact what is contentious about a 'naked singularity' is that here, where time and space cease to exist, God might be found! What matter that *mater* collapses in on itself? What does God think 'He' is missing out on? Or to put it slightly differently, why is God the

Father frightened of being left out in the dark? And correspondingly, why does Freud the Father 'box' the mother in, the cupboard, the womb, the unconscious, when faced with the 'apocalyptic' force of the mother? I asked in Chapter One why Freud turned away from the mother when she seemed so close. Chapter Three will attempt to answer this, asking why it is she gets pushed to the periphery (effectively boxed in) just when she makes an appearance, a proper appearance that is, in Freudian psychoanalysis. Why does Freud assign the mother a position in the unconscious, the black hole it might be said of the psyche?

While the preceding chapter engaged with feminist understandings, explorations and even new inroads into realising the mother in Freudian psychoanalysis it also illustrated that femininity is continually effaced and even engulfed by maternity. And yet correspondingly this maternity is somehow lost in a narcissistic *emptiness* according to Kristeva. Or it becomes the story of mothers and daughters as it does for Irigaray. Gallop asks, 'Is it that Freud/man/theory can assimilate the otherness of woman into Mother (the complement to man's primary narcissism) thanks to a structural weakness in the distinction between a girl and her mother?' (Gallop, 1982: 114). Certainly Freud advocated for a weaker Oedipal complex and correspondingly a weaker superego in women. Which would suggest as feminist psychoanalysts are at pains to point out that 'woman' has a 'primary' relationship to the mother because the distinction between the 'stages' pre-Oedipal and Oedipal are less severe than they are for the little boy. Sprengnether calls the pre-Oedipal/Oedipal split at the heart of object-relations theory a hierarchy that feminists psychoanalysts engaged in object-relations theory fail to problematise (Sprengnether, 2000: 144). And further, 'A beneficial conjunction between feminism and psychoanalysis must take account of the fact (as Lacanianism and post-structuralism fail to do) that a woman's body is the carnal origin of every human subject without desubjectifying the mother herself (as object-relations theory tends to do) (Sprengnether, 1990: 9).

The following chapter looks to Freud, his letters, his theory, and also biography on Freud to try and locate the mother in his writing. And to ask why, if the mother is not there – which we can reasonably assume she is not – why is she not? Why did Freud privilege the father/son relationship in the Oedipal complex but regard religion as infantile? And yet what is the story of God and his son if not Oedipal? The mother in

this biblical story effectively disappears through an act of sexual procreation that *is not*. The mother-son story is privileged here in much the same way that Freud will privilege it by arguing that it is the most perfect and conflict free of all relationships. The Father, the son and the Holy Ghost are the story of three men. There are no mothers (t)here. As Sprengnether rightly points out, the mother is ‘spectre,’ an aside, a footnote even. And yet this is not quite right either because Freud argued that the mother was first love-object; that the *fort/da* is explicitly about the mother and a need to manage her loss; the uncanny and the unplumbable navel all concerned with an unknown – a lost mother – a mother of depths. And there, in *The Theme of the Three Caskets* (SE 12) Freud names the mothers, as Goddesses, of Fate – man’s fate it might be noted. But in this short essay Freud is at pains to illustrate that the fairest of the Fates is not only Death, but the Goddess of Love. And he concludes this brief article by stressing the mothers that men love, ‘the mother herself, the beloved...and finally the Mother Earth who receives him once more’ (SE 12: 301). It is to Freud’s mother, or the mother in Freud – and one questions how differentiated these mothers are for Freud, and for us all – that we go to next.

Chapter Three

Freud

‘Psychoanalysis is like a woman who wants to be seduced but knows she will be underrated unless she offers resistance’ (Freud, 1938).³⁴

The following chapter looks at Freud’s letters and his theories to understand where the mother might be in his work. We know the mother is locatable, at times directly, more often than not, indirectly in Freud’s writing. What is difficult in Freudian ‘speculation’³⁵ is where the mother is glaringly obvious and yet Freud will by-pass her to keep his Oedipal theory intact. As other authors have shown this can lead to an argument that may sound unconvincing. Of course Freud’s natural penmanship will keep us engaged and his ability to write the Oedipal complex as a ‘bulwark... Against the black tide of mud’ (Jung, 1963: 147-148) becomes its own dogma. This was said to Jung in 1910, three years before they parted company because of Jung’s inability to accept Freud’s sexual theory. Jung recalls this incident in his memoirs (1963). But Jung’s recounting of it is vivid and conveys his astonishment at Freud’s emotional tone. Here Freud guards his unpalatable ‘child’ with the ‘tone of a father’ says Jung against the ‘black tide of mud’ (Jung, 1963: 147-148).³⁶ An interesting use of

³⁴ In a letter to Stefan Zweig, in E. Freud, *Letters of Sigmund Freud* (1960).

³⁵ Freud argued in ‘On Narcissism’ that the difference between a speculative theory and their own, based on empirical evidence, is that the speculative theory wants ‘neat and tidy foundations.’ Whereas psychoanalysis is content to do with ‘nebulously evanescent, scarcely conceivable basic ideas, hoping to grasp them more clearly as they develop, and willing if need be to exchange them for others’ (Freud in Phillips ed., 2006: 361-362). I am not comparing psychoanalysis to a ‘speculative theory’ although I would say, and in line with Freud’s own analysis here, that the mother is quite often ‘speculative’ for Freud. For all the horror her Medusa-like genitals provoke she is packed away ‘tidily’ for Freud particularly in his analysis of the son-mother relationship as being ‘perfect’ and conflict free. Abstract thought, such as shown in his metapsychological texts was different according to Freud, from philosophical speculation (in Jones, 1957: 32).

³⁶ In fact Jung continues his ‘speculation’ on Freud’s ‘sexual theory’ stating that the neurotic (which is one of the charges Jung leveled against Freud in his ‘final’ letter (the letter that caused the break between Freud and Jung, 18 December, 1912 in McGuire, 1974: 534-535)), which he admitted following Freud, we all were to a degree, found it difficult to ‘climb up out of the mud of the commonplace’ (in Jung, 1963: 161). Jung continues comparing the mud that the ‘neurotic’ ‘wallows in’ as the earlier repressed. This can only mean the mother as the earlier repressed (in the/as the unconscious) is solely placed in the realm, whether fantasy or real, of the mother.

terminology given that the word ‘mud’ and the word ‘mother’ have the same meaning etymologically and therefore the same connection verbally as I argued in Chapter Two. By itself, this argument would be rather weak in its suggestion that ‘unconsciously’ Freud privileges the Father over the Mother. As we will see in the following chapter, this is not always unconscious at all. Freud in his own analogy regarding paths, roads and journeys took the ‘royal’ road of dreaming to find the ‘unconscious activities of the mind’ (SE 5: 608). This is consciously taken argues Jonte-Pace, because the royal roads in ancient times were direct routes free from dangers and obstacles (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 24-25). The suggestion being that only a ‘fool’ would take the uncharted road/path. Jonte-Pace states that the tension inherent in Freud’s depiction of a ‘Christian’ royal road travelled by a ‘godless Jew’ is extended in the competing/complimentary metaphor of the ‘narrow defile’ – the path – through which ‘we’ might emerge on-route to our destination. Freud will tell Fliess that the structure of the dream book is that of a ‘fantasised journey through the wilderness’ – a pilgrimage (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 24). Metaphorically though this journey that leads us away from the royal road highlights Freud’s own argument that landscapes and pathways are representative of the female body – a female body that he later depicts as unknown and a riddle.

In his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (SE 15) Freud shows that pubic hair ‘is depicted in dreams as woods and bushes’, mindful of the fact that Freud had also argued that the pubic hair surrounding the mother’s genitals is a ‘Medusa’s head’ one that we turn away from in fear and horror (SE 18). Stanley Hyman argues that ‘(a)ll of these dark woods, narrow defiles, high grounds, and deep penetrations are unconscious sexual imagery and we are exploring a woman’s body – that of Freud’s mother’ (Hyman cited by Jonte-Pace, 2001: 24 n 3). While I am hesitant about retrospectively attributing unconscious motives to Freud regarding his theories, in particular the Oedipal theory – Freud’s ‘bulwark’, Hyman’s analysis is compelling in light of Freud’s own engagement. And as we will see, Freud felt no such compunction when addressing Leonardo da Vinci’s ‘Oedipal’ relationship to his mother. And if these types of speculations are arrived at because of unconscious memories of a time *before* the Oedipus complex – mindful of Green’s statement that a

Thus Jung explicitly, although without further reference compares the mother (the repressed/unconscious) to ‘mud’.

baby is born into an Oedipalised world – then it is psychoanalysis's endeavour to uncover them. Lyotard makes this explicit, questioning, what he terms, Freud's 'deferral' of the mother. Lyotard argues that a 'baby must see its **MOTHER**'s face as a landscape' (Lyotard, 1991:189 (his emphasis)). But not because the baby feels with its mouth, its face and hands, or even because it 'sees' the mother, but because it is the 'first act in the 'deferred action' that Freud tried to elaborate. But he was too much of a psychologist. This mother is a mother who is a timbre 'before' it sounds, who is there 'before' the coordinates of sound, before destiny' (Lyotard, 1991: 189). I have addressed this 'before', in Chapters One and Two. Freud said in *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (SE 23) that the child brings to the world, *before* any experiences an "archaic heritage" (167 and 240-241). But it could be said that this 'before' becomes tricky for Freud if we consider that Freud's conceptualisation of anxiety and even the unconscious betray a certain amount of mutability, in light of the fact that he wanted his sexual theory to be a 'bulwark'.

This chapter will offer an engagement with Freud, interacting between his personal correspondence and his theory. The Oedipus complex will be highlighted because within it and because of it, Freud's infantile sexual theory as opposed to his seduction theory reigned supreme. Briefly, Freud initially believed that children were seduced (sexually abused) by their parents or close (male) relatives and he included his own father as one of these 'perverts' (Masson, 1985: 264 – the important letter of 21st September, 1897). James Strachey the editor and primary translator of the Standard Edition of Freud in English argues that the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (hereafter referred to as 'The Project') haunts all of Freud's work (SE 1: 290). The 'trauma' theory or as it is more often referred to as the 'seduction' theory also worries, perhaps haunts if we are to keep to this analogy, his theory of infantile sexual phantasy. After all, trauma in Greek means 'wound' but it also has a PIE³⁷ root meaning to rub, or to turn. Freud constantly referred to the gaps, holes, voids, 'wounds' we might say, in his theory, which he argued needed filling in badly (SE 1: 195). He also never denied that children were not abused but that it was not as common as he first thought: 'You must not suppose, however, that sexual abuse of a child by its nearest male relatives belongs entirely to the realm of phantasy. Most

³⁷ Proto-Indo-European (PIE). Descendent/remnant languages represented in the Romance languages of which English, German, Greek and Latin belong.

analysts will have treated cases in which such events were real and could be unimpeachably established' (SE 16: 370).

Much has been written about Freud's 'abandonment' of the seduction theory. Freud himself said it was 'untenable' and a 'mistaken idea' (SE 14: 17). But also, he felt a 'helpless bewilderment' and the 'firm ground of reality was gone' (SE 14: 17). This becomes poignant if one considers that Freud saw his *neurotica* (the seduction theory) as offering him the 'expectation of eternal fame' and 'wealth', which was principally about supporting his children as the dream '*My son the Myops*' explains (SE 4). "Rebecca, take off your gown; you are no longer a bride" (Masson, 1985: 266), a particular Jewish joke, suggests Masson, where Rebecca has forsaken her wedding vows before the wedding. Masson in apparent agreement with Anna Freud also understands Freud's use of this joke as personalising how Freud conceived of this loss: 'Freud, with his theory of the neuroses, had believed himself privileged and happy as a bride. Those days were now over and he had to return to his earlier ordinary status; he had made no discovery' (in Masson, 1985: 267 n 3). Further Anna Freud argues, 'keeping up the seduction theory would mean to abandon the Oedipus Complex, and with it the whole importance of phantasy life, conscious or unconscious phantasy. In fact, I think there would have been no psychoanalysis afterwards' (Brunner, 1995: 36). Sprengnether argues that in Freud's abandonment of the seduction theory he relegated the importance of the mother as the first seducer, as can be seen in the Little Hans case-study below, and ignored the 'key that would have opened the 'doors to The Mothers' [an allusion to Goethe's *Faust*]', something he condemns Breuer for doing no less (Sprengnether, 1990: 39 n 1). But by Freud's assignment of 'the mother' to a kind of pre-Oedipal never-land, as Laplanche and Pontalis will argue 'fantasy' operates as a kind of 'regressive tendency towards the origin' (Laplanche and Pontalis: 1986: 15).

Freud set up a series of theoretical alternatives subject-object, constitution-event, internal-external, imaginary-real, where he stressed the 'first terms of these pairs of opposites' state Laplanche and Pontalis (1986: 14-15). But as Freud has shown in *Das Unheimliche* (SE 17) the linguistic meaning of one word tends to meld into its opposite, thus what was unfamiliar (uncanny/unhomely) becomes familiar (canny/homely). This can be seen in Freud's positioning of the Oedipus complex as a

‘bulwark’ which is constantly undermined by the pre-Oedipal (if we understand the pre-Oedipal as a place *before* language and the rules/laws associated with the Oedipal theory). Freud’s sets of opposites ooze into each other so that where Freud is determined to uphold one against the other, the proverbial banana skin makes an appearance and Freud, or at least his Oedipal theory and its component parts, end up slipping and sliding all over the place.

This chapter then will highlight the ‘slipping and sliding’ including the areas of castration anxiety, repression and the infantile sexual theory (Oedipus complex) because these appear to be the places where the mother is most prominent and where Freud repeatedly turns away. Given that these areas are the ‘cornerstones of psychoanalysis’, his turning away raises several questions, not least, why he turns away? In Chapter Two this turning away was offered as a response to the child’s sighting of the mother’s genitals. Here Freud emphasised the little boy’s horror when seeing the ‘wound’ left by castration – obviously not a literal castration but the child’s psyche does not understand this argues Freud. Before this, as part of Freud’s cloacal theory all children imagine the mother has a penis. It is only with the resolution of the Oedipus complex and the advent of puberty and the return of the sexual instinct – in any case a return in content of the manifest desire for the first love object, the mother – that a fuller understanding of the vagina as an ‘asylum’ for the penis is uncovered.

Nachträglichkeit: return to the ‘before’

Lyotard’s use of the term ‘deferred action’ which is most often left untranslated, *Nachträglichkeit* (Laplanche calls *Nachträglichkeit* part of Freud’s ‘paraconceptual’ apparatus (Laplanche, 1976: 25 n 1), confirms an expression of a ‘before’ in Freud’s work. Laplanche and Pontalis argue that *Nachträglichkeit* which they translate as ‘afterwardness’ would seem to undermine time itself. Controversially then, Freud after consideration of *Nachträglichkeit* – first mentioned in ‘The Project’ in relation to the notion of defence and the seduction theory, preposes something he will call, ‘primal phantasies’. Laplanche and Pontalis suggest that Freud’s ‘primal phantasies’ made up as they are from the primal scene (parental coitus), castration anxiety, seduction and ‘others’ as Freud puts it, were a counter argument to what Freud saw as limiting in Jung’s similar concept of ‘retrospective phantasies’. The “primal phantasy” ‘transcends the individual lived experiences and his imaginings’ and is a

foundation on which the primal scene, castration, seduction etcetera, emerge (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973: 114). Sounding rather Lamarckian, and Freud was not adverse to Lamarck's idea of inherited tendencies being passed down generationally (now called 'soft inheritance'), *Nachträglichkeit* was neglected by subsequent psychoanalysts (excluding Lacan) as perhaps too difficult to 'reify' / 'rectify'. That being said, something without linear time that arises, if you will, from a 'substrate' suggests as Lyotard argues, a *before* that is intimately concerned with the mother; a mother before time itself it seems. Freud's favoured example for the expression of *Nachträglichkeit* was the story of the young man 'who was a lover of feminine beauty and reminisces about the good-looking wet-nurse who suckled him when he was a baby. 'I'm only sorry that I didn't make better use of my opportunity', he says (SE 4: 204).

It might be remembered, that Freud said of the relationship to the mother that it was 'so grey with age and shadowy and almost impossible to revivify – that it was as if it had succumbed to an especially inexorable repression' (SE 21: 226). Simply put then, the mother, and our relationship to her, is too difficult to understand and belongs somewhere in the 'dark continent' – a term Freud applied to both the unconscious and female sexuality. But there is more to this, because in the 'The Project' Freud will say 'If a trauma (an experience of pain) occurs for the first time when there is already an ego in existence—the very first traumas of all escape the ego entirely—there is a release of unpleasure; but the ego is simultaneously at work creating lateral cathexes' (in A. Freud, Bonaparte, Kris ed., 1954: 416). Thus the 'deferred action' surfacing – and this is the right word if one thinks of Freud's depiction of the ego as first and foremost a bodily-ego; 'it is not merely a surface entity, but it is itself the projection of a surface' (SE 19: 26 and Freud, 1989: 636-637) – as it does from a psychical substrate, is without coherent time or for that matter, it seems, an especially coherent ego.

A pre-ego

I want to stay with this 'ego' that *is not* an ego but a pre-ego according to Loewald. This ego is integral to Freud's understanding of the 'oceanic', of revenants/ghosts. Freud comments throughout the *Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4-5) that he is 'haunted' surrounded by 'revenants'. He argues that we call upon revenants as a

means to bring back what we have lost, friends and enemies, even his own children. Named after deceased friends, dead heroes or figures from mythology, Freud argues that '(t)heir names made the children into revenants' (SE 5: 485-486), and reasons that children are 'our only path to immortality' and are made revenant regardless of their names (SE 5: 485-486). The word 'revenant' is interesting. When discussing his mother, in particular his mother naked or in a state of undress Freud resorts to Latin as in *matrem* and *nudam*. When Freud talks of ghosts he uses the Latin term *revenant*, which means 'returning'. Thus when faced with something that for Freud is too close, he turns away, resorting to Latin, the language of Rome and not his mother-tongue. Gilman will argue that when Freud discusses seeing his mother, *nudam* on the train journey from Leipzig to Vienna he expresses anxiety but it is an anxiety that reveals the 'innate difference between the self and the Other' (Gilman, 1993: 126). Thus the 'marginal Jewish self' is displaced onto the body of the Other, his mother, who in this instance at least becomes the container for his well known travel anxiety. But as Gilman points out Freud follows the comments on *matrem nudam* with the death wishes he held against his eleven-month younger baby brother. Thus the displacement of his anxiety onto his mother's naked body is compounded by the guilt he feels around the realisation of his wish, his brother died. The time-line is wrong here though. Operating on something of a 'deferred action' (*Nachträglichkeit*) himself, Freud shaves two years off his age, he is four when he makes the train journey with *matrem nudam*, not two or two and a half as he writes in the letter to Fliess (Bonaparte, A. Freud, Kris ed., 1954: 219). Here then, we could say, is a rudimentary Oedipal Complex 'before' it is named. But importantly, the jealousy is not directed towards the father, or as it is understood an unfaithful mother but to a now dead brother. Thus *matrem nudam* is interweaved with the dead body of his brother Julius, a *revenant* we could say.

Freud writes in *Moses and Monotheism* (SE 23) that 'the periods between the ages of two and four seem to be the most important' (74), and further that the experiences in this period are usually forgotten, the remaining 'mnemic' residues becoming 'screen memories'. These screen memories have, as a rule, 'injured' the budding/pre-ego ("narcissistic mortifications"), and are predominantly, argues Freud, of a 'sexual-aggressive nature' (young children making no 'sharp distinction between sexual and aggressive acts, as they do later' (SE 23: 74)). The "traumas" suggests Freud 'are

either experiences on the subject's own body or sense perceptions, mostly of something seen and heard—that is, experiences or impressions' coming back to memory only through the process of analysis (because of subsequent traumas (SE 23: 74)). Perhaps evocatively, Freud argues that the onset of infantile amnesia, coinciding with the onset of this early period of sexuality, could be thought of 'as a vestige—a 'survival'—of primeval times like certain portions of our bodily anatomy' (SE 23: 75). Thus, just as wisdom teeth (a perfectly 'oral' symbol), the appendix and even muscles behind the ear are vestigial so too, argues Freud is the traumas of early childhood (and it might be remembered that Freud suggested that anxiety itself was an "archaic heritage"). The aggressive wish on the one hand, the death of the 'usurper', and on the other hand, of an awakening sexuality, seem to be combined in Freud's early 'screen memories' although it might be said, (mis)recognised by Freud, as if 'through a glass, darkly' (1 Corinthians 13:12): a mis-recognition, and obscuration that Freud not only frequents upon the mother/*his mother*, but which he assigns as vestigial, as a 'before'.

Matrem nudem, anxiety and the journey

In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (SE 7) in Freud's discussion on childhood trauma and the subsequent "infantile amnesia" Freud remarks that it is surprising how often young boys show an inordinate amount of interest in the workings of trains. Little Hans thinks that the steam from trains has something to do with the trains penis and Freud as a young child thought the steam came up from Hell, a Hell made real to him by his old Catholic nursemaid. Freud states that when the train left Freiberg, the place of 'happy childhood memories' for Leipzig, and stopped in Breslau, the gas jets aflame made him think of 'souls burning in hell' (Breger, 2000: 16. Jones, 1953: 14. Masson, 1985: 285).

Freud suggests that journeys, in particular train journeys, are often associated with anxiety and this can be seen in the repression of the sexual element associated with the movement of the train. The repressed aspect of the 'rocking and rolling' quite often turns into its opposite, argues Freud, so that an adult will respond to the 'rocking' with nausea, exhaustion or anxiety. This same person will 'protect themselves against a repetition of the painful experience by a dread of railway-travel' (Freud, 1989: 276). Freud is saying then, that a child with a strong sexual disposition,

who enjoys the 'passive movement' of the 'rocking' and 'swinging' of the railway carriages, will later, because of repression 'turn away' from what was originally felt as pleasurable. Of course, not all children with a fascination for trains will follow this particular path, but it might be said, that the young Freud, viewing a naked mother and carrying the guilt of a brother's death, developed a well-known train neurosis and therefore may have been such a child. For Gilman Freud's train anxiety is articulated in the face of his own difference – the circumcised/castrated Jew, which he displaced onto his mother or onto 'the "castrated" body of the woman' (Gilman, 1993: 126). For Jones, Freud's train anxiety is also connected with his mother, but Jones saw it as 'connected with the fear of losing his home' and therefore 'ultimately his mother's breast' (Jones, 1953: 14). As I argued above, Freud said that the most significant traumas were those 'laid down' in the unconscious in the first three years of childhood and Freud was three when his family left Freiberg.

Freud's 'journeys'

Robert Kramer argues that for Fliess's benefit Freud 'maps' out the itinerary for the 'conquistador's descent into Virgil's Infernal Regions, (a reference to Freud's epitaph for *The Interpretation of Dreams* – 'If I cannot bend the Higher Powers, I will move the Infernal Regions') revealing that "the whole" was far more important than the parts' (Kramer ed., 1993: 39). Thus Kramer concludes, '*The Interpretation of Dreams* is at once a maternal return and an open refusal of the whole' (Kramer ed., 1993: 39). Freud will instead inscribe his own Oedipal journey here of another road and an unheroic father – his unheroic father. When faced with an anti-Semite who knocks his new fur cap onto the road with the taunt 'Jew, get off the pavement!' Freud's father responds to his young sons question, 'And what did you do?' with the answer, 'I went into the street and picked up the cap' (SE 4: 197). In a move reminiscent of the 'family romance' Freud turns to Hannibal, the Jewish General of antiquity, identifying instead with his noble deeds. He replaces the weak father with a more worthy one. In contrast Martin Freud in his memoirs offers a story of Freud who defending his sons Martin and Oliver marched through a crowd 'swinging his stick' and hurling abuse at them. Freud will call this the 'Thumsee' incident in a letter to Fliess (although Martin Freud said, 'there is no evidence that father was affected in the least. He never recalled the incident at home, and I am not aware that he ever mentioned it in any of his letters to our family or friends' (M. Freud, 1957: 71).

Martin remembers this as the only time his father spoke in an angry tone to him, telling him to stay in the boat while he ‘charged the hostile crowd’. And the crowd, frightened by the man running at them dispersed and let him through. For Martin Freud, this incident made a deep impression on him and 55 years on in his memoirs, he can still recall the ‘racial hatred’ expressed on the faces of the ‘mob’. For him, they were ‘fiendishly ugly’. For Freud, the memory of his father and the gentile still expresses its power in ‘all these emotions and dreams’ he says (SE 4:197).³⁸

Freud declaration that ‘All paths lead to Rome’ is a significant statement when one considers his short essay *A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis* (SE 22). When Freud stood on the Acropolis he felt that he had surpassed his father and therefore he had done something forbidden (SE 22: 247). His memory of his father is tied to/bound with his own longing to see the Eternal City, to walk in the footsteps of Hannibal. This memory is interweaved with his boyhood dream of journeying to Rome in light of his father’s condemnation of him – ignoring propriety he urinates in front of his parents when he is seven – ‘The boy will come to nothing’ his father says (SE 4: 216). Thus, Rome becomes the culmination of Freud’s sense of achievement. Freud says that his wish to go to Rome was, on the one hand, an acknowledgement of the ‘tenacity of Jewry’ against the powerful organization of the ‘Catholic church’. On

³⁸ In Martin Freud’s memories, one memory in particular stands out. The flooding that occurred in Aussee, the place of their summer holidays. On this occasion the flooding caused bridges and roads, houses and shops to be washed away. As the larder emptied Freud put on a knapsack and decided to brave the elements and see whether he could find a village not affected by flooding. To the Freud children it was decided their father was ‘the most efficient, the wisest and most knowledgeable hero in the world’ (M. Freud, 1957: 62). Freud returned with the knapsack full to ‘bursting-point’ and while Martin Freud could not recall the contents he did remember clearly ‘that one important item was an enormous salami’ (M. Freud, 1957: 62). Not only Martin though, his sister Mathilde who also recalls the day ‘agrees about the big sausage’ (M. Freud, 1957: 63). She could not remember any other details but that her father returned with a ‘big sausage’. ‘Lord Penis’ might be right then, although offered in a different context (to Fliess in relation to Witch’s and a consideration of their association to the Hysteric’s psychoses/neuroses, in Masson, 1985: 227) because as ‘the Hero’ Freud in his ‘caul covered cap’ (see pg 92 of this chapter) pushed through the weather related tangle and saved the day. At what unconscious level does an understanding of ‘uncastrated’ become whole? And how could, ‘woman’ as ‘hole’, i.e., castrated ever think to acquire this position? Again, Geller’s and Gilman’s arguments that Freud displaced the feminine application of the male Jew onto the body of women, or more particularly the mother, may have some resonance here.

the other hand, ‘the wish to go to Rome had become in my dream-life a cloak and a symbol for a number of other passionate wishes’ (SE 4: 196-197). Freud’s use of ‘a cloak and a symbol’ here are a reference to the ‘weak spot’ in a dream which Freud likened to something that might be undone like the embroidered mark on Siegfried’s cloak where Kriemhild embroidered a small cross so that Hagen could stab him there (SE 5: 515 n 2).

Which/Witch Way³⁹

It is pertinent to point out that with all these paths, roads and journeys Freud neglects to tell us which way we – or he – should turn. He tells Fliess he is planning the dream book on an imaginary journey - through the *annals* of the mother’s body as it were – and when ‘we’ come out into the open, ‘the prospect and the question: “Which way do you want to go?”’ (Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris, 1954: 290). A significant question and one that Freud himself alludes to in his citing of Stekel’s⁴⁰ analysis of the ‘right’ or ‘wrong/left’ way: *Right* and *left*, according to Stekel, offer in an ethical sense the kind of path or journey we undertake: ‘The right-hand path always means the path of righteousness and the left one that of crime. Thus ‘left’ may represent homosexuality, incest or perversion, and ‘right’ may represent marriage, intercourse with a prostitute and so on, always looked at from the individual’s moral standpoint (SE 5: 357-358). Not surprisingly a lean towards right means the path of righteousness, towards left, to something forbidden, wrong, a path of crime (SE 5: 357). Freud tellingly cites the biblical story of Moses here, who using his ‘left’ hand in which, he held a rod (that could turn into a snake), struck water from a rock for the thirsting Israelites (SE 5: 380). But this forbidden action, like the eating of the apple

³⁹ This is reminiscent of the childhood board games, ‘Hey, Hey, Witch Way’ and ‘Which Witch’ both of which operated on a journey or a path, to a house, or through a house (the Witch in the womb we might say). We will meet this/se Witch(s) shortly, in Freud’s ‘Witch metapsychology’. And these games offer an entirely appropriate comparison between Freud’s Witch metapsychology and the ‘Witch’ in *Faust* who Freud calls on to help as Mephistopheles tells Faust after addressing the ‘Witch’: ‘Note which way, with what or which/One deals with a witch’ (Part One, Scene eight (see reference below)).

⁴⁰ Freud suggests that Stekel offers a few ‘good’ ideas (SE 5: 357 and SE 14: 19) and that while he did some creditable work initially “afterwards went totally astray”. In a letter to Jung he states that when he thinks of Stekel ‘the old litany comes to mind: “Me piget, pudet, poenitet, taedet, atque miseret” (“I feel disgust, shame, regret, weariness, and pity”) (in McGuire, 1974: 458).

at the bidding of another snake had repercussions for Moses. Moses was allowed to *see* the Promised Land but he was not allowed to enter it (SE 5: 380-381). Freud said that the story of Moses tormented him like an 'unlaid ghost' (SE 23: 103). Similarly, in his case-study of Little Hans Freud argues that in an analysis 'a thing which has not been understood inevitably reappears; like an unlaid ghost, it cannot rest until the mystery has been solved and the spell broken' (SE 10: 122). What is it that Freud does not understand? He will argue that female sexuality is the 'dark continent' and that castration and circumcision are possibly the deepest motives for anti-Semitism and yet he is spell-bound; by what? What is the 'thing' that Freud misunderstands but will reappear like an 'unlaid ghost?' The collusion of Moses and Eve (the primordial mother Sprengnether calls her) is deliberate because they point to a connection between woman/mother and Jewish male. As we saw in Chapter Two Sprengnether argues that the mother haunts Freud, although it is not a haunting that Freud will acknowledge or for that matter *see*. But there are elements of the Jewish male/mother/ghost nexus throughout Freud's writing, creating what Jonte-Pace will call a 'counter-thesis'. As I have argued, I am unsure of the term 'counterthesis' that Jonte-Pace uses. It seems such a clumsy term for 'the hesitant non-Oedipal speculations in which Freud analyses death and the fantasy of immortality in association with the mother' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 2).

Ghosts, Ancestors, 'archaic heritages'

These points of intersection, navels as it were, suggest something so much more visceral, bloody even. Loewald argues for a distinction between these ghosts and ancestors, which accompany us throughout our lives but importantly how they accompany us argues Loewald depends on what type of mother, or mothering we have had. If they attend us as ghosts states Loewald then they 'haunt the present generation with their shadow life' (Loewald in Mitchell, 1998: 850). Rather vampirish, these ghosts of the unconscious feed on the 'patients' defences and symptoms, they quite shockingly as Loewald writes it, 'taste blood' (Loewald in Mitchell, 1998: 850). In analysis these ghosts are laid to rest states Loewald and in being so are transformed into ancestors who serve in the continuity between past and present life, between fantasy and reality, between object and subject. If we accept this division between ghosts and ancestors, which itself relies on a dualism, something Loewald takes Freud to task for, then a complication arises in Freud's own account.

He is tormented by ‘unlaid ghosts’, but also in the dream of the ‘tailor’s life’ on Freud’s own admission, he felt a familiarity with this dream and the tailor’s statement that ‘I have for many years dragged around with me, like a ghost from which I could not set myself free, the shadow of a ...life’ (SE 5: 473). I referred to Freud’s comparison to the tailor in Chapter One but there is more here because if Freud will have it that the child is born with an “*archaic heritage*” what exactly is it? (SE 23: 167). Freud argues in *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (SE 23) that the ‘archaic heritage’ children bring with them at birth is a combination of ‘inherited and acquired characteristics’, which we should not divide too dramatically. Comparatively making the relationship between the ‘id’ and the ego antithetical is not quite right either states Freud. The id may well be what is oldest in us but the id and ego were originally one; the ego grew out of, developed as it were from the id. To speak, more clearly then of an *archaic heritage* is too include both of these ideas and to add to them, ‘the lines of development, trends and reactions which it [the ego] will later exhibit’, and which ‘are already laid down for it’ (SE 23: 240). Indeed, Freud argues, symbolism as well as ‘equally specialized precipitates’ from other fields of research impute to ‘us’ the importance of assigning a specific ‘hereditary inheritance’ (SE 23: 240-242). We can see this in the Wolf Man case-study where Freud suggests that it does not matter whether primal phantasies are really experienced or are a phylogenetic experience, issuing as they do from the archaic heritage, what matters is what is done with the experience. If the child’s own experience fails him then he fills in ‘the gaps in individual truth with prehistoric truth; he replaces occurrences in his own life by occurrences in the life of his ancestors’ (SE 17: 97).⁴¹

In *Moses and Monotheism* (SE 23) under the chapter titled ‘Difficulties’ Freud writes that the *archaic heritage* is constitutional, peculiar to the individual but that it has a

⁴¹ In a letter to Else Voigtländer Freud explains this clearly: ‘We find in psychoanalysis that we are dealing not with *one* disposition but with an infinite number of dispositions which are developed and fixed by accidental fate. The disposition is so to speak polymorphous. We also believe that this is again a case in which scientifically thinking people distort a cooperation into an antithesis. The question as to which is of greater significance, constitution or experience, which of the two elements decides character, can in my opinion only be answered by saying that ...[fate and chance] and not one *or* the other are decisive. Why should there be an antithesis, since constitution after all is nothing but the sediment of experiences from a long line of ancestors; and why should the *individual* experience not be granted a share alongside the experience of ancestors? (in E. Freud, 1960: 284).

universal application in particular with regard to ‘symbolism’, which is accessible to us in the form of myth, legend and fairy-tale: in the very language, thought, speech that ‘we’ use irrespective of our ‘mother tongue’: ‘A number of symbols are as old as language itself...’ (SE 5: 352). But more than this, the ‘model of a phylogenetic event’ is the very early and what might be called, generic ‘traumas’ (SE 23: 98-99). Thus the Oedipus complex and castration anxiety are an *archaic heritage* given that both have an immediate relation to the totemic murder of the father (SE 23: 101). Freud makes it clear that the archaic heritage of ‘the human animal ... corresponds to the instincts of animals even though it is different in its compass and contents’ (SE 23: 100).⁴² Freud asks, ‘under what conditions does a memory of this kind enter the archaic heritage?’ And, ‘in what circumstances can it become active—that is, can it advance to consciousness from its unconscious state in the id...?’ (SE 23: 101). In both cases, the repetition of some ‘important’, that is to say ‘traumatic’ event would give rise to the entrance of the archaic heritage, the individual component is less easily answered.⁴³ In *Moses and Monotheism* Freud’s argument is concerned with the cross-cultural phylogenetic inheritance that applies the murder of Moses and of Christ to the Jews and to the Jews alone.⁴⁴

If Loewald sees a discord between ghosts and ancestors then, it is not so certain that Freud does. After all, an archaic heritage suggests ancestral knowledge. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4) Freud writes that the discarded, buried and repressed wishes, ‘which we have to attribute some sort of continued existence only because of their re-emergence in a dream’, are not dead, like persons who have died, in the sense that we know death but are rather like the shades in the *Odyssey* who awaken to a

⁴² An unpopular argument in Freud’s day, and possibly more so now.

⁴³ One form of repetition is what Freud called ‘affectionate abuse’, where the father, or in Bollas’s example of the clowning mother, will use such phrases as, ‘I’ll eat you up’ and so on. One phrase I remember quite vividly from my childhood is being told that if I misbehaved my mother would ‘Boil my blood for breakfast’. Another one, less memorable but possibly more transferable, was ‘I will skin you alive if you do that again’. For some reason I equated this to the childhood rhyme of ‘hang your britches on a chair’ but instead of pants I pictured my skinned body, and only the flesh, that is without the blood now boiling in the pot, hanging over the chair. I have never been able to rid myself of this equation of images.

⁴⁴ Martin Freud asks, ‘I sometimes wonder whether or not this traditional hatred of Jews, nourished as it is by legend and fairy-tales throughout the centuries, will die out: witches are not burnt any longer in civilized countries’ (in M. Freud, 1957: 186).

certain degree of life as soon as they have drunk blood (SE 4: 249). Whereas for Freud these ghosts *are* ancestors, remnants of discarded and forgotten wishes of which the affect remains the same only the ideational content has changed. For Loewald there is separation between the ghosts of the past who are linked to passion, trauma and loss and the ancestors who are 'there' to assist 'us' with living.⁴⁵ Freud follows his example of the Odyssean shades with the dream of a 'pregnant' woman who in the course of analysis came to understand that the rejection of the child in her womb was itself a 'reminiscence' of herself as a foetus in her mother's womb. That is to say, she remembered or had heard that her mother fell into a deep depression when she was pregnant with her. She followed her mother's example says Freud, the dream of her daughter now fifteen and dead in a case illustrative of the fact that the Odyssean shades of blood, buried and repressed are also resurrected, albeit not often in such a complimentary way.⁴⁶ What might be called the '*doppelgänger* effect', which Freud in *The Uncanny* (SE 17) links to a belief in the soul and an afterlife, is here returned to the body of a woman, importantly a pregnant woman who represents the nexus of birth/life and death. When Freud evokes the Odyssean shades, ghosts who reside in an underworld he 'forgets' that the womb, the place we want to return to is itself then an underworld. The womb offers, albeit figuratively, exit and return. Freud argues that '(i)n anatomy the orifices of the body are in so many words termed

⁴⁵ The psychoanalyst Selma Fraiberg argued, 'In every nursery there are ghosts. The intruders from [a family's] past have taken up residence in their nursery claiming rights of ownership. ... while none has issued an invitation...the ghosts take up residence and conduct the rehearsal of the family tragedy from a tattered script' (Blaffer-Hrdy 1999: 405).

⁴⁶ In *Dreams* (SE 15) Freud repeats the patient's dream but here makes the 'dead' daughter seventeen rather than fifteen (Strachey thinks this is a misprint in the German work): 'A woman, whose dream meant that she would like to see her daughter, now seventeen years old, dead before her eyes, found under our guidance that she had indeed at one time harboured this death-wish. The child was the fruit of an unhappy marriage which was soon dissolved. Once, while she still bore her daughter in her womb, in a fit of rage after a violent scene with her husband she had beaten with her fists on her body in order to kill the child inside it. How many mothers, who love their children tenderly, perhaps over-tenderly, to-day, conceived them unwillingly and wished at that time that the living thing within them might not develop further! They may even have expressed that wish in various, fortunately harmless, actions. Thus their death-wish against someone they love, which is later so mysterious, originates from the earliest days of their relationship to that person' (SE 15: 202 and SE 4: 154-5 and 259).

‘Leibesporten’ [literally, ‘portals of the body] (SE 15: 159). As a ‘gateway’ or a ‘doorway’ then Freud’s depiction of the womb is as something that is always already open, or at least slightly ajar. The *revenants* that haunt Freud, that he drags throughout his life, that remain unladen would seem to have some relation to this picture of the womb as paradoxically open and closed, as exit and return, and importantly as life and death. That Freud cannot make this explicit, that he gets ‘caught’ in a navel as it were, is partly because he cannot picture the woman’s body as ‘whole’. She remains in parts, and at a distance, *nudam* we might say.

Klein will argue that this depiction of the mother as a ‘hole’ but not ‘whole’ has an equivalent relationship in Eros’ alignment to the whole and Thanatos’ to the part(s). For Freud the womb is not only *Leibesporten* but it stands in for the mother. For Plato, this room/womb, as I argued in Chapter Two is not only *Leibesporten*, but also *before* God, and thus we could argue *before* time itself. If as Freud argued through Kant, that ‘time and space are ‘necessary forms of thought’’ (SE 18: 28), then how, as Rose argues through Bollas, can/do we think about mothers: ‘What does thinking about mothers do to thinking?’ (Rose, 2004: 151). The death instinct remains one of Freud’s most controversial ideas and its integral relationship to the body of the mother/womb remains relatively understudied. Is this because to think about the mother we need to think outside time and space, something that is metaphysically impossible for the human brain to do? Coupled with this is our overall rejection of not only the physical act of death, but its psychical meaning. Death is an end but we have God to mediate this end even if *before* God was the chora/the womb/room, the mother. We will return to these arguments later in this chapter, for now I want to look at how Freud understood his Jewishness and in turn, how this informed his writing on, or lack thereof, the mother.

The Jew, the Gentile and the Woman

To return to Freud’s recollection of his father being accosted by a Gentile and having his hat knocked off. The hat argues Freud is a symbol of a man – of his genitals (SE 5: 360). The Jewish father who has his hat knocked off by a Christian lout expresses the difference that the Jewish male body held in 19th Century anti-Semitic Vienna – it is a ‘castrated’ body, the hat (the foreskin) was always already gone. Now this may

be significant for Freud's neglect of the mother, of his inability to understand the riddle of female sexuality. Because if Freud made a dogma of his Oedipal complex he may have done so to assert his own masculinity in light of his father's remembered weakness and the general anti-Semitism that Jews throughout the world faced (and continue to face). Jay Geller in *On Freud's Jewish Body: Mitigating Circumstances* arguing through Danial Boyarin states 'The Oedipus Complex is Freud's family romance of escape from Jewish queerness into gentile, phallic heterosexuality' (in Geller, 2007: 27). Geller continues, 'As a consequence of the syllogistic identification of the circumcised male Jew with women (via the mediations of circumcision as castration, as emasculation, as being effeminate), gender difference, so necessary to both Freud's theory and to his society, was jeopardised' (Geller, 2007: 35). Simply put, Geller argues 'Jew equals woman' which less simply would 'entail the repudiation of psychoanalysis' (Geller, 2007: 35). Geller's thesis continues, illustrating that this 'Jew equals woman' is itself too simplistic and lacks the 'necessary' contradictions inherent to Freudian psychoanalysis. Geller explains this by illustrating Freud's statement that *Judentum* – a German word that conveys Jewry (the people), Jewishness (character and custom) and Judaism (religion) that the word 'Jew' cannot adequately describe especially in its translation to English – has become 'to some extent a fossil' (SE 23: 88 and Geller, 2007: 19). In contemporary academic discourse then Geller argues, 'Jews have been written out of critical feminist studies, which place the onus for misogyny on "traditional Jewish culture" and for patriarchy on the "Old Testament"' (Geller, 2007: 19). Feminism, Geller seems to be saying, through using the 'Master's' tools to highlight 'his' misogynist leanings, in fact underscores 'their' own complicity in the Master's game. This can be seen in the feminist psychoanalytic engagement in Chapter Two. Either Freud is dismissed because of his apparent misogynistic 'science' or he is inappropriately appropriated we could say. Freud's unconscious either/or is consciously rendered as unproblematic by replacing the Oedipal with the pre-Oedipal. *Ipso facto*, one for the other, but this of course neglects the intent of the unconscious and as Geller makes explicit it lets the other(s) off the hook.

Feminism was from the start a 'sisterhood' where all differences were supposedly subsumed under the banner of a universal womanhood. This neglected the obvious power structure already in place where 'white was right' and 'black' marginalized.

But Geller argues that even respected Freudian academics like Sander Gilman will explain, 'Freud's often stereotypical discourse on women as his defensive displacement of the discourses of racial antisemitism' (Geller, 2007: 19). Again, Peter Gay perhaps recognized as the expert on Freud *par excellence* will refute Freud's Jewishness as having any share 'in the making of psychoanalysis' (Geller, 2007: 24) as explicated in Gay's book *A Godless Jew* (Gay, 1987). In fact, as Gay illustrates in a letter to Ernest Jones Freud writes that his Jewishness, like his 'passion for smoking' and his lifelong interest in telepathy are his 'private affair' 'inessential for psychoanalysis' (in Gay, 1987: 148). Gay concludes, 'Inessential: *wesensfremd*—his Judaism was inessential, not to Freud, but to his creation, psychoanalysis' (Gay, 1987: 148). By utilising Freud's own arguments in letters and in *his* psychoanalysis Gay will argue that 'Freud would not be typecast' (Gay, 1987: 33). But Gay is a faithful biographer of Freud, taking him at his word. This is not a criticism of Gay but by quoting from Freud's correspondence to support his, and therefore Freud's argument that psychoanalysis is not a Jewish science Gay neglects other references, however tenuous they sometimes might be. For example, Gay quotes Freud as replying to a 'correspondent from Palestine who sought to assimilate Freud's theory of dreams to Talmudic discussions: "My attention has repeatedly been called to the observations in the Talmud about the problems of dreams. But I must say that the approximation to the understanding of the dream among the ancient Greeks is far more striking"' (in Gay, 1987: 32-33). Gay does not question this allusion – because an allusion it may well be, instead he will argue that 'Parallels, then, may hint at much, but they guarantee nothing'. And further, 'They cannot ignore and must not minimize Freud's repeated assertions that he was an atheist, an infidel Jew, all his life...' (Gay, 1987: 33-34). The allusion of course is to Freud's frequent references to *The Interpretation of Dreams* as 'the Egyptian dream book' in letters to Fliess. And yet he will say of W. Erb's text book 'the greatest name in German neuropathology' (SE 20: 9) that he came to the realisation that 'what I had taken for an epitome of exact observations was merely the construction of phantasy' (SE 20: 9). In fact, Erb's book had 'no more relation to reality than some 'Egyptian' dream-book, such as is sold in cheap book-shop' (SE 20: 9). This illustrates the inherent contradiction of taking Freud at his word. On the one hand, his *Interpretation of Dreams* will be upheld as 'the Egyptian dream book', as a positive representation of the ancient Egyptian's knowledge about dreams. On the other hand, Erb's book is compared to

some 'Egyptian-dream book, such as is sold in a cheap book-shop' (SE 20: 9). Freud may assert that he was a 'Godless Jew', but his attachment (*Anlehnung* – his 'leaning-on') to Greek and Egyptian archaeology and mythology somewhat belies this statement. His 'dream' book is the 'Egyptian dream book', and it is the Egyptian's that Freud refers to as the people who did so much in denying the reality of death and who took 'such pains to make existence in the next world possible' (SE 23: 19-20). Of course the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses were different, perhaps only by apace, to a singular conception of a monolithic God as Christianity and Judaism portray it. The Egyptian Gods and Goddesses had the patina of 'age', of the archaic, perhaps even of timelessness. But this is not a thesis on Freud's relationship to God, or even for that matter on his understandings of Jewry, of being a Jew. If he refers to himself as an 'out-and-out unbeliever' (E. Freud, 1960: 453) then who are we to say this is wrong – *he* is wrong? But his consistent denial that neither his atheism nor his Jewishness have anything to do with his science psychoanalysis sounds much like Hamlet's mother when Hamlet presents her with a play depicting the Queen as *she is*, 'The lady doth protest too much, methinks' (*Hamlet* Act 3, scene 2). An apt analogy if one considers the connotation for Freud not to make of the Jewish male a 'woman'. We could say in fact, that this is what Rank stands accused of. By making the mother the 'primal' object, by making her the centre of the child's life and as follows, the life of the adult he effectively dismisses the importance of the Oedipus Complex – he castrates Freud's work. That Rank is aware of this is expressed in his own belief that Freud could not 'see' that behind the Oedipus situation was a more powerful and primal object relationship – that of the mother (Rank in Kramer ed., 1993: 37). Freud represses the role of the *castrating mother* argues Rank and in doing so splits off his fear and hatred onto women (Rank in Kramer ed., 1993: 37).

To return to Geller's argument concerning Freud's Jewishness, as Geller, Gay and Gilman make explicit, Freud never denied his Jewishness. But what Gay and Gilman forget argues Geller, is that Freud defined Jewishness himself in the mark of the male Jew and the 'bedrock' of his science psychoanalysis, castration. In both the Little Hans case-study and 'the beautiful example of his work,' the *novella* on Leonardo da Vinci, Freud writes, 'the castration complex is the deepest unconscious root of anti-semitism; for even in the nursery little boys hear that a Jew has something cut off his penis—a piece of his penis, they think—and this gives them the right to despise Jews.'

And there is no stronger unconscious root for the sense of superiority over women' (SE 10: 36 n 1 and Geller, 2007: 25). Geller will argue that Freud's entanglement with the mother could be seen then, as both a reaction to, and displacement of, his own anxiety in the face of anti-Semitism. It was important for Freud to view himself as masculinized argues Geller and the Jewish male with a 'piece missing' in contrast, equated to a masculinized Jewish woman (Geller, 2007: 8). Gilman states something similar in the linking of 'the Jew' with the 'image of the woman', 'Freud provided a place where the Jew could be made to disappear and still find a safe haven' (in Brunner, 1995: 24). In fact Gilman ends his informative and rigorous treaty on Freud with the words, 'His weapon against anti-Semitism was the discourse of science'. And the author of *The MAN Moses and the Monotheistic Religion* was "Freud the man," "not Freud the Jew" (Gilman, 1993: 199).

God, (un)reason, illusion

Freud refers to himself as both someone who had disturbed the sleep of mankind and as a 'destroyer of illusions', of his own, and those of mankind (in Gay, 1987: 56). Perhaps then, in Freud's desire to keep the mother/son relationship intact, to leave it perfect and un-besmirched he left it in the realm of illusions. In the *Future of an Illusion* (SE 21) he will argue that it is difficult to avoid illusions but that he holds fast against them and 'If experience should show—not to me, but to others after me, who think as I do—that we have been mistaken, we will give up our expectations' (SE 21: 53). This is an argument against religious illusions, something Freud argues is infantile at bottom and which limits the potentiality of mankind and threatens 'reason, our "God Logos"' (SE 21: 54). It may seem strange for Freud to make a 'God' of reason with its theological metaphor, but stranger still to bring reason to 'God's' house. Reason as Freud would show, is not 'master in its own house' (Gay, 1987: 64). An odd couple then, god and reason, more so when one considers that psychoanalysis is ostensibly concerned with 'un-reason'. Gay will call 'Logos, the divinity of psychoanalysis...' (Gay, 1987: 65) and will argue, through Freud, that religion and science are 'irreparably split'. Freud will state that religion as illusion is the fulfilment "'of the oldest, strongest, most urgent wishes of mankind; the secret of their strength is the strength of these wishes"... Religion, in short, is the mother, the champion, and the beneficiary of illusions' (in Gay, 1987: 66). As the argument goes then, both the mother and religion are illusions of a type that credits no scholarship, is

infantile at bottom. But psychoanalysis, if it is nothing else is the study of the child in the man: a blithe and perhaps disingenuous statement, but true for all that. Thus the child Freud is also implicated in the adult Freud, the creator of the science of psychoanalysis. Freud turns from the mother, *his* mother, as he turns from the importance of the mother outside the desexualised metaphors of her as first love-object, as integral to the mental life of the child, as the 'essence' of the sensual with the depiction of the baby sated at the mother's breast. And yet this sensual image which Freud calls 'sexual', 'No one who has seen a baby sinking back satiated from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that this picture persists as a prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life' (SE 7: 182) while not necessarily devoid of sexuality is caught between the self-preservation instincts and the sexual instincts. I think that it is the envelopment – and this seems an entirely appropriate word – of the self-preservation instincts by the sexual instincts that Freud's 'gaps' open up and thereafter through *his* science psychoanalysis, is the attempt to fill them. It is important to note, that Freud argued that these earlier 'sensual' tendencies remain intensely preserved in the unconscious, continuing to exist in their original form (SE 18: 111).

Freud avers that it is the self-preservation instincts not the sexual instincts that are responsible for 'God'. Religion he argues is founded on 'infantile helplessness' conceived of a world where parents are benevolent and all powerful (to Jung in McGuire, 1974: 283-284). But this is a strange God, bound as it is to the self-preservation instincts. This God fashioned in infancy is initially exempt from the sexual instinct says Freud, this only 'adds its spice later'. There is a slip here, after all the self-preservation instincts are in the realm of the mother. God, Freud will argue is a substitute for the father. While the self-preservation and sexual instincts will coalesce under Freud's later conception of Eros this does not address Freud's earlier rendering of a 'God' emerging from, what can only be understood as, the pre-Oedipal. This can be explained argues Jonte-Pace if we acknowledge Freud's turning away from the body of the mother, who in any event, lays encased in a tangle of dream thoughts, hidden behind an 'unplumbable navel'.

'There is no God'

In the short essay, *A Religious Experience* (SE 21) Freud is responding to a young American physician's crisis of faith. The young man writes to Freud telling him how he heard the voice of God with a recommendation that if Freud listened hard enough and searched his soul long enough he might also find God. The 'catalyst in the doctor's crisis of faith had been the dead body of a woman' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 34). On seeing the 'sweet-faced dear old woman' being carried to the dissecting table, the American doctor thought 'There is no God' (SE 21: 169). Freud interprets the doctor's dream on his Oedipal paradigm; the sweet-faced old woman is his mother; the sight of her dead body on the point of being stripped or naked aroused in him a longing for his mother; condemnation against his father (God) was produced as a reaction against the ill-treatment of 'his' mother and his own Oedipal desires (SE 21: 171). This is all straightforward enough argues Freud but Jonte-Pace sees discrepancies (displacements) in Freud's argument. Freud fails to address the obvious Oedipal elements in the doctor's account in particular the all important castration complex states Jonte-Pace. For what is a dead body but a symbol of the erect penis i.e., stiff? In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) Freud states:

From a dream of P's it appears that ice is in fact a symbol by antithesis for an erection: i.e. something that becomes hard in the cold instead of—like a penis—in heat (in excitation). The two antithetical concepts of sexuality and death are frequently linked through the idea that death makes things stiff. One of the Henris' informants instanced a piece of ice as a screen memory for his grandmother's death (SE 6: 49 n 2).

Freud erases the castrative/death element from the American doctor's account as he does in his own account of the dream of his dead mother. In Freud's 'anxiety' dream in his seventh or eighth year he sees his 'beloved mother' with a peculiarly peaceful expression on her face being carried into the room by two or three people with bird's beaks. Freud says he woke in an anxious state and that this did not dissipate until he had seen his mother's face and reassured himself that she was not dead (SE 5: 583-584). Freud argues that he was not anxious because his mother was dead in his dream, but 'when repression is taken into account' one can see the hidden sexual 'craving' behind which, the dead mother was represented (SE 5: 584). Freud had argued that the dreaming of the death of 'persons of whom the dreamer is fond' especially when accompanied by feelings of inconsolable grief suggests death wishes towards that person (SE 4: 248- 249, SE 15: 202 and Jonte-Pace, 2001: 40-41). And

yet as Jonte-Pace argues that Freud is quick to deny the possibility of ‘matricidal fantasies’ in his dream instead insisting that the ‘obscure sexual craving for the mother...is deeper, more primal’ (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 41). Jonte-Pace quotes the psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu who in response to Freud’s interpretation of his dream calls it unsatisfactory, ‘and the insistence with which he plays down the specific anxiety most prominent in the dream [about death of his mother] by tracing it back to something else strikes me as suspect’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 41). Pontalis goes further argues Jonte-Pace by suggesting that the theme of sex is a kind of cover-up for death in psychoanalytic theory: “‘The theme of death is as basic to Freudian psychoanalysis as is the theme of sexuality. I even believe the latter has been widely put forward so as to cover up the former’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 41). Jonte-Pace suggests we follow the same hermeneutic that Freud followed in his analysis of the Bible where he comments on the ‘destinies’ of a text:

Thus almost everywhere noticeable gaps, disturbing repetitions and obvious contradictions have come about—indications which reveal things to us which it was not intended to communicate. In its implications the distortion of a text resembles a murder: the difficulty is not in perpetrating the deed, but in getting rid of its traces. We might well lend the word ‘*Entstellung* [distortion]’ the double-meaning to which it has claim but of which to-day it makes no use. It should mean not only ‘to change the appearance of something’ but also ‘to put something in another place, to displace.’ Accordingly, in many instances of textual distortion, we may nevertheless count upon finding what has been suppressed and disavowed hidden away somewhere else, though changed and torn from its context. Only it will not always be easy to recognize it (SE 23: 43).

Freud in an effort to get rid of the traces of the dead mother in his dream (in the doctor’s dream): ‘I was not anxious because I had dreamt my mother was dying’, seems to be saying, ‘I was anxious because the dream made of my mother a sexual object and in knowing that this is the forbidden thing, I ‘erased’ her’.⁴⁷ He puts

⁴⁷ This harks back to the Irma dream and its connection to Emma Eckstein. Seeing her lying there and looking dead, Freud says, suddenly it all became clear to me and he felt sick. ‘We had done her an injustice’ Freud writes to Fliess, ‘she was not at all abnormal’ (Masson, 1985: 117). Freud’s position in regard to Eckstein changes over the weeks, until finally, her near death, not once but several times has him confess to Fliess, that she ‘bled out of *longing*. She has always been a bleeder...’ (in Masson, 1985: 186). Masson signals the ‘it became clear to me’ as Freud’s abandonment of the seduction theory and it might be said of Emma Eckstein. Masson suggests that Freud

‘something else’ in her place as he once did with the primal scene in the Wolf Man case-study (SE 17). Sarah Kofman argues that psychoanalysis will make all women dead women and it does so because ‘she’ ‘blocks all exits, all paths, all contact’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 42). A strange juxtaposition then, at once deadly but also deadly alive, one that signals the doubling (‘the double-meaning’) that occurs when Freud addresses *his* mother: ‘I was not anxious because I had dreamt my mother was dying’ (SE 5: 584): ‘I had missed my mother, and had come to suspect that she was shut up in this wardrobe or cupboard’ (SE 6: 49-51). ‘We might well lend the word *Entstellung*’ to the mother then, with its suppression, hiding, disavowal, misrecognition and displacement.

Freud’s dream with its bird beaked figures arose from his perusal of the illustrations in the Phillippon’s Bible. They were ‘gods’ argues Freud, with falcon heads ‘from an ancient Egyptian funerary relief’ (SE 5: 584), which were ‘intended to ensure safe passage of the dead to the afterlife’ (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 43). Freud with his attendance to the linguistic meaning of words would have known, argues Anzieu that ‘the bird-headed Egyptian god, Thoth, is pronounced in German the same way as *Tot* (the German word for a ‘dead person’)’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 43). Further this is Freud’s last personal dream in his *Interpretation of Dreams*, and Anzieu suggests:

By placing the interpretation of [this] dream at the end of his book, he was confirming that he had taken back his beloved mother from his father and regained possession of her; but, more than that, he was indicating that he now had the last word on death, the last word on anxiety, the last word on separation from the primally loved object. For death, anxiety and separation are inevitable facts of life which we can counter (indeed, only counter) with words (Anzieu cited by Jonte-Pace, 2001: 44).

Freud will say in *Femininity* that anxiety is the reproduction of an old-event and is linked to the self-preservation instincts (SE 22: 84-85). How then might God and anxiety be linked to a dead but erotic mother? In particular if one considers as we did above, that Freud is never really clear how the self-preservation instincts, which are in the domain of the mother, are resolved outside of the mother in the first place. If as Bollas suggests that the mother might be our first clown and thereafter our

was ‘enamoured’ of Fliess, in fact one could say ‘bewitched’ as he initially at least, regarded Fliess as a ‘prophet’ of types argues Masson (in Masson, 2004).

understanding of God (and I will engage with Bollas's assertion in Chapter Five), how might we connect these disparate threads, of mother, self-preservation instincts, anxiety and an erotic but dead mother? In particular when Freud covers them over with his Oedipus complex, or an aspect of it at least. If Thoth and *Tot* have a linguistic connection and in Freud's dream this is a connection to the mother's dead body then why does Freud deny the matricidal phantasy and instead highlight the "hidden sexual craving" for the mother? Once again Freud highlights the Oedipal element of the dream while dismissing, what he will call, "the deeper primal element". Of course, Freud's mother appears as "blissfully dead" (sexually satiated like the baby at the breast), and the young Freud awakens anxious and insecure. But Freud takes back his mother by "mummifying" her (and we will discuss the meaning of "mummer" as clown in Chapter Five). Silenced then, the mother's role in "death, anxiety and separation" where she seems to be most present, "succumbs to an especially inexorable repression" it seems, of Freud's own making.

The *déjà vu* of the mother's genitals, her womb

Returning once more to the metaphors of paths and journeys Freud will tell us in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that our feelings of *déjà vu* are of a place that we have been to before, that is the mother's genitals, her womb (SE 5: 399). He reiterates this in *The Uncanny* (SE 17) where he says that when a man dreams of a place or a country that is familiar to him he is right, because this is a memory of a place where we 'lived once upon a time and in the beginning' (SE 17: 245). Invoking the introduction of this *heim*, with that of a traditional fairy-tale here Freud's 'tail' is of another kind. The joke he says, 'Love is home-sickness' refers to the mother's genitals or her body (SE 17: 245). But what is it that Freud means in his use of the concept *déjà vu*? In a letter to Romain Rolland to celebrate his 70th birthday Freud writes that he is 'an impoverished man who "has seen better days"' (Freud, 2006: 68). Offering Rolland a 'gift' of a memory, which he titles, *A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis* (Freud, 2006: 68, SE 22), Freud writes, coincidentally I have just realised that my younger brother and you are the same age. Freud's younger brother Alexander mourns their mother's death, something Freud is unable to do. Romain Rolland understands the oceanic, which Freud describes as something unknown to him. The experience on the Acropolis had troubled Freud for a 'generation' and he did not know why he tells Rolland, so for his birthday he sought to analyse it.

What was it that had disturbed Freud concerning this experience? Freud writes that the experience on the Acropolis ‘contained an element of doubt about reality’ (Freud, 2006: 73). In this, he compares it to ‘a piece of good news’ such as winning a lottery ticket or a girl finding out that the man she loves, loves her back (Freud, 2006: 71). Why then, asks Freud, do people fall ill when offered, either, everything that they deserve or when success seems to be theirs. Because, Freud suggests, they cannot ‘expect fate to supply anything so good’, they do not believe they are worth it. Freud terms this expression ‘too good to be true’ and argues that it is an ‘expression of pessimism’ which we all have to some degree or another. But Freud’s own experience of the Acropolis is one that he will call a feeling of estrangement (derealisation in SE 22). Here it is as if he is split into two people, argues Freud. One doubting the existence of the Acropolis but being moved to believe in it, because ‘here I am, standing on the Acropolis’ taking in the view. The other person simply enjoyed the experience because he never knew that the existence of the Acropolis was in doubt.

The ‘momentarily feeling’ of disbelief that Freud encapsulates in the statement, ‘*What I am seeing there is not real*’ and which he terms estrangement (derealisation) is made to accommodate the ‘false pronouncement’: The Acropolis does not exist because I do not think I will ever get to see it due to circumstance, happenstance or what you will. Therefore I will put a false statement – it does not exist – in place of the true one – I know it exists (Freud, 2006: 73). But these estrangements (derealisations) are little understood argues Freud, ‘they are described as ‘sensations’, but they are clearly complicated processes bound up with particular contents and linked with decisions made concerning those contents’ (Freud, 2006: 73). They are failed actions, comparable to dreams and occur in normal people as often as in people with mental illness. Freud offers two clauses to this ‘sensation’ of strangeness. Either the subject feels a part of him/herself has become strange, or a piece of reality has. The latter Freud terms depersonalisation, and then adds that other phenomena, such as *déjà vu* and *déjà raconté* are the positive counterparts to estrangement and depersonalisation. In estrangement we attempt to exclude something, a piece of reality from ourselves. In *déjà vu* a piece of reality that is excluded from us we assume is our own. Freud emphasises that all of these phenomena are closely interconnected.

In the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) Freud offers a more detailed account of *déjà vu*. Linking it to the ‘uncanny’ and the ‘miraculous’ Freud argues that *déjà vu* is the ‘peculiar feeling’ we have, ‘in certain moments and situations, of having had exactly the same experience once before or of having once before been in the same place, though our efforts never succeed in clearly remembering the previous occasion that announces itself in this way’ (SE 6: 265). The object(s) of *déjà vu* is never fully remembered argues Freud, but they are not illusions, instead the ‘feelings’ associated with *déjà vu* are those of unconscious phantasies (SE 6: 266). Freud offers the memory of a ‘lady’ whose experience of *déjà vu* is finally understood by Freud as one of substitution. Unable to deal with the near loss of her brother and her earlier wishful phantasy that considered his loss, Freud argues that she created ‘an analogous situation in the home of her friends, whose only brother was in danger of dying soon, as in fact he did die shortly’ (SE 6: 267). Thus the repression of a wishful phantasy, an occurrence of real illness, later seen in a friend’s brother, who in fact did die, fashioned a feeling of *déjà vu*. Freud will admit that a ‘piece is missing’ here, but argues that until further study is undertaken concerning the phenomena of *déjà vu* and its counterparts, estrangement and depersonalisations this is all he can offer. He does concede that the feeling of *déjà vu* is similar to Ferenczi’s contention that we have lost something, some object but we convince ourselves that this important object that we have lost is in fact not lost at all and everything will be alright (or will be righted) in our world. This is the ‘cheaper’ equivalent to the ‘real’ processes of parapraxis (slips of the tongue) argues Freud (SE 6: 265-269).

Thus ‘once upon a time and in the beginning’ in a loving and wishful phantasy (albeit of death) we journeyed to the place that without a doubt we can say we have ‘been there once before’ (SE 5: 399, SE 17: 245). But this is perplexing because what Freud tells us of these phenomena is that they cause us to doubt a piece of reality either externally or internally, something has become strange to us. No doubt a return to the womb might seem strange and Freud reiterates that the female (mothers) genitals are not only strange to us but also horrifying, there is definitely a ‘piece missing’ but how does this equate to his analysis of *déjà vu*. The female genital organs are *unheimliche* (unhomely) but the womb is our *unheimliche heim* (uncanny or unhomely home). And Freud frames the uncanny experience of the female genitals in the language of the

fairy-tale, ‘once upon a time’ and in the beginning. In this ‘framing’ he is describing something that is so common as to be universal ‘of all human beings’, the mother’s womb, of which we have feelings of *déjà vu* states Freud. There is something I cannot quite put my finger on here, a useful analogy if one follows Freud in his discussion of the obsessional patient who tells Freud he has returned to a ‘house’ he has been in twice before. As a child, sleeping next to his mother he inserted his finger into her vagina while she slept (SE 5: 399). Thus Freud follows his own feelings of estrangement on the Acropolis, of a situation that included ‘myself, the Acropolis and my perception of it’ and the doubt that persisted in the experience of the Acropolis (Freud, 2006: 73) with the obsessional patient who has been *there*, who has returned *there* (or at least his finger has) and who dreams of *there*. This of course calls the ‘da’ in Freud’s famous *fort/da* (gone/there) into question (which I will discuss in Chapter Four), but I remain troubled with Freud’s linking of *déjà vu* to the womb.

Freud comments himself that the feeling of *déjà vu* has been linked to the mystical, to an other-worldliness if you like (Freud, 2006: 74). But by enclosing our return to the mother, our feelings of *déjà vu* in the language of the fable, what is it that Freud is telling us? If the *déjà vu* of the womb is one associated with a fairy-tale, it might be pertinent to ask which fairy-tale and why? That the womb is symbolised by a house (our uncanny home) brings forth a witch and a candy-covered house that children eat from and are in turn eaten by the witch.⁴⁸ That the witch both feeds them and cooks them in an oven again shows the doubling that Freud argues for in his Acropolis reminiscence: *déjà vu* is a defence mechanism through which the ego to protect itself from ‘disintegration’ displaces in whatever manner and in whichever way it can onto “something else besides”.

While Freud will make our feelings of *déjà vu* in relation to the return to our uncanny home, comforting, albeit strange, it is not frightening in the way that the father is represented as a wolf, or as Rumpelstiltskin (SE 12: 281-287). Of course, these are not feelings of *déjà vu* or any of the related phenomena but Freud’s persistence in

⁴⁸ This reference to the fairy-tale of Hans el and Gretel is representative of the ‘primal trauma’ of birth argues Rank (Rank, 1952:110)

marking out the boundary of the uncanny in relation to the mother, or the mother's body, in particular her womb seems to suggest that *déjà vu* and our uncanny home (the womb) are stranger than he will allow for. More so, if one considers that Freud referred to himself as Rumpelstiltskin in a letter to Fliess, with the words 'Oh, how glad I am that no one, no one knows...' in relation to dreams being understood as wish-fulfilments, something no-one else had 'guessed' (Masson, 1985: 243).

Rumpelstiltskin, states Freud, 'gave access to the deeper, infantile stratum of the dream thoughts' (CP 4: 238). This 'droll little fellow...whose secret is so eagerly canvassed, who can perform such extraordinary tricks' is the recipient of penis envy argues Freud (SE 12: 283, CP 4: 238-239). That is why there is so much 'fury against him' (SE 12: 283). Freud then, as Rumpelstiltskin the possessor of an envious knowledge concerning dreams makes himself the possessor of an envious penis (male authority/gentile) with a whole piece more, and not with 'a piece missing' as Geller and Gilman argue. Freud suggests this himself, through a *fausse reconnaissance* offered by his famous patient the Wolf Man. '*Fausse reconnaissance*' or '*déjà raconté*' understood as false recollection/memory, was in this case covering over/up the Wolf Man's castration anxiety (the story concerns a memory of cutting off his little finger, albeit a memory associated with the loss of his mother, through, it could be argued, the acquisition of language: 'Now I feel as though I had known it all the time' (in CP 2: 341)). Freud states that 'particularly in relation to the castration complex, similar hallucinatory falsifications are of not infrequent occurrence, and that they can just as easily serve the purpose of correcting unwelcome perceptions' (SE 13: 205). While the return to the womb is a 'special case' of *déjà vu* argues Freud, in that it has a universal application the similarity to singular cases of *déjà vu* are also prominent. The repressed and 'common element' of the 'recollection/memory/dream' returns against 'the teeth of all resistance' argues Freud. In the very Oedipality of the statement 'the teeth of all resistance' Freud highlights the displacement that the feeling of *déjà vu* evokes. Here then on/at the threshold of oral and anal our feelings of *déjà vu* towards the mother's genitals, her womb are foregrounded only to be displaced in the Freudian dance of Rumpelstiltskin, the funny little man who grimaces and is representative of the penis (SE 12: 282-283). The feelings of *déjà vu*, which are at once 'uncanny' and 'miraculous' with their association to the mother's womb are obscured through the allocation of fairy-tales, here Hansel and Gretel and Freud's own self-rendering as Rumpelstiltskin.

There is what Rank has called a ‘squaring of the circle’ happening here, which Freud argued Leonardo da Vinci did in an effort to ‘win’ back, perhaps keep, his mother. The ‘squaring of the circle’ suggests that through knowledge we might solve the problems of knowledge, in this case that of being and returning to the mother’s womb. Rank extends his analysis, in the myth of the hero, who he argues is set on regaining the mother by overcoming a particularly ‘severe birth trauma’ (Rank, 1952: 106). In Rank’s reckoning the exodus of the womb is so traumatic that the hero is constantly striving, in his heroic conquests to return. Leaving aside whether or not we reject Rank’s analysis as Freud finally did (although not all of it) it might be remembered that Freud referred to himself as nothing more than a ‘conquistador, an adventurer’ with all that this means, ‘curiosity, daring and tenacity characteristic of a man of this sort’ (Masson, 1985: 398). A hero then, one who born in a caul (like the Wolf Man was also), is assured of being a ‘great man in the world’ (SE 4: 192). Rank will have it that the caul (a membrane covering the babies head and/or body and which in being relatively rare has had legends develop around it) offers ‘a kind of permanent uterus’ and therefore a ‘heroic *invulnerability*’, a ‘magic’ we might say (Rank, 1952: 107). Birth trauma argues Rank is more commonly shown in fairy-tales than the myth of the hero. Could it be that our caul covered Freud, who remembers in the *Interpretation of Dreams* that his mother was told by an old-peasant woman that they could expect great things from him, in rejecting anti-Semitism and displacing the sense of being an Other onto his mother, re-enacts this in his distancing of the womb, as canny and homely while acknowledging the uncanny and unhomely aspect of it through fairy-tale?

‘Sleeping Beauty’

Freud tells Fliess that the dream journey is structured ‘on an imaginary walk’ (Masson, 1985: 365). But the ‘dark forest’ with its ‘concealed pass’ through which Freud will lead his readers, is also where they are most likely to get lost: ‘Most readers will get lost in this thorny thicket and never get to see the Sleeping Beauty behind it’ writes Freud to Fliess (in Masson, 1985: 362). In the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) Freud suggests that the fairy-tale uses screen memories like the

Hermit Crab⁴⁹ uses empty shells as a new but familiar and canny home (SE 6: 49 n 2). This is an instance of what Freud calls a 'verbal bridge.' The shell hides the crab as the fairy-tale hides, becomes the screen for the real memory (SE 6: 49). The chosen fairy-tale will have a particular resonance for the child argues Freud and thereafter becomes a favourite without them knowing why. Freud extends this point, 'If we carefully observe from clear instances the way in which dreamers use fairy tales and the point at which they bring them in, we may perhaps also succeed in picking up some hints which will help in interpreting remaining obscurities in the fairy tales themselves' (SE 12: 283).

In Kristeva's analysis of a patient she also addresses the fairy-tale of *Sleeping Beauty*,⁵⁰ because the fairy-tale argues Kristeva helps to integrate 'temporal shifters' in language. Thus in *Sleeping Beauty* the sixteen year old princess is put to sleep by the 'prick' of a spinning wheel, enchanted by a Wicked Witch. One hundred years later a prince, hearing of the 'myth' of the beautiful sleeping princess, manages to push his way through the thorny thicket that has grown up around the castle, and in a kiss, *he* awakens her. This seems to be an example of Freud's deferred action/*Nachträglichkeit*. Time is rendered obsolete in this fairy-tale with its one hundred and sixteen year old princess awakening from a 'deathly' slumber with a kiss. But what is more curious is the thicket that Freud refers to that his readers and the prince must get through to find Sleeping Beauty. This could surely be identified as the type of bush or thicket that he argues surrounds the mother's/Medusa's genitals and which we turn from in horror? Thus to get to the Sleeping Beauty, which holds the suggestion of a prize, one first needs to push their way through the 'mother's' thorny thicket. Since this does not sound palatable, well at least according to Freud, it is unlikely that anyone will make the journey. And why would we, if through the thicket, the mother's pubic hair, death lies waiting? But there is more to this 'fable' because if the fairy-tale is a screen memory, having some resonance to the child,

⁴⁹ As an aside, the Hermit Crab, the screen for Freud's fairy-tale was mythologically believed to grow spontaneously out of mud and slime.

⁵⁰ Cixous argues that the fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty is 'particularly expressive of woman's place...' which is always to be found in or on a bed, and only a man can wake her up and transfer her from one bed to another. She points out that in another fairy tale, Little Red Riding Hood, she does what women should never do, 'travels through her own forest!' (Cixous, 2000: 233).

albeit unconsciously, how might we understand Freud's use of *Sleeping Beauty*? Comparatively we could say that 'sleeping' invokes dreaming, and here is a dreamer of some one hundred years. But *Sleeping Beauty* is dreaming behind a thorny thicket. If we compare the thicket and the dreamer to Freud's other, most quoted and celebrated passage, 'the navel of the dream' then perhaps we come closer to the mother that Freud turns away from. It is worth quoting the excerpt in full:

There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream, which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the dream. This is the dream's navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown. The dream thoughts to which we are led by interpretation cannot, from the nature of things, have any definite endings; they are bound to branch out in every direction into the intricate network of our world of thought. It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-wish grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium (SE 5: 525).

Even in the best interpreted dreams, there is often a place [*eine Stelle*] that must be left in the dark, because in the process of interpreting one notices a tangle of dream-thoughts arising [*anhebt*] which resists unravelling but has also made no further contributions [*keine weiteren Beiträge*] to the dream-content. This, then, is the navel of the dream, the place where it straddles the unknown [*dem Unerkannten aufsitzt*]. The dream-thoughts, to which interpretation leads one, are necessarily interminable [*ohne Abschluss*] and branch out on all sides into the netlike entanglement [*in die netzartige Verstrickung*] of our world of thought. Out of one of the denser places in this meshwork, the dream-wish rises [*erhebt sich*] like a mushroom out of its mycelium (in Weber, 1982: 73 (SE 5: 530)).

Earlier in the *Interpretation of Dreams* (SE 4) Freud had called this 'unknown spot', an 'unplumbable navel'. Samuel Weber in *The Legend of Freud* (1982) argues that here, on the border of metapsychology Freud exhibits no anxiety, 'no cause for concern' 'for the 'place that must be left in the dark', 'even in the best interpreted dreams', can still be put squarely in its place, despite – or rather *because* of its obscurity' (Weber, 1982: 73-74). I offered Weber's interpretation of this extract above because he will argue that the English translation of Freud's German text loses something in its interpretation. But it is not only English readers that are misinformed. Weber will argue that Lacan⁵¹ also misunderstands Freud's emphasis

⁵¹ Laplanche who trained under Lacan argues that Lacan only ever read a few sentences in German and suggests that Lacan did not know German very well and

concerning the navel. Weber argues that Lacan positioned himself as a guide, someone to 'orient us in this confusing space and place' attached as it to this 'unplumbable navel' (Weber, 1982: 78). At the beginning of Lacan's *The Four Basic Concepts of Psychoanalysis* Weber states, Lacan tells his listeners and future readers, "When you read the texts of Freud, you can rely upon the terms I have introduced to guide you" (in Weber, 1982: 78). And yet here, where these terms should be our guide we are presented with a navel, 'the centre of the unknown – which, like the anatomical navel itself, its representative, is nothing but the abyss (*béance*) of which we speak' (Lacan cited by Weber, 1982: 78). Lacan's 'navel' his *béance* is centred and empty, something that Freud's never was argues Weber. Freud's 'unplumbable navel' while ending in darkness does so in the knowledge that this darkness is 'saturated', is 'full', to use Weber's words, 'because it contains too much' (Weber, 1982: 79). Weber asks why it is that we notice, that Freud noticed this 'tangle of dream-thoughts?' Is it because 'we see or notice' 'that place in a certain way?' (Weber, 1982: 77). This spot argues Freud 'straddles the unknown' illustrating interpretation's 'enabling limit' but also its potential chaotic properties. Weber pauses for a moment on the meaning of the word straddle. Freud straddles this dream-navel argues Weber, whereas Lacan makes of it a centre comprising of nothing. Straddle, 'To spread the legs wide apart... to set the legs wide apart...to take up a position that favours both sides... and at the end of the article a synonym says Weber, to 'divaricate' (Weber, 1982: 80). 'Divaricate', a botanical term meaning 'to stretch or open wide apart or asunder... to branch off or diverge' (from O.E.D.⁵², in Weber, 1982: 80). Freud straddles argues Weber 'in all the meanings suggested so provocatively by the O.E.D., and of which the so-called primal scene is perhaps only the most graphic figuration' (Weber, 1982: 81). Weber has Freud in a rather

therefore was unable to read a complete text of Freud's. Lacan's famous 'Return to Freud' is premised on a reading of Freud. We would suppose that this reading was in German but Laplanche argues that 'I don't think he knew German so well, and I don't think he ever read much more than a few lines at any one time. I don't think he read an entire paper of Freud's in German. It was more an impulse, to go back to Freud, which was very important. His interpretations are completely speculative, or imaginative. Such as when he said that Freud nowhere speaks of 'instinct'. That just goes against what Freud said. Instead of saying Freud never speaks of instinct, it's much more interesting to admit that he did and explore the contradiction between 'instinct' and 'drive' (Laplanche in an interview with John Fletcher and Peter Osborne, 1999).

⁵² Oxford English Dictionary.

compromising position – although admittedly Freud put himself there. And it seems somewhat reminiscent of Irigaray's phallic erection, which would arise in the spot where we were once connected to the mother.

When Freud tells us that the dream is unknown he also concludes that it 'rises ... like a mushroom⁵³ out of its mycelium' (SE 5: 525. Weber, 1982: 75). Thus Weber will tell us, 'If the dream-wish erects itself, phallic-like, out of the mycelium, the latter serves to remind us of what the Lacanian reading would like to forget: that the dream-navel cannot be reduced to a question of the phallus, of the *béance*, split or absent center of a subject, for one simple reason: the thallus' (Weber, 1982: 81). Once again, turning to the O.E.D., Weber finds a "curious definition: one which consists almost entirely of *negations*: *Thallus*, (Gr. *thallos*, green shoot, f. *thallein* to bloom.) Bot. A vegetable structure without vascular tissue, in which there is no differentiation into stem and leaves, and from which true roots are absent' (in Weber, 1982: 81). The thallus, without true roots issuing as it does from the mycelium of the mushroom suggests that whereas Lacan's "signification du phallus" appears to be child's play: *manqué d'un manqué*, *béance*, signifier of the effects of the signified – all such formulae move easily within the stable, homogenous spatial continuum that the thallus distorts and distends, dislocates and disfigures' (Weber, 1982: 82). At the limits of interpretation then argues Weber we find a navel and a thallus that suggest a negation of meaning because there is *too much* meaning. Here then negations are employed to render the unconscious conscious, to avoid repression (Weber, 1982: 82).

What does this have to do with our Sleeping Beauty? Weber states that when Freud arrives at his 'tangle of dream-thoughts' he reassures himself and his readers that this is the 'navel of the dream' and in doing so takes us back to the body of our mothers. 'What could be more reassuring and familiar, more primordial and powerful than this reference to the place where the body was last joined to its maternal origins' (Weber, 1982: 76). And further, 'this place is also the site of a *trace* and of a *separation*, but also of a *knot*, is a reflection that carries little force next to the reassuring sense of continuity, generation, and originality connoted by the figure' (Weber, 1982: 76).

⁵³ Harvie Ferguson suggests that an 'oft repeated' metaphor or simile in Freud's letters and his theory is that of the mushroom. Further Ferguson argues that Freud was an avid mushroom hunter and that on more than one occasion he refers to dreams 'as primitive plant-like or fungus-like forms' (Ferguson, 1996: 67).

Readers of the Standard Edition of Freud are reassured, argues Weber by the translation which renders the dream-thoughts as an 'intricate network' that branch out into our world of thought. But Freud's 'net' is also a 'trap' argues Weber, a net/trap that is not as consoling as Strachey has deciphered it. And 'traps' as Weber states, 'particularly those of the unconscious, are rarely less effective for being ignored' (Weber, 1982: 77).

The words of Freud's German emphasised the 'tangle of dream-thoughts' that do 'not stay in its place', but invade our conscious thoughts in the light of day (Weber, 1982: 77). That which seems so familiar, the navel, is represented then as not 'quite as familiar as it seemed' (Weber, 1982: 77). The philology of *das unheimliche* is echoed in the familiar but unsettling navel: in the anatomical navel to the dream-navel. Freud's injunction that 'We can, must, and indeed *should* stop right here, contemplating the navel' appears to echo the other imperative, to turn away from the mother's genitals, for fear of going blind, therefore castrated. When Freud straddles the 'tangle of dream-thoughts' that reaches down into the unknown, he in effect straddles the mother. The navel with its proximity to the maternal genitals, which Freud evokes in his description, is figuratively the pubic hair, which covers the 'dangerous' genitals of the mother. To get to Sleeping Beauty, we have to, well the prince has too, push through the thorny thicket. Thus both actions involve a getting too that resembles the sexual act. A sexual act that is infantile and Oedipal at bottom because it evokes the boy's desire for the mother. Why then, does Freud, at the limit of interpretation, of knowledge of the unknown, turn away, or rather make the object of representation a horrifying Medusa's head, or of a navel, comforting yet presented to us as a tangle, a net/trap? Like Perseus then, argues Jonte-Pace Freud 'averted his eyes from the psychoanalyst's task of interpretation when the task involved unraveling the threads that led to the mother's body' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 31). He turns away 'at the tangle of maternal hair and at the navel, the site of the scar memorialising the loss of the mother through the cutting of the cord which once linked infant to mother, for he knew that the Oedipal road, the royal road, although it theorizes an erotic reunion with the mother, could not take him to this uncanny destination' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 31). In fact, by comparing the figure of the navel with the 'unknown' which Freud tells us to turn away from he may be evoking the 'Great Unknown' – Death, suggests Jonte-Pace, as Freud in a dream interpretation a few pages earlier

identifies with Death (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 31-32).⁵⁴ But the 'Great Unknown' has implications of the unconscious, God and Fate, as Freud writes in a letter to 'Frau Lou' acknowledging that the First World War 'is exactly the way we should have expected people to behave from our knowledge of psycho-analysis' (Pfeiffer ed. 1972: 21). Freud is saddened by this and states 'We have to abdicate, and the Great Unknown, He or It, lurking behind Fate will someday repeat this experiment with another race' (Pfeiffer ed. 1972: 21). Here Freud compares the Great Unknown to 'He or It', the id/unconscious/God but importantly 'It/Id/He' lurks behind Fate who we have seen before in the guise of the three Goddesses, all mothers, the most beautiful being, according to Freud the Goddess of Love who is later to be thought of as the Goddess of Death, 'Death itself' states Freud (SE 12: 298). While this may seem strange to have Eros and Thanatos merge, become One we might say, Freud tells us that the choice is unconscious, prepared by an archaic 'ambivalence' that 'harks back to a primeval identity'. Choice argues Freud, 'stands in the place of necessity, of destiny' (SE 12: 299), but the idea of freely choosing is itself perhaps nothing more than a wishful phantasy, that, as wishful phantasies do, transforms into its opposite. Freud will say that this "borders on the uncanny" and that we can only 'guess at what lies beneath' (SE 12: 300). Here in a footnote he brings our attention to Psyche of Apuleius's story who has many traits that remind us of death: 'Her wedding is celebrated like a funeral, she has to descend into the underworld, and afterwards she sinks into a death-like sleep' (SE 12: 300 n 1). Psyche's story has some resemblance to Freud's childhood dream of his mother's death that I engaged with above but here Eros conquers Thanatos as Freud cannot let Death take his mother and reversing the roles, he takes his mother in his arms, but unlike Shakespeare's character King Lear, he holds his mother with "hidden sexual cravings", Death cannot have her. This is the paradox according to Freud, because Death already has her, if indeed 'The Mothers' are to be thought of as Death. Freud stops the pursuit of the unknown at the physical scar of our attachment to our mothers and thus in both stopping and turning away, he gets to keep her as the silent Goddess of Love.

⁵⁴ As an aside, Freud tells Theodore Reik a fairy-tale, the same fairy-tale we have been discussing, although in this case it is a 'Sleeping Beauty' of the Orient. Freud tells Reik the tale to explain that we are all of us dispensable, and further that 'psychoanalysis would continue on without him and that change within the fundamental tenets of psychoanalysis was good and to be expected' (in Reik, 1940: 31-32).

Freud will ask his readers to accompany him on a journey into the unconscious arena of dreams and stops only to acknowledge that no one will make it through the ‘thorny thicket’ of the mother/Medusa’s pubic hair. Or indeed be able to descend into the realms of the unknown stopped as we are by the naval of the dream. And if somehow we did get through to the other side of the mother/Medusa, what would we find but that death is waiting for us disguised as Sleeping Beauty. How else are we to understand this myth, this fairy-tale?

‘Witch metapsychology’

‘The Devil knows the recipe/But only a witch/Can stir and shake and make it.’⁵⁵

Jay Geller will say that ‘Freudian discourse was at least as much shaped by the corporealization of identity as it helped shape this phenomenon’ (Geller, 2007: 11). And that Freud sought to subvert some of these discourses – of gender, race, sexuality and class and in doing so was caught in a classic double bind. Thus, uncannily argues Geller this ‘double bind’ will weave – travel maybe – its way through Freud’s corpus projecting and introjecting at turns, turning on its own travail. What Sprengnether identifies as a haunting mother in Freud’s work, and Jonte-Pace a counterthesis is perhaps an ‘echo’ of a late 19th, early 20th Century man attempting to both find his place in an increasingly anti-Semitic world through claiming a universality that effects/affects us ‘All’. In a similar argument, although with a quite different aim in mind, Sabine Prokhoris introduces *The Witch’s Kitchen* citing Goethe’s exposition concerning the red thread that runs through the rope of the English navy; a red thread that denotes its allegiance to the Crown. Goethe argues that in his work ‘Elective Affinities’ ‘there runs through Ottilie’s journal a thread of affection and inclination that binds everything together and characterises the whole’ (in Prokhoris, 1995: 1). Thus Prokhoris will argue that in reading Freud such a red thread also exists. Binding together his love letters to Martha, his letters to Jung, Ferenczi, Jones and others, his scientific work – *his* psychoanalysis, and importantly to Goethe. In fact, one could argue that Freud borrows Goethe’s red thread and weaves it throughout his work. Prokhoris contends that Freud does this when contemplating a ‘weak spot’ in his argument, calling on the ‘Witch’ of Goethe’s most “queerest brainchild” – *Faust* - to

⁵⁵ Scene Eight, the ‘Witches Kitchen’, Mephistopheles speaks. In Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*. Howard Brenton ed. 1995. All quoted material unless otherwise indicated from this edition.

use Prokhoris's words, to proceed (Prokhoris, 1995: 2). Just as Oedipus calls on the blind prophet Tiresias to make clear the prophecy which, he does not believe Freud calls on the 'Witch' to explain his Metapsychology.

In his *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (SE 23) Freud tells us that the road of a successful psychoanalysis is long – there are no shortcuts (SE 23: 224). Of one concern – he names three – in the analytic experience is the 'taming' of the instinct so that the demand of the instinct 'falls' into place alongside the ego (SE 23: 224-225). But how is this achieved asks Freud? To which, he answers we do not know, 'we can only say: 'So muss den doch die Hexe dran!' – the Witch Metapsychology. Without metapsychological speculation and theorizing—I had almost said 'phantasying'—we shall not get another step forward. Unfortunately, here as elsewhere, what our Witch reveals is neither very clear nor very detailed' (SE 23: 225). 'We must call the Witch to our help after all' but unfortunately she offers us only one clue from which to work from, 'although it's a clue of the highest value', the antithesis between the primary processes and the secondary processes' (SE 23: 225). Not only does Freud call on the 'Witch', he will, several pages later, tell us that ancient myth and superstition continue to cling tenaciously onto life, so that one could almost believe that dragons still exist (SE 23: 229). In contrast, Peter Gay will state that Freud had no use for mythical creatures like dragons or the centaur, here used in reference to a 'philosophical theologian' as a 'strange centaur' (Gay, 1987: 67). Gay insists that for Freud the exposure of these mythical beings was a task that psychoanalysis was well suited for (Gay, 1987: 67). Here mythical beings not only include centaurs – half man, half beast, but also God and Christ (Gay, 1987: 67). But Gay himself refers to *Logos* as the divinity of psychoanalysis. An interesting parable then given that *Logos* in Greek is also Christ, the son who Gay places with other mythical beings of who Freud had little use for. And yet the Oedipus myth with its patricide, its incest and inducement to matricide and its mythical creature, the Sphinx is recognised as one of the major tenets, if not *the* major tenet of psychoanalysis. The Sphinx with her woman's head and breast, the body of a lion and wings of an eagle is not a monster in the traditional sense but an ancient religious figure. God and his son Jesus then appear to be in good company and not as Gay would have it, of little use to the 'Father' of psychoanalysis.

Prokhoris argues that Goethe who was haunted for years by the ‘avatars’ of the Faust legend, was a father figure for Freud, and she adds, immortal besides (Prokhoris, 1995: 78). Prokhoris will argue that Freudian psychoanalysis and Goethe’s *Faust* are nocturnal creations – creatures of the night. But also, and more importantly it is Goethe’s *Faust* that Prokhoris suggests, ‘helped maintain’ the blind spots – the navels – of Freud’s own self-analysis and correspondingly, of his theory. The ‘massive blind spot’ that every patient encounters, including Freud, is also ‘the mysterious, obscure night hollowed out behind her, the night of a dark wood or deep spring, or else of a womb...’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 78). ‘This nocturnal power’ argues Prokhoris, ‘finds expression, in *Faust*, in the figure of the Witch, veritable sublation but also naked reality of what Goethe calls “nature”—an undefinable, archaic maternal figure taken to wife in the nuptials that preside over artistic creation’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 78). As I argued in Chapter One Freud states that it was hearing Goethe’s beautiful essay on ‘Nature’ that attracted him to medicine rather than his original field of law. Goethe’s Nature though is quite a different one to the one that Freud will portray. Initially, a ‘nourishing, never exhausted, and never denying mother—a sensual and maternal deity’ ‘She’ is wholly different from the cruel, heedless, destructive Nature Freud would delineate in his late writings’ (Gay, 1987: 59).

Goethe, Prokhoris argues, is a Mephistophelean mediator in Freud’s engagement with the Witch metapsychology and thus helps to maintain what Prokhoris will call Freud’s ‘umbilical link’ with his ‘ongoing experience of the unconscious’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 80). The ‘umbilical’ as Freud has shown is the spot that reaches down into the unknown, where a ‘tangle of thoughts’ converge, cover over and also catch (trap?) the ‘uninterpreted’, the ‘misinterpreted’ the not to be interpreted dream-thoughts. Prokhoris analyses that the intellectual labour needed to produce metapsychological theory must be the same as that that engenders dreams (Prokhoris, 1995: 80). The source of both states Prokhoris is ‘nourished’ by infantile wishes, by the return of the repressed. Goethe then, or more particularly Goethe’s *Faust*, can ‘serve as a support for the subtle alchemical operation that enables Freud to make the transition from dreams to scientific discourse’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 80). Prokhoris contends that ‘Goethe’s Witch is interminably delivering him [Freud] of this work of art he keeps returning to, which he nourishes even as he sucks sustenance from it, which he cannot quite manage to tear himself free of...’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 80). A provocative analysis;

the Witch holds Freud to her breast from which he cannot free himself. Evocative of Freud's statement 'The finding of an object is in fact a refinding of it' (SE 7: 222) and perhaps 'There are thus good reasons why a child sucking at his mother's breast has become the prototype of every relation of love' (SE 7: 222). But what does this say for Freud? About Freud? Is he like Faust, asks Prokhoris who desires to drink (and drink...) from the eternally refillable breasts of nature? But who has to be satisfied by the 'Witches ghastly, loathsome brew' (Prokhoris, 1995: 50). And isn't this an infantile wish and also as Freud makes clear a reproach against the mother, who never gave us enough milk, enough love that is to say (SE 22: 122). It might be that Freud is less Faust and more Mephistopheles, he who can only whisper the name 'The Mothers'. Who in handing Faust the tiny key to 'The Mothers' tells him 'Don't underestimate/ It'. Although Faust also says, 'A beautiful word, 'Mothers'/That the mind knows/Is comforting: What, then, shudders/ My soul?'(Part Two, Act One, Scene 5: 168-171).

The Witch's Kitchen

'The logic of soup, with dumplings for arguments' (SE 12: 167 and E. Freud, 1960: 280)

In Goethe's *Faust*, Faust complains to Mephistopheles that his words always smell to him like the Witch's kitchen, 'Of a long forgotten time, to me'. Prokhoris makes a connection between Freud's id, which Freud said we approach with analogies, 'we call it chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitements' (in Prokhoris, 1995: 111 and SE 22: 73) and the scene of the Witch's Kitchen in *Faust*. The Witch's Kitchen is about the turning back of time, a return to youth. In this then it is reminiscent of another kitchen and the boy Freud. Here he learns the lesson of death at the hands – literally – of his mother. In recounting this dream in *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud goes to the kitchen in search of pudding, but one of the women, of which there were three tells him he must wait until she was ready. Freud leaves with a sense of injustice and in the fairy-tale scene reminiscent of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, here Freud being our Goldilocks begins to try on overcoats.⁵⁶ The first is too long, the second

⁵⁶ In the short paper, *Observations and Examples from Analytic Practice* (SE 13) Freud argues that an overcoat is a symbol for a man. While he does suggest that this is common to woman's dreams (simply because overcoat in German is 'Mantel' which has linguistic assonance to 'Man') it is interesting that Freud denied 'pudding' by a woman goes looking for comfort in a man, well a symbol of a man at least. I am

belongs to a stranger with a long face (SE 4: 204), which is strangely descriptive of Mephistopheles argues Prokhoris (1995: 154). He seems to be looking for one that is 'just right'. He remembers when he was about thirteen and the first novel he reads in which the hero at the end of his life kept calling out to three women 'who had bought the greatest happiness and sorrow into his life' (SE 4: 205). Freud continues, 'In connection with the three women I thought of the three Fates who spin the destiny of man, and I knew that one of the three women—the inn-hostess in the dream—was the mother who gives life, and furthermore (as in my own case) gives the living creature its first nourishment. Love and hunger, I reflected, meet at a woman's breast'. One of the Fates was rubbing her hands together, 'as if she were making dumplings' and Freud suggests that this is the Goddess of Death and here he remembers the lessons of his mother:

When I was six years old and was given my first lessons by my mother, I was expected to believe that we were all made of earth and must therefore return to earth. This did not suit me and I expressed doubts of the doctrine. My mother thereupon rubbed the palms of her hands together—just as she did in making dumplings, except that there was no dough between them—and showed me the blackish scales of *epidermis* produced by the friction as a proof that we were made of earth. My astonishment at this ocular demonstration knew no bounds and I acquiesced in the belief which I was later to hear expressed in the words: '*Du bist der Natur einen Tod schuldig*' ('Thou owest Nature a death'). So they really were Fates that I found in the kitchen when I went into it—as I had so often done in my childhood when I was hungry, while my mother, standing by the fire, had admonished me that I must wait till dinner was ready (SE 4: 205).

The 'weird spectacle' in the Witch's kitchen where Faust drinks the witch's brew while the Witch recites a strange spell/magic, mumbo-jumbo Prokhoris calls it, is reminiscent of 'the unknowable, or unconscious, where (the Witch) metapsychology ultimately proceeds' (Prokhoris, 1995: 140). Here then between Goethe's *Faust* and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* the kitchen or the Witch's Kitchen, because after all what are the three Fates but Witches is the place 'where metapsychology learns to

not suggesting anything here other than, when the mother says 'No' Freud turns to a father, or at least a male figure for some kind of reassurance/comfort. To extend this point, in the American lectures Freud argues that 'Men generally are not candid in sexual matters. They do not show their sexuality freely, but they wear a thick overcoat—a fabric of lies—to conceal it, as though it were bad weather in the world of sex' (Chase, 2010).

undo repression and open its ears to the language of the drives' (Prokhoris, 1995: 145). Perhaps we should pause for a moment and make clear what metapsychology is, irrespective or perhaps inclusive of its categorisation as a 'Witch'. For Prokhoris, 'Metapsychology is neither a serenely (and naïvely) totalising vision of things, nor a set of experimentally verifiable hypotheses; it is rather a palimpsest of the unconscious, communicating, via the bridges formed by words, with dreams, the transference, and, ultimately, the drive' (Prokhoris, 1995: 13). And further for Prokhoris, the 'relation between Freud's text and that which, in Freud's text, operates as "infratext"—namely, the "citations" from *Faust*—assures the transmission of these "palimpsest effects"' (Prokhoris, 1995: 13-14). José Brunner argues that Freud denoted the term metapsychology to describe his use of metaphors, which helped him to explain the processes of the mind (Brunner, 1995: 48). Brunner further argues that Freud's use of metaphors, his metapsychological theorising 'moulds the invisible world of the psyche primarily in terms of the outer world of society' (Brunner, 1995: 49). Freud states in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (SE 18):

The indefiniteness of all our discussions on what we describe as metapsychology is of course due to the fact that we know nothing of the nature of the excitatory process that takes place in the elements of the psychical systems, and that we do not feel justified in framing any hypothesis on the subject. We are constantly operating all the time with a large unknown factor, which we are obliged to carry over into every new formula (SE 18: 30-31).

Brunner sums it up well, citing Samuel Weber, 'Freud's willingness to negotiate with the unknown and to acknowledge uncertainty not merely as an impediment or defect, but as an integral part of thinking and writing' (Brunner, 1995: 50). To return to our 'Witch' metapsychology then, the Witch in the guise of metapsychology 'appears' at the tangle of dream thoughts of the unplumable navel. The Witch both reveals then, and also in juxtaposition, or at least paradoxically, keeps 'things' hidden. As an 'undoer' of repression, mindful of the fact that Freud said 'It is not easy in theory to deduce the possibility of such a thing as repression' (SE 14: 146), the Witch translates (and let it be noted that Freud in a letter to Fliess wrote that repression is a failure of translation (Masson, 1995: 208)), myth, dream, fairy-tale into knowledge. But this knowledge itself goes back to the first riddle, 'Where do babies come from?' which could in fact be interpreted as, 'Where did this particular, intruding baby come from?' (SE 9: 212-213). Freud states that this first riddle/question is like all research 'the

product of a vital exigency' (SE 9: 213). Prokhoris argues that in Freud's wish to know the unconscious and therefore in the attempt to undo the repression that bars access to the unconscious, he would have to 'work out a system of thought capable of re-establishing a connection with the infantile' (Prokhoris, 1995: 146). As Freud argued in *Dreams*, 'The fact is thus confirmed that *what is unconscious in mental life is also what is infantile*' (SE 15: 210). We can see that this is what Klein sought to do with her effort to get to a 'before': before the unconscious was *unconscious* – before that is the unconscious itself (see Chapter Two, page 55). If as Prokhoris argues, Faust was 'made new' in the Witch's Kitchen, rejuvenated we could say, then what Freud sought was a rejuvenation of types. By re-establishing the connections between the repressed infantile sexual researches and the return of the repressed in the myth, dreams and fairy-tales of the adult analysand Freud was making clear, or at least conscious, the theory of drives and the unconscious. Freud then is playing a double-game argues Prokhoris comparable to the duplicities of the Trojan horse (Prokhoris, 1995: 146). All matter/*mater* of things reside within the psyche, not only the Odyssean shades, but Odysseus himself, or at least his figurative counterpart, 'he' who undertook the journey to the underworld, and was able to see the 'ghosts' only when they 'tasted blood'. A fitting analogy then, when one considers that the Trojan horse is a form of metaphoric trickery, a storming of the 'barricades of repression' and it might be said, who knows what else (Prokhoris, 1995: 146).

To take us back to the kitchen, Freud states the child in his/her cloacal stage not only believes that babies are born from the anus but that the eating of some particular thing, like in a fairy story, will create a baby (SE 9: 220). Prokhoris will argue that Goethe's Witch's Kitchen and Freud's kitchen which has an echo of the primal scene (and might surely be included in Freud's primal phantasies) encapsulates metapsychology but also, and tellingly the theory of drives of hunger and love, which Prokhoris neglects to say, that even Freud said, meet at the Mother's breast. Prokhoris offers another dream from *The Interpretation of Dreams* one that elaborates the play of the three Fates in the kitchen scene. Freud argues that this dream belongs to 'Dreams of convenience' (SE 4: 125), which was seen in his desire for a glass of water. Here Prokhoris diverts our attention showing that this dream, far from being a convenience dream is 'modified' as she writes it. In the 'modified' version of the 'convenience' dream Freud's wife is giving him a drink of water out of an 'Etruscan

cinerary vase', which in any event Freud no longer owned having gifted it to someone else. The water 'tasted so salty (evidently because of the ashes in the urn) that I woke up' states Freud (SE 4: 124). Freud offers a footnote with two citations to prove that thirst and hunger in dreams give rise to awakening (of the soul also) and of quelling these needs. Prokhoris is surprised that Freud is contented to leave the convenience dream there. In Freud's kitchen dream of the three Fates, we hear echo's of his childhood kitchen states Prokhoris and simultaneously the intersection of love/hunger and knowledge, precisely the ingredients of the Witch metapsychology. Here the first question of the infantile sexual researches, 'Where do babies come from?' and his mother's lesson, 'What becomes of the dead?' are inseparable (Prokhoris, 1995: 154). Thus the origin of babies, 'like being in a fairy story; one eats some particular thing and gets a child from it' (SE 9: 220) and The End, 'Thou owest Nature a death' (SE 4: 205), are intertwined.

What Freud drinks from the Etruscan⁵⁷ cinerary urn is a 'dead man' argues Prokhoris, but more than that, in the French at least, the salty taste of the water can be compared to the sea and the mother ('the homonyms *mer* and *mère* mean sea and mother' (Prokhoris, 1995: 152 n.)). Thus death, dumplings/babies and knowledge are knitted, one might say knotted together like the navel and therefore have an 'originary' relation to the mother and her body. That the babies/dumplings are implicitly connected to knowledge, or of the having of knowledge that is not yours is explained by Freud in the German: *Knödel*/dumplings is also *Knödl* the plagiariser. This takes me back to the question my six-year old son asked of me and that I offered in Chapter One of this thesis, 'If you eat my soul does that mean you have my voice?' Not unlike the six-year old Freud seeking his mother's knowledge regarding the 'sexual' theories

⁵⁷ The connection with death is further extended if one considers Freud's dream on 'a strange book', *She* and its companion by the same author, *Heart of the World* (SE 5: 452-455). Without addressing the dream in full, I will take one element of it: Freud sees the 'wooden house' in the dream as a grave. Freud argues that in actuality 'I had already been in a grave once, but it was an excavated Etruscan grave'. ... 'The dream seems to have been saying: 'If you must rest in a grave, let it be the Etruscan one. And, by making this replacement, it transformed the gloomiest of expectations into one that was highly desirable' (SE 5: 454-455). That Freud saw the 'skeletons of two grown-up men' in the Etruscan grave is reflected in the dream of drinking ashes of dead men from the 'Etruscan cinerary vase'. Although this is not Freud's point, and he makes no association to the 'salty taste of the ashes' and 'death' which is why Prokhoris refers to a/her 'modified' version of Freud's 'convenience dream'.

of 'the beginning and the end'. 'So wird's Euch an der Weisheit *Brüsten*' quotes Freud from *Faust*, 'Thus at the *breasts* of Wisdom clinging...' (SE 4: 206 n 3), Freud links Eros and Death to the mother through the Witch metapsychology without realising that he is doing so. He reiterates this in his quotation of *Faust* once again at the closure of a 'botanical (monograph) dream' (SE 4: 282):

A thousand threads one treadle throws,
Where fly the shuttles hither and thither,
Unseen the threads are knit together,
And an infinite combination grows (SE 4: 283 n 2).

Weaving as Freud argued in *Femininity* (SE 22) is an unconscious response to the 'mattedness' of the pubic hair, which conceals the Medusa affect of the female genitals. Further weaving and plaiting argues Freud in this paper were perhaps the only contribution that women have made 'in the history of civilisation' (SE 22: 132). Prokhoris argues, 'Like the kitchen, weaving, whose back-and-forth movement is not without sexual connotations, belongs to woman's sphere...Weaving, thanks to which the texture of dreams excels at concealing, not a "nothing," but a "dark continent" – the mystery of whatever it is that dreams cook up in their kitchen' (Prokhoris, 1995: 157). Also, and as Freud argued in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, it is Kriemhild's embroidered cross that shows Hagen where to stab Siegfried (SE 5: 515 n 2). Thus, and as Freud perhaps unconsciously, certainly inadvertently writes, the embroidered mark, reminiscent of the pubic hair of women, of the mother, has the power to cause death.

Femininity

Freud will argue that when the little girl turns away from the mother she does so with feelings of hostility directed towards the mother. In fact, her 'powerful' attachment to the mother 'ends in hate' (SE 22: 121). Her reproaches against the mother are great, but not argues Freud dissimilar to the little boys; the mother didn't love her/him enough, which is equivalent to giving 'them' too little milk. She is a 'faithless' mother, she brings another child into 'their space'; she forbids any masturbatory

pleasure. 'All these factors' says Freud, 'the slights, the disappointments in love, the jealousy, the seduction followed by prohibition—are, after all, also in operation in the relation of a *boy* to his mother and are yet unable to alienate him from the maternal object' (SE 22: 122-124). It is the castration complex states Freud, where the little girl feels 'seriously wronged' by the mother for her 'inferior organ' that differentiates the girl from the boy. Penis envy will leave 'ineradicable traces on their development and the formation of their character' (SE 22: 125). Here Freud means that women will have more jealousy and carry more envy than men. That the turning away from the mother 'ends in hate' is never fully resolved and later, finds a substitute in the birth of a baby boy. Thus Freud will argue, that 'A mother is only bought unlimited satisfaction by her relation to a son; this is altogether the most perfect, the most free from ambivalence of all human relationships' (SE 22: 133). Certainly, to concur with Freud's own analysis of his essay on *Femininity*, it is 'incomplete and fragmentary' and different to his earlier essay on *Female Sexuality* (SE 21). In this earlier paper, Freud argues that the little girls turning away from the mother creates 'aggressive oral and sadistic wishes in a form forced on them by early repression, as a fear of being killed by her mother' (SE 21: 237). This is a result of an unconscious hostility that the child feels as emanating from the mother towards/against her. Freud argued that one unconscious could act on another unconscious – this *is* after all a psycho-analysis. Freud argued 'How many mothers, who love their children tenderly, perhaps over-tenderly, to-day, conceived them unwillingly and wished at that time that the living thing within them might not develop further! They may even have expressed that wish in various, fortunately harmless, actions. Thus their death-wish against someone they love, which is later so mysterious, originates from the earliest days of their relationship to that person' (SE 15: 202 see also SE 4: 154-5 and 259).

Jim Swan (1974) argues that the hostility and sadism that the child feels is actually a 'two-way-street', die or be killed. In his example of oral sadism Swan makes this symbolic fantasy explicit: 'the "sucked and hungry lioness" in Shakespeare's 'As You Like It', the lioness representing a fantasy of a mother devoured by her infant and now about to devour the infant in retaliation' (Swan, 1974: 50 and Act IV, Sc. 3). The fear of the mother then, which is a fear of being consumed, was initially found in analysis argues Freud, only in relation to the father. But he argues that it is probably 'the product of transformation of oral aggressivity directed to the mother. The child

wants to eat up its mother from whom it has had its nourishment; in the case of the father there is no such obvious determinant for the wish' (SE 21: 237). This deflection of the 'bad mother' to the father is a product of the battle for the mother by the child. Rank will place this 'battle' prenatally and in Lacan's *Hommelette/lamella* given in Chapter One, a similar scenario takes place where the mother covers the baby with a 'kind of hunger', her libido and in turn the baby tries to 'devour' – one could say exhaust – the mother in return. Rank argues that this image of the 'bad mother' continues in 'Freud's estimation of woman, who is merely a passive and inferior object for him: in other words 'castrated' (in Kramer ed., 1993: 38).

The Father's Daughter is not the Mother's

Freud 'borrows' the Oedipus myth from the Greek playwright Sophocles but his favourite Greek figure, of which he owned a small bronze, was the 'Pallas Athena'. H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) who was analysed by Freud in 1933-1934 states that after a psychoanalytic session they would often wander into Freud's study and continue their discussion. On one occasion Freud told H.D. that his collection of 'Mythological figures, ancient Assyrian deities, wooden toys from Egyptian tombs, saints and gargoyles, the eloquent symbolism of serpents and Gothic dragons...hundreds of strange and lovely little carved faces...' "helped stabilise the evanescent idea, or keep it from escaping altogether" (Donn, 1988: 6). He once handed her a small bronze statue, positioned with others in a semi-circle on his desk. "“*This* is my favourite", he said, and placed it in her hands' (Donn, 1988: 6). The statue was the Pallas Athena. H.D. knew it was "“to be venerated as a projection of abstract thought ... born without human or even without divine mother, sprung full-armed from the head of her father . . . Zeus”" (Donn, 1988: 6). 'She is perfect ... only she has lost her spear' (H.D., 1974: 69-69). With the Nazi invasion of Vienna Freud made the decision to move his family to England. Concerned that he would lose his collection of antiquities to the Nazi's he chose two examples, two favourite pieces, one being the Pallas Athena and had Princess Bonaparte 'spirit' them away to France. Freud was eventually reunited with all his collection but on receiving the Pallas Athena from the Princess he said that he felt 'proud and rich under the protection of Athene' (Freud in Molnar, 1992: 237). It is intriguing that a man who depicted women as the 'dark continent', as an unsolvable riddle, eons old, could venerate a statue of a Greek goddess, one who wore the image of Medusa on her 'breast'. A Medusa that Freud had written as representing the

‘horrificing’ effects of the mother’s genitals (SE 18). Tracing the mythic linkage of the ‘horrificing Medusa with the goddess Athene’ Freud notes the ‘appropriateness of the symbolism: “This symbol of horror (*Grauen*) is worn upon her dress by the virgin goddess Athene. And rightly so, for thus she becomes a woman who is unapproachable and repels all sexual desires – since she displays the terrifying genitals of the Mother”’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 52 and SE 18: 273-274). Freud’s conclusion that the Medusa’s head, like the sight of the mother’s genitals arouse castration anxiety, involves a ‘turning away’. In doing so, he emphasises the apotropaic effect of the penis which ‘stiffens’ at the sight of the Medusa’s head/mothers genitals, reassuring the ‘male’ viewer that everything will be alright – after all ‘To display the penis or any of its surrogates is to say: ‘I am not afraid of you. I defy you. I have a penis’ (SE 18: 274). Freud then seems to be saying that while ‘his’ Athena is esteemed, ‘he’ is terrified of the mother. What might the Pallas Athena represent to Freud? H.D. saw the statue as representing to Freud ‘his belief in reason against all odds’ (Donn, 1988: 6). But is it reasonable to believe that the daughter sprang from the father’s head? Perhaps this is how Freud ‘reasoned’ his relationship to Anna. It was as if she had bypassed the mother and was the father’s progeny alone. Freud said Anna was the ‘most gifted of his children’ and told Jones that she ‘does not claim to be treated as a woman’ (Donn, 1988: 176). In a letter to Arnold Zweig, Freud refers to Anna, as ‘my faithful Anna-Antigone’ (E. Freud, 1960: 424).⁵⁸ To Lou Andreas-Salomé Freud said of Anna’s care, quoting Goethe’s Mephistopheles, ‘In the end we depend/On the creatures we made’ (in E.Freud, 1960: 425). Prokhoris argues that the devil/demon Mephistopheles had a particular resonance for Freud (Prokhoris, 1995). Freud in his letters to Fliess calls him ‘my demon,’(daimonie) ‘my other half’ (Masson, 1985: 134). Strachey will call Fliess Freud’s ‘auxiliary super-ego’ (in Grossworth, 1991: 32). To Ferenczi he says “...you will long ago have guessed the subjective condition for the ‘Choice of the Three Caskets”’ (in E. Freud, 1960: 301).

I want to question further how Freud’s attachment to the Pallas Athena and her association with Medusa might say something about the neglect of the mother in his work. Athena is the virgin patron of Athens and the Parthenon on the Acropolis was

⁵⁸ In fact the full sentence is as follows, ‘Even supported by my faithful Anna-Antigone I could not embark on a journey’ (E. Freud, 1960: 424). Antigone guides her blind father Oedipus through the ‘wilderness’.

built in Athena's honour. J.J. Bachofen in *Myth, Religion and Mother Right* (1973), in his argument for the matriarchal society that preceded the existing patriarchal one argued that Athena was originally a maternal figure that was – like other goddesses – reinterpreted as a god and therefore given more power. Freud in contrast saw Athena as an 'original mother goddess divested of her power', as all mother-goddesses were. But in Athena's case, 'she was reduced to being a daughter...robbed of her own mother and, by having virginity imposed on her, was permanently excluded from motherhood' (SE 23: 45-46, n 2).⁵⁹ In this interpretation, Athena was demoted to being only Zeus's daughter – his brain-child – never allowed the expression of motherhood (Freud would have known though, that when Zeus swallows Athena's mother Metis, he takes over her progenerative capacity). Anna, the 'child analyst' as Freud referred to her, whether this meant the analyst of children or his child, the analyst is less clear, but in the language of old, she is a spinster, unmarried, childless. A 'brain-child' no less. It might also be said, that when Freud stood on the Acropolis with a feeling of 'estrangement/déjà vu', he was standing on the daughter's house, importantly then, the mother's womb.

Rose cites an example given in H. D.'s *Tribute to Freud* of his recognition that one of her symptoms – writing on the wall – was 'dangerous'. Dangerous because as Freud analyses it this symptom of hallucinated writing was an expression of a desire for union with the mother (Rose, 2004: 154). Later he tells her that what he found most disturbing in regard to this symptom was not only that it expressed a regression to the mother but that he was put in the position of the mother: 'I do not like to be the mother in the transference – it always surprises and shocks me a little' (Freud cited by Rose, 2004: 154). The moment of danger for Freud suggests Rose is where Freud's own 'rigid' lines of demarcation between inside and outside, between object and subject break down. Freud himself links writing as originally a representation for the lost mother in *Civilisation and its Discontents* (SE 21: 91). But there is a doubling

⁵⁹ In one version of the legend Athena becomes a mother, although she doesn't physically give birth, rather Hephaestus who falls in love with her, follows her (although lame) and while she resists him, he ejaculates on her leg. Disgusted Athena wipes the semen off with a bit of wool, which mingles with 'Mother Earth' and Erichthonius is born. Athena recognises him as her son and rears him without the other Gods knowing.

here, of both the mother in the form of writing, and Freud as a representation of this mother. The double is analysed by Freud as our reassurance against death but we have seen that the dead mother is covered over by Freud as something he does not want to see. But why is the mother such a troubling figure for Freud? Is it really as simple as a form of displacement from the circumcised male Jew to the uncanny body of the mother, who represents both life and death?

The Wandering Jew

On the eve of Freud's departure to England he writes a letter to his son with the words, 'it is high time that Ahasuerus came to rest somewhere' (E.Freud, 1938: 442-443). This is a letter of an 'old man' writing to his son for no particular reason he says. But as Jonte-Pace suggests it is not a 'Virgilian, Oedipal or Dantean hero, who maps the royal road and reads the hidden signs' but 'the eternal wandering Jew' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 28). 'Ahasuerus', the 'wandering Jew', whose name is thought to have originated with the Persian King in the book of Esther who, is not a Jew and whose very name among medieval Jews was said to be an exemplum of a fool.⁶⁰ Thus the name Freud took for himself at the end of his life, like his Moses, is a Jew and not a Jew, is both wanderer and clown. Strangely then, Freud the absolver of Moses Jewish identity takes a historical/mythical identity and makes it his own. Stranger still, when one considers Jung's analysis of the wanderer as representative of a longing 'of the ever-restless desire, which nowhere finds its object, for, unknown to itself, it seeks the lost mother' (Jung, 1919: 127). Jonte-Pace cites Susan Shapiro as arguing that Ahasuerus, the 'eternal wandering Jew' is the 'troupe' that underwrites *The Uncanny*. As I have argued above in Freud's attempt to masculinize the Jewish male, he displaces, or 'grafts' as Shapiro suggests, what is uncanny about the Jewish male – circumcision – onto the female body, especially the body of the mother (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 81-82). Freud himself recognises this wandering male Jew as himself in *The Uncanny* when in a 'provincial town in Italy' he finds himself retracing his footsteps not once but three times, to a street of small houses full with painted women at their windows (PE, 2003:144). Jonte-Pace argues that Freud 'portrays himself as a wanderer far from home who experiences a sense of the uncanny when he loses his way in a labyrinth of female sexuality' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 82).

⁶⁰ Reference online 'Wikipedia'.

Geller continues the 'wandering Jew' analogy although for Geller it is about the political position of the Jews in anti-Semitic Vienna. Geller argues that from the definition of the uncanny as that which turns into its opposite comes an argument that incorporates the situation of 'Viennese Jews during Freud's professional career' (Geller, 2007: 43). Gentiles viewed the Jews as a '*Gastvolk*' that is a guest people, not as a welcome guest but as a parasite upon the *Gastvolk*, the host people. The double-bind of the uncanny is evident here states Geller in the use of the word *Gastvolk* which places the Jew as both an uncanny guest and is also its host. Consequently argues Geller, 'as with any encounter with the uncanny, Gentile encounters with Jews were mediated by dread, anxiety and the fascination, by the projection of all that would be strange on the all-too-familiar' (Geller, 2007: 44). Further Geller quotes from a pamphlet circulated in Vienna in the 1880's where the Russian Jewish physician, Leon Pinsker concludes that Jews could not trust in the Emancipation but must emancipate themselves. Of interest here, is that Pinsker highlights the 'crimes' of the Jews, as Freud does later in his *Moses and Monotheism* (SE 23) in particular aligning the hatred of Jews to their 'hand' in the death of Jesus. As for the rest, Pinsker's pamphlet lists the Jews crimes against humanity as perceived by the 'rest of civilisation' (Geller, 2007: 45). Pinsker makes the point argues Geller that Israel had not really died but its spirit lived on in the displaced Jews. The nation is dead but the Jew lives: lives though, as an 'apparition,' as 'one of the dead walking among the living' (Geller, 2007: 45). Here then, we have the image of Ahasuerus 'the wandering Jew' cursed to walk the earth for eternity for taunting Jesus on his way to the Crucifixion. Freud's use of Ahasuerus as a moniker, with its associations to Cain, nearing the end of his own life and being displaced to England raises other questions. In the biblical story Cain kills Abel because he believes that God favours Abel over him. Here then is Freud's displaced, dethroned and prejudiced infant who looks on the new arrival with jealousy and death-wishes. In a letter to Fliess Freud writes, 'I greeted my brother (who was a year my junior and who died after a few months) with ill-wishes and genuine childhood jealousy' (SE 1: 262). Freud wishes for Julius' death, and indeed the death was a fulfilment of the wish, although as he says, 'his death left the germ of self-reproaches in me' (SE 1: 262).

The Cain Phantasy

Freud comments on a patient's 'Cain phantasy' because "all men are brothers" (SE 5: 458, see also SE 4: 260). This young man who is diagnosed with an obsessional neurosis desired to murder his father and when his parents really died he began to reproach himself violently for having these murderous inclinations. He believed that as Cain he could get rid of/murder complete strangers by keeping his 'eye' on them. Freud's attention to the Cain phantasy is aligned with his sleepwalking on a train journey. Here Freud's wandering is an escape from his elderly travelling companions who he imagined wanted to 'exchange affectionate embraces during the night' and his arrival, met with such hostility had prevented this. The young man with the 'Cain phantasy' had been Freud's travelling companion a few weeks earlier and it had been an enjoyable journey. Freud says at the root of the young man's neurosis lay 'hostile impulses against his father, dating from his childhood' and involving a sexual situation (SE 5: 458). In 'identifying myself' with him suggests Freud, I was 'seeking to confess something analogous' in myself (SE 5: 458). Freud argues that the 'something analogous' was a scene from his early childhood where the sexually curious child 'forced his way into his parents bedroom and had been turned out of it on his father's orders' (SE 5: 458-459). This has connections with the other scene where the young Freud urinating in front of his parents is reprimanded with 'the boy will come to nothing' remaining and re-evoked in his journey to Rome and his visit to the Acropolis. The echo of the reprimand raising the possibility of finding out the 'forbidden thing' is resolved as Freud surveys Rome. 'I have come to something' he seems to say.

Jonte-Pace argues that Shapiro is 'exactly on the mark' when she aligns Freud's uncanny wanderings with the next passage in *The Uncanny*. Freud cherished a 'superstitious belief' as he called it, that he was destined to die at the age of 62. Under the influence of Fliess's 'biological doctrine' he placed an emphasis on the significance of numbers and in a letter to Jung in 1909 explains the uncanny experience he had with the frequency of the number 62 in his life (McGuire, 1974: 219). He felt the number 62, in its various forms, hotel rooms, theatre tickets, telephone numbers, pursued him. After he had celebrated his 62nd birthday he apparently remarked to Ferenczi, 'That shows what little trust one can place in the supernatural' (in Jones, 1957: 418). In fact, Freud at the time of writing *The Uncanny* was 63. And he writes in *The Uncanny* although without reference to himself, a man

would be very hard indeed if he did not respond to the ‘obstinate reoccurrence of a number; he will take it, perhaps as an indication of the span of life allotted to him’ (SE 17: 238). A year past his expected death one could say Freud may have felt as if he had cheated death: ‘The wandering Jew, fated to die at age sixty-two, had survived’ (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 84). And quoting Cixous, ‘Isn’t the one who has lived a year beyond the age foreseen for his own disappearance in some way, a ghost?’ (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 84). There is more to this autobiographical account because Freud offers another personal example of an uncanny effect. On a train, Freud catches sight of his image in the mirror and experiences something like a shock he says because the meeting of one’s own image is sometimes ‘unbidden and unexpected’ like meeting a stranger whose appearance you ‘thoroughly disliked’ (SE 17: 248 n 1). Rank quotes Heine as saying, ‘There is nothing more uncanny than seeing one’s face accidentally in a mirror by moonlight’ (Rank, 1971: 43 n 19). Freud asks, ‘Is it possible, though, that our dislike of them was a vestigial trace of the archaic reaction which feels the ‘double’ to be something uncanny?’ (SE 17: 248 n 1). Freud had argued that the double was initially seen as our insurance against annihilation with ‘our’ duplication recognised in ‘mirror-images, shadows, guardian spirits, the doctrine of the soul and the fear of death’ (PE, 2003: 142). But that following the philology of *das unheimliche* into its opposite *heimlich*, and the cultural advance of mankind understood in the mental development of the child through the surmounting of primordial narcissism, the double which was once ‘an assurance of immortality’ now becomes ‘the uncanny harbinger of death’ (PE, 2003: 142). Freud with his placement of the Cain phantasy and his ‘ill-wishes’ against his brother invokes the double of Cain, in his twin Abel. In the talion of old, an ‘eye for an eye’. With my brother’s death ‘I hath’ castrated him seems to be the wish. I have made him lesser. I have made him woman. I have made him dead.

Ernest Jones in his trilogy on Freud’s life will also argue that the uncanny impression of seeing his double in the mirror was interpreted by Freud as an omen of his death (Jones, 1957: 409 (Freud will faint two times in front of Jung who he believed harboured death wishes against him after he analysed Jung’s dream)). Jones suggests that the importance of *The Uncanny* as a work is that it lays bare part of Freud’s personality: ‘That is the deep psychological origin of his own superstitious tendencies’ (Jones, 1957: 429). This is seen in his belief of his ‘magical omnipotence’

carried through from the child to the man. In the repetition of the number 62, which seemed to Freud an ‘uncanny harbinger’ of his own death. Freud will say that ‘animism, magic and sorcery, the omnipotence of thoughts, man’s attitude to death, involuntary repetition and the castration complex comprise practically all the factors which turn something frightening into something uncanny’ (SE 17: 243). And yet Freud’s penultimate example of the uncanny – ‘the crown’ he says (PE, 2003: 150) – is the fear of being buried alive by mistake. But this is not to be thought of as terrifying states Freud after all the representation of this burial phantasy is nothing other than ‘the phantasy, I mean, of intra-uterine existence’ itself having a certain lasciviousness’ (SE 17: 244). Finally for Freud, what is most uncanny of all, is not the dead brother caught up in the doubling of the self, or even the castration complex but the home of the uncanny, the mother’s womb (and I note that in fact Freud called the womb our ‘uncanny home’ and heaven the ‘home of the uncanny’. Certainly in this context with the womb representing both life and death, the home of the uncanny, or our uncanny home are in effect the same thing).

Little Hans

‘Oh, do let me alone’

Freud will say that the ‘male organ can be represented in dreams by a hand or a foot and that the female genitals can be represented by the mouth, the ear, *or even the eye*’ (SE 5: 359 [italics my own]). If the vulva can be represented as an eye and yet the boy child seeing his mother’s genitals disbelieves what he sees, what does that say to us about the concept of seeing? If the castration complex is about seeing what is not there – the lack of a penis – how do we recognise this lack with an eye that does not see? For Freud castration anxiety takes the place of this lack but does this really explain how the eye – of sight itself – seems to be in two places at once: symbolically as the mother’s genitals, blindly in the act of seeing. Little Hans will not give up the idea that his mother or his sister have ‘widdlers’ to use his word for the penis. In fact, he will say his mother’s penis is as big as a horse and his sister’s is ‘lovely’. Here Freud will say that it is laughter that meets castration for the little boy not the horror that the boy feels when confronted with the sight of the mother’s genitals. That Little Hans laughs when confronted with his sister’s ‘tiny’ yet lovely ‘little widdler’ is understood by Freud as a recognition of female castration as opposed to the denial of his own potential castration. And yet Little Hans laughs when his mother refuses to

be 'seduced' by him and touch his penis. It is 'piggish' she says because is not 'proper' (SE 10: 19). Hans in contrast, laughingly, tells his mother 'But its great fun' (SE 10: 19). In Freud's paper, *Contributions to the Psychology of Love* (CP 4) Freud will say that 'a child is an erotic plaything' that it is seduced by its mother (nurse) and that these seductions leave their mark on the child later to be expressed in other object attachments (CP 4: 205). Lacan will concur, arguing that it is precisely at the time of the masturbatory interdiction by the mother, that anxiety will occur. But that the anxiety is attached to the object of temptation, the mothers desire for Little Hans and therefore his penis – Little Hans *as* the penis (Lacan, 1962-1963: 10-11). Evoking the castration threat when Hans is caught playing with his penis his mother tells him she will get Dr. A. to cut it off (SE 10: 7-8). She continues by saying, 'And then what'll you widdle with?' to which Hans replies, 'With my bottom'⁶¹ (SE 10: 8). Freud suggests that it was on this occasion with the issuing of the castration threat that the castration complex first made its appearance (SE 10: 8). Later, when Freud is offering a summary of the Little Hans case-study he does not directly relate the threat of castration, and the subsequent 'widdling bottom' to either the bath incident or the switch between the hole and behind-hole. It is after all the 'behind-hole' that Little Hans understands as the place that babies come from, like *lumfs* (Freud's cloacal theory and *lumf* is Hans word for faeces). The box and bath are both symbols of the mother's womb, something Little Hans alludes to often and to which Freud

⁶¹ My twin sons confirm Hans idea of a 'widdling bottom.' After listening to them talk about their day with their penises I ask them what would you do if you woke up in the morning and your penis was gone. They looked shocked for a second and then one answered that he would scream to death, yes but what would you do I asked again. Now he really had to think about it, his twin just sat and looked. Finally he said I still have my bottom! Freud does point out that the bottom irregardless of the cloacal theory is 'habitually regarded by children as part of the genitals' (SE 5: 365). But he does not seem to consider that when Hans says he will 'wee from his bottom' this might indicate that Hans already knew at some unconscious level that his mother weed from hers, that is without a penis. His lack of care concerning the loss of his penis in that instant as opposed to the anxiety associated with the idea of its loss at a later date could be that he always already knew but did not want to know (Chasseguet-Smirgel argues that the little boy 'knows' but is 'repressing an image of the mother as all-powerful and overwhelming' (Benjamin, 1995: 83). See Chapter Two of this thesis, page 36). Freud says of his case study of Miss Lucy R., that her description of knowing and not knowing something is a form of repression although not a proper repression: 'I didn't know—or rather I didn't want to know. I wanted to drive it out of my head...' (SE 2: 117).

summarizes as, being the ‘*phantasy of procreation*’ distorted by anxiety’ (SE 10: 128). In fact the big bath of water that Hans imagines himself in ‘was his mother’s womb’. The plumber who ‘bores’ into little Hans stomach while he takes his bath is both Freud (in Max Graf’s analysis) and Max Graf, in Freud’s analysis. One could say, that somehow owing to the child’s own sexual researches, coupled with the birth of his little sister and a understanding of some form of the primal scene that Little Hans understood this *phantasy of procreation* as, ‘With your big penis you “bored” me’ (i.e. ‘gave birth to me’) ‘and put me in my mother’s womb’ (SE 10: 128). Again this sleight of hand, Freud circumvents the mother to bring the father to the fore of Little Hans anxiety, and yet this does not sit quite right. Like Freud’s amoebic model with its protractible pseudopodia, the object-libido, and less significantly (because of Hans immature ego), his ego-libido converges on the body of the mother. Freud makes Little Hans phobic object – the horse – representative of the father and yet it is his mother that Little Hans compares the horse’s penis to. Initially Max Graf thinks Hans phobia of biting horses is linked to Hans mother, asking Freud, ‘is the whole thing simply connected to his mother?’ (SE 10: 22).

When horses lie down with their legs in a row, Little Hans thinks of death but also of *lumfs*, which he understands as ‘babies’. Max Graf suggests to Little Hans that he’d like to beat his mother. Little Hans replies that he whipped a horse and it fell down and made a row with its feet. He says this is just a joke but that he doesn’t like how big the horses are, how big and fat and that he thinks they might fall down and make rows with their feet. This is an allusion to Hans making a row with his feet (that is kicking his feet around in a temper) when he doesn’t want to do something, including defecating. Max Graf and Freud both try and persuade Hans that the white horse that bites is in fact his father. And the falling down and biting horse is Hans own fear that his father would bite him and then fall down dead. Hans tells his father that the white horse bites fingers and Max Graf is struck by the fact that Hans says finger – i.e., penis – instead of hand. But as Freud says in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (SE 7) the hand is seen as an ‘important contribution’ in the ‘instinct for mastery and it is predominantly male’ (SE 7: 188). And yet the biting is in Freud’s own analysis an oral cannibalistic stage concerned with the mother and Hans himself compares his mother’s long white neck to a giraffe. This is from Hans giraffe dream where he takes the ‘crumpled giraffe’ away from the big giraffe. The crumpled

giraffe is his mother, or more particularly his mother's 'vulva' because Hans says he 'sat down on top of the crumpled one' to stop it going back to the big giraffe, his father.⁶² Pointedly, he can say to his father, "But Mummy takes me into bed all the same, and Mummy belongs to me!" (SE 10: 39-40).

And yet Hans will not give up the childhood sexual theory as Freud explains it of believing his mother has a widdler – as big as a horse. Now the horse is the phobic object but the anxiety attached to it is seen by Freud as a longing for the mother. Freud says that parts of Little Hans analysis are perplexing but he cannot understand why, although he connects the fear of the horses and the affection of the mother. Looking at Hans and his father together Freud recognises that Max Graf has both a moustache and glasses and Hans fear is the black thing around the horses' mouths and also the blinkers around their eyes. But this neglects Hans own analysis that he finds his mother's black underwear disgusting and dirty – it makes him want to spit (SE 10: 55-63). And that his fear of 'fat' horses falling down and making a row with their feet developed after his mother gave birth to his little sister Hanna. Significantly Hans is not frightened of horses that pull empty carts, only full carts. Freud has said that the womb is symbolised by boxes and houses and cars etcetera. It could be argued then that Hans is not frightened when his horse-mother is empty, i.e., not pregnant. This would fit with Freud's theory that children are jealous of their new rivals – the birth of a sibling, and that the sexual theory – infantile sexual researches, begins with such a birth.

⁶² In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud is analysing the 'Count Thun' dream (*Count Nichtshun* – 'Count Do-nothing') and in the 'working through' of the derivation of the elements of the dream argues that 'Gir-affe' leads to the association, 'Affe', which 'is the German for 'ape'' (SE 4: 213). I was struck by the unconscious word-association here with little Hans dream. Because the 'ape' is a predecessor of 'Man', we could say we are 'ape'. But also to 'ape' somebody is to 'mimic' them, to 'go ape' is to go crazy, whether with excitement or anger is beside the point. Hans dream is of Gir-affes. He takes the smaller Gir-affe from the big one and effectively makes it his own. Thus in 'aping' his father he is mimicking him, i.e., taking his father's place with the element of anger because he wants his mother to himself, and correspondingly, excitement at having his mother to himself. How far back do 'archaic heritages' go? Freud once said they could go back as far as the Ice Age, although this is his phylogenetic inheritance, although one is not necessary differentiated from the other. It might be a bit ambitious to say that we go 'ape' because we were 'ape' (the great Hominidae family) but then again Freud had considered that the unconscious might be the long sought for 'missing link' (E. Freud, 1960: 318 and Groddeck, 1977: 38).

Freud will refer to Hans mother as ‘excellent and devoted’ and argues that she ‘has a predestined part to play’ and further that her ‘position’ is a ‘hard one’ (SE 10: 27-28). Sprengnether citing Coppelia Kahn and Iza Erlich argues that Little Hans mother ‘is not an agent but part of a stage set. . . . Her role is preordained, there is nothing in it she can alter’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 56 n 18). Perhaps if we understand Freud’s neglect of Little Hans mother we could agree with this statement but the fact that Hans and his mother ignore Max Graf’s imperatives, you must not cuddle/sleep with your mother: you must realise that your mother and Hanna do not have widdlers: you must see that only mummies have babies and so on is significant. Hans wilfully ignores his father’s advice and his mother just ignores him. When pushed to enlighten Hans by Freud, Max Graf tries to tell him that women and little girls do not have penises, that he cannot have a baby, that he, or his penis is the horse and the big giraffe but Hans will have none of it. Hans in his sexual researches is trying to find out where babies come from. His father tells him that God decides whether Mummy will have a baby or not. ‘If God did not wish it none would grow inside her’ (SE 10: 91). Contradicting his father Hans says, ‘But Mummy told me if she didn’t want it no more’d grow...’ (SE 10: 91). The mother trumps God then, or even the mother and God have an understanding that Max Graf – significantly, the father – is excluded from. Freud comments that Max Graf is ‘pushing’ Hans with his endless inquiries. Hans fed up says to his father, ‘Oh, do let me alone’ (SE 10: 57).

While Freud neglects the role of the mother in the Little Hans case-study he does not in contrast dismiss Little Hans so easily. In fact, Freud argues that children do not lie without reason, are in fact often more trustworthy than adults. And further, he states, he did not hold to the ‘present fashionable’ view that ‘assertions made by children are invariably arbitrary and untrustworthy. The arbitrary has no existence in mental life’ (SE 10: 102-103). And Freud makes clear that Hans is a normal cheerful little boy who may be better – i.e., psychically healthier for overcoming his phobia rather than repressing it for a later date. Comparatively we could say that the little American girl whose mother writes Freud a letter exhibits the same forms of precocious knowledge that Little Hans does.

In the brief paper Freud will title *Associations of a Four-year old Child* (SE 18) the mother begins her letter with the words, 'I must tell you what my little girl said yesterday. I have not recovered from my astonishment' (SE 18: 266). The letter continues with the almost four year old telling her mother that she knows that if her cousin Emily gets married she'll have a baby. Surprised the mother questions her and the little girl replies, 'Oh, I know a lot besides. I know that trees grow in the ground... And I know that God made the world' (SE 18: 266). The mother understood argues Freud that the little girl was making a symbolic equation – babies grow in the mother as trees grow in the Mother Earth: 'we have already learnt from numerous incontestable observations the early age at which children know how to make use of symbols' (SE 18: 266). But says Freud, the little girl expresses she knows more about the origin of babies. She knows that, 'its all the work of the father'. 'But this time', says Freud 'she was replacing the direct thought by the appropriate sublimation – that God makes the world' (SE 18: 266). In Hans 'enlightenment' he will not believe his father when he tries to convince him that it is he, not Hans mother that is closer to God. Unlike the American girl Hans believes it is his mother who decides whether she will have a baby or not. His mother may be in conjunction with God but he refuses to suppose his father has anything to do with it. Freud makes of God and the father a composite that ignores his own case-study. Thus rather than addressing the constitutive links, Freud separates them out ignoring the reiteration of God and Mother/Nature, which as we saw above is viewed as an anathema to Western thought. Freud needs to deny this to keep his Oedipal theory intact.

Working from, or at least offering a 'nod' towards, Freud's papers addressing the meaning (philology) of words, Swan extends Freud's linguistic analysis employing 'contemporary' examples. Discussing the word 'fuck' formerly one might say a taboo word for sexual intercourse, Swan states that it has a strong and 'unconscious rhyming connection with the work "suck"' (Swan, 1974: 4). Swan appears to argue that the move from 'suck' to 'fuck' has something of a 'deferred action' to it. The infantile sexual researches may end in a latent period but they carry over symbolic associations between words and things. Thus, 'fucking' and 'sucking' signify 'frustration' of the hands and mouth at the breast and towards the 'hole'(vagina). Whether the symbolism here can extend to the hole being a void created by a lack of knowledge or because of a lack of knowledge the child cannot make sense of a body with a 'piece missing'

remains unclarified by Swan. In any event, this is not quite Swan's argument but the comparison between the words, 'suck' and 'fuck' continue in the language used for men 'taking' a woman. Accordingly argues Swan, the man 'gets himself a "piece of ass;" more aggressively, he may even "tear (or rip) off a piece"' (Swan, 1974: 4). Thus the 'sexuality of most male human beings' which carries with it a 'desire to subjugate' is first recognised in the little boy's desire, or propensity to, 'tear open a hole somewhere'. What needs to be considered here is that just when the child (the boy child) is trying to make sense of his desire for his mother, repression 'sets in'. We can see this with Little Hans. His desire to do something forbidden to his mother that he imagined his father doing, comes up against the incest prohibition says Freud (SE 10: 41). He may 'send away' the 'big giraffe' (his father) and sit on the 'crumpled giraffe' (his mother) but knows, says Freud that what he desires is 'forbidden *in itself*' (SE 10: 41 (emphasis Freud's own)). Frustration because of this 'unconscious' prohibition is 'replaced by an act of violence such as smashing a window-pane or forcing a way into an enclosed space' (SE 10: 41). Freud makes it clear in his paper *A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis* (SE 22) that to overcome a forbidden action you have to surpass the father. What he does not make clear, or what seems uncanny to him, is that in overcoming the forbidden action, acquiring sexual knowledge we could say, we do not appear to let go of the feelings of *déjà vu* in relation to the mother, or more particularly our first *heim*, the womb. Thus, we may well overcome the father, but it seems that we are less able to let go of the mother. The relation to the mother/womb seems to be one of *déjà vu*, a reminiscence, a constant turning back.

The woman/mother in 'bits and pieces'

Freud states that the theory of instincts had the longest and hardest labour but was 'indispensable to the whole structure' (SE 21: 117). In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (SE 18) Freud argued that the instincts were 'at once the most important and the most obscure element of psychological research' (SE 18: 34), without which the 'part' would not become 'whole'. Freud's use of metaphorical impregnations usually followed by difficult labours and birth is not unusual in male writers. But Freud continues, creating a 'whole' line of metaphorical associations where woman/mother becomes a 'part' or more particularly, a 'hole'. Freudian 'screen memories' made up of the actual story, the remembered story and the phantasied story are very rarely

complete argues Freud but in one ‘good example’ Freud offers the recollection of a young man, now 24 who in his fifth year sought to understand the differences between male and female. He had trouble differentiating between *m* and *n*. His aunt suggests that ‘the *m* has a whole piece more than the *n*—the third stroke’ (SE 6: 48-49). Thus Freud states later the boy was able to discern the difference between male and female through the realisation ‘that a boy, too, has a whole piece more than a girl’ (SE 6: 48-49). The ‘something missing’ as Freud says in relation to another male dreamer is the ‘principle feature of the female genitalia’ (SE 4: 333). The castration complex for the little boy is the recognition that the girl/mother has a wound in place of the penis – which is in fact a mis-recognition because anyhow the child will not believe the evidence of his own eyes. And for the little girl it is a recognition that the mother never gave her a penis and therefore she ‘lacks’. The boy has a ‘whole piece more than a girl’ but the girl is the ‘hole’. *She is* and here I return to Horney’s recollection that *She is* becomes a series of negative personifications that the woman/mother will attract, the ‘hole’ that the little boy wants to do something violent to ‘which the child cannot account for—obscure urges to do something violent, to press in, to knock to pieces, to tear open a hole somewhere’ (SE 9: 218). In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (SE 7) Freud will extend the little boy’s aggression arguing that sadism is easily detected in normal males: ‘The sexuality of most male human beings contains an element of *aggressiveness* – a desire to subjugate’ (SE 7: 157). He continues that this has biological significance and further that it oscillates between two positions, one given over to active or intimated violence of/on the sexual object, the other based entirely on the satisfaction gained from a continual humiliation and maltreatment of the object (SE 7: 158). It is only the latter that deserves the name of perversion argues Freud, the former, active violence towards the sexual object is normal ‘male’ behaviour.

The Mother metaphors: *Necrotic bones*

Freud will say of his ‘Project’ that to publish it before it was ready (mindful of the fact that it remained unpublished in his lifetime) would be like ‘sending a six-months’ foetus of a girl to a ball’ and anyhow ‘skittles and mushroom-hunting are far healthier’ (SE 1: 284). I engaged with Freud’s allegorical use of the mushroom earlier in this chapter but the pregnancy related imagery continues. Freud will argue that in a psychoanalysis the ‘cure’ is comparable to an incompletely expelled placenta (Jung

uses a similar analogy when he says that psychoanalysis is an 'abortion' (in McGuire, 1974)). If the placenta is delivered whole without any noxious fragments remaining this then is an accurate analogy for the process of psychoanalysis. An analysis is completed when the patient can reach an endpoint from which future relapses and fresh onsets of illness will not reoccur (CP 2: 288). In his papers on the psychology of love Freud will use an even stranger analogy for libido that remains attached to the mother. Here he compares the shape of the newborn's skull to the shape of the mother's pelvis (SE 11: 169). And again, Freud will say that the genitals have retained their 'animal cast' and that love is still in its essence animal like (CP 4: 215). The shape of the mother's cervix, imprinted on the infant's skull is comparable to libido that remains attached to the mother. Similarly, the genitals – and here he seems to imply the mother's genitals, have retained their 'animal cast' and love too is animalistic. But love is also the cure and the cure here at least according to Freud 'is comparable to an incompletely expelled placenta' – 'noxious fragments' ruin the cure. Freud will say that the little girl realises her clitoris is 'inferior' – does not measure up to the penis and that this is an accurate analogy for the term 'inferiority complex' something little used in psychoanalysis. After all says Freud the child feels inferior if s/he notices s/he is not loved; and the ego feels unloved, and therefore criticised by the super-ego. Freud analyses a biography of Wilhelm II to extend this metaphor. Wilhelm II, last German Emperor and King of Prussia suffered from a birth defect, Erb's Palsy, an injury that occurred at the time of his birth. This made his left arm smaller than his right arm and with limited use (SE 22: 66). The author of the biography suggests that the 'hero's' character, which from historical accounts was emotionally wrought, is built on the inferiority associated with this physical defect. In fact as Freud suggests, it is not the physical defect at all, and therefore the inferiority complex does not stand up under scrutiny. But rather the mother of this man, instead of compensating him for his physical deformity with an overabundance of love, withdrew love altogether. His actions as a man showed that he had never forgiven his mother this lack of love. He professed an open hatred for this 'English' mother, one comparable perhaps only to his abhorrence for the Jews. The withdrawal of the animalistic cast of mother love, 'the hungry lioness', Freud explains will result in serious psychical defects in the developing ego/person. Thus the 'lack' that the little girl feels may not be because her mother did not give her a penis, it might rather be, that the mother did not love *her* enough. If as Freud argues the mother/son

relationship is without parallel how might the little girl understand herself in comparison to this?

A rotten contention: The Wolf Man's rotten bone

The case study of the Wolf Man presented in Freud's paper *The History of an Infantile Neurosis* (SE 17) was an attempt to bring together the 'cardinal tenets' of psychoanalysis – the unconscious, infantile sexuality and the Oedipus complex. Torok and Rand argue that Freud was attempting to distance himself from his erstwhile colleagues, Adler and Jung 'both who disputed the primacy of infantile sexuality and the Oedipus complex' (Torok and Rand, 1986: lii). But the Wolf Man never seemed to regain the psychic health Freud sought for him. In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (SE 23) Freud writes that Wolf Man continued to have 'attacks' in which, 'the pathogenic material consisted of pieces of the patient's childhood history, which . . . now came away – the comparison is unavoidable – like sutures after an operation, or small fragments of necrotic bone' (SE 23: 217-218 and Torok and Rand, 1986: liv). Thus the Wolf Man's childhood history comes away like fragments of necrotic bone – rotten, one might say. Between the noxious fragments of the baby's placenta and the later necrotic bones of childhood lays the cure of psychoanalysis. Freud un-mistakenly writes these maternal metaphors into *his* psychoanalysis and yet cannot see the forest for the trees as he once wrote to Fliess (in reference to the 'original' authors of dreams) (in Masson, 1985: 365). Because, as Freud said in a letter to Jung, the cure after all, is love. And if the mother is the first love object, if it is the mother to who we compare all other love-objects then why is she finally for Freud, like a piece of necrotic bone, stinking as Freud says in relation to the process of repression, itself a feminine concept. Thus libido with its adhesive womb like conformation, and the animal like cast of love and the mothers genitals; the inferiority complex whose confirmation is expressed in the little girl's knowledge that her mother did not give her a penis, did not love *her* enough; all of these things have some profound and inherent relationship to the mother, bodily and mentally. And although Freud states that mother's love is of utmost importance in the mental life of the child and his pregnancy/birth/mother analogies proliferate he will not, or he cannot give the mother the same importance he attributes to the father.

And yet Freud, as I have argued, will say ‘We call the mother the first *love-object*’ (SE 16: 329). Love is the mental side of the sexual trend brought to the fore as the awareness of the *aim* of the sexual trend is repressed. This is the latent stage or the so-called childhood amnesia. The child – the boy child in particular, because Freud stresses that the original sexual trend is now attached – leaning on (*Anlehnung*) – to the Oedipus complex is free to love his mother uninhibited by the ‘erotic’ charge. This returns in puberty where a fresh ‘insult’ of the original object – that is to say, the mother, is cathected with libido. From the time of puberty onwards the child (again, the boy child) must give up his first and incestuous love-object, his mother and intum reconcile with his father. Freud will argue that this task is set for everyone but it is a remarkable fact that they are very rarely resolved. Residues, ‘necrotic tissue’, remain attached to the mother predominantly in neurotics says Freud, and yet he will also argue that we are all a little bit neurotic (SE 6). Thus the mother as first love-object remains cathected with libido but perhaps in a way similar to Freud’s description of libido that remains attached (leaning on – *Anlehnung*) to the mother: as ‘impress’.

This is an argument reminiscent of *The Mystic Writing Pad* (SE 19). Here a thick slab of wax takes the place of the mother’s cervix but it might well be a similar argument because of the impression left by the *original* medium. Here a pen (a stylus) writes on the top layer of the pad, a celluloid layer that is then lifted to reveal a waxed layer underneath with a clear description of what has been written. Lifting both the celluloid layer and the waxed paper beneath clears both of writing. But says Freud, if we were to look at the wax slab – in a certain light, in a particular way (‘squinting at the point’ we might say (to Fliess, in A. Freud, Bonaparte, Kris, 1954: 298)), we can make out the impression of what was written beforehand. A permanent trace remains. This argument is premonitorily given in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (SE 18) and resurrected in *On Narcissism: An Introduction* (SE 14). In fact it revolves throughout Freud’s writing with an almost fatal intensity, to understand the origin of time itself. Again, Freud uses the example of the amoeba – in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *On Narcissism*, the amoeba is linked to the unconscious, in *The Mystic Writing Pad* to the ego – which sends out feelers to sample the excitations of the outside world only to hastily retreat once it has experienced them. That it does this through a medium, here the system Freud calls the perceptual conscious, a kind of doorway between the inner and outer worlds, is an apt description of the impressions of the mothers cervix

on the baby's head. If as Freud argued above that the mother's cervix leaves an impression on the child's head, we could say that the mother through the process of birth leaves an impression of herself on her child. Perhaps we could be so bold to say that the mother is the 'medium' albeit a bodily medium and thus a doorway of types, something Freud alludes to with his 'condensing' of mother to womb, and her attributions as 'narrow spaces', as 'portal', and of 'water/amniotic fluid'. The ego after all as Freud said 'is first and foremost a bodily ego' comparable to the 'cortical homunculus' the little man inside our heads – our soul as ancient philosophy extolled it (SE 19: 26). The child then bears the mark of the mother in more ways than one. Freud alludes to the process of this 'discontinuous method of functioning' as lying at 'the bottom of the origin of the concept of time' (SE 19: 231). This seems closer to a description – as I gave it – of Kristeva's *chora* in Chapter Two of this thesis (51-53). Father time and Mother Species says Kristeva quoting James Joyce (1995: 204) but is it rather mother time and mother species with nary a father in sight? The baby takes the mother in as s/he takes in her milk – s/he is the mother and the mother is 'I'. But with his analogy of the cervical shaping of the infants head by libido that remains attached to the mother we have a doubling up, something Freud maintains we employ as a measure of saving our soul against extinction (SE 17). If we save our soul/psyche then we save ourselves. We are immortal, or at least we think we are. Freud argues in *The Ego and the Id*, 'To the ego therefore, living means the same as being loved—being loved by the super-ego, which here again appears as the representative of the id' (SE 19: 58). If the id with its correlation to the timelessness of the unconscious, which Freud designates as female—the 'dark continent' enables its representative the super-ego to love the ego so that life might go on, then the super-ego here is not paternal, or even heir to the Oedipus Complex as Freud would have it, but maternal.

The 'hole'

Perhaps it is not so 'cut and dried' as this after all Freud will say that 'in the id, which is capable of being inherited are harboured residues of the existences of countless egos; and, when the ego forms its super-ego out of the id, it may perhaps only be reviving shapes of former egos and be bringing them to resurrection' (SE 19: 38). Freud switches between making his super-ego, his *Über-Ich* (Over-I) parental and thereafter paternal. If Fate and conscience are only two aspects of the *Über-Ich* then Fate as Freud has shown it at least has a direct correlation to the mother, in the form

of the three Fates that decide the destiny of man as I have argued above. But Freud will also say 'Even Fate is in the last resort, only a later projection of the father' (SE 21: 185). Once again, that less than careful 'sleight of hand'.

In response to a letter that Rank writes, a condolence letter for both Freud's cancer and his book, *The Trauma of Birth* that is viewed as cancerous to Freud's 'life's work', Freud says 'The *Über-Ich* merely says to the *Tr* [dream of *Trauma*]: All right, you old jester and boaster. This is not true at all! [*Da ist ja alles nicht wahr!*] ...' (in Kramer ed., 1996: 15). Here Freud exchanges 'you old jester' for the ego, something he has done before, and his super-ego, the *Über-Ich*, is putting the ego in its place. Freud is telling Rank that his book, *The Trauma of Birth* which places the mother at the centre of psychoanalysis not the father, is all ego, effectively, if we address the 'punning' in the letters, 'nothing'. One of Freud's most famous sayings, 'The shadow of the object fell over the I' is here expressed as 'das *Über-Ich*, the "above-I" or super-ego, the shadow of the object that falls, after internalization of the castration threat, on das Ich, the "I" (in Kramer, ed., 1996: 14). The super-ego, 'internalized residue of the castrating father' and source of *Angst* and guilt-feeling is viewed by Rank in contrast to Freud as a 'turning away' and also contradictory and simultaneously a 'looking back' to the mother. With Freud's train neurosis, his overlay of his dead baby brother with a desexualised naked mother, anxiety, guilt, grief and loss come together. Freud saw this but did not *see*. In his defence of Rank against the 'Committee'⁶³ Freud argues, 'Basically the attitude toward the [mother] would be ambivalent from the start. *Here is the contradiction.* ... I find it very hard to decide here, nor do I *see*...' (in Kramer ed., 1996: 22 (my emphasis)). Freud continues with his analysis arguing that it is the *father we always see*. Freud's constant vacillations, his ultimate need to save his Oedipal theory will mean that when offered the chance to *see* he turns away. How this could be configured as a form of protectionism is argued throughout this Chapter. Whenever he is offered the key to 'The Mothers' he turns away, from the horrifying sight of the mother's genitals, her 'gaping wound', from her countless positions as something essential that he wants to

⁶³ The 'Committee', the 'Old Guard' was a group of seven until Rank left. Like the Wednesday group that met at Freud's house to give talks, smoke cigars, eat cake. They each had a gold ring with a Greek intaglio that came from Freud's collection. Their primary task was to protect psychoanalysis from within, i.e., 'against personalities and accidents' (in Jones, 1955: 173).

get behind but which inhibition and prohibition may stop him from doing so. Freud argued that he had ‘restored what is missing’ in the case-study of Dora and as he never tired of repeating, the psychoanalysts task was about filling in gaps, covering over wounds, shoring up the void. But what Freud forgets is that ‘a hole is a hole’, his words, and that the hole is always already female, a vagina, the womb. As Kramer points out in his *A Psychology of Difference* (1996 – Rank’s American lectures) this ‘gaping hole’ that Freud determined the little boy turned from in horror could also, in later life at least, be the prosthetic he was forced to wear when his lower jaw was cut away with cancer. Freud referred to the prosthetic as ‘the monster’ and at one point called cancer his ‘old friend’ possibly because it had been a ‘companion’ to him for sixteen years. Kramer suggests that Freud’s ‘poignant’ observation in *Civilizations and its Discontents* (SE 21) of ‘Man’ as a ‘kind of prosthetic God’ who puts on his ‘auxiliary organs’ where briefly he is resplendent in all his glory, but these are not ‘grown on him’ and still ‘give him much trouble at times’ is a reflection of his own prosthetic (Kramer ed., 1996: 23). Rank made a metaphor of it, ‘psychoanalytic truth is constructed artificially like an “intellectual prosthesis”’ (in Kramer ed., 1996: 27). In a footnote Freud says that a prosthetic ‘is to make up for some missing or inadequate part’ (SE 21: 92 n 1). It ‘restores what is missing’ then as Freud sought, in the arguments of Geller, Gay and Gilman to replace ‘the piece missing’ of the circumcised male Jew onto the castrated body of the woman/mother. Kramer’s analysis that the ‘whole’ was more important than the ‘parts’ is echoed here. But the whole, at least as Gallop will argue is the ‘pre-Oedipal mother, apparently omnipotent and omniscient, until the ‘discovery that she is not a ‘whole’ but a ‘hole’ (Gallop, 1982: 22).

With Freud’s keys, and locks and riddling he hoped to find a way to bring together the major tenets of his psychoanalysis, to make it whole as it were. It could be argued that his continued neglect of the figure of the mother, that is always there, on the periphery of his theories, pushed to the corners of the ‘dark continent’, is the reason that the puzzle would not – could not – fit together. The mother who Freud described from a patient’s dream as a ‘gaping wound’ (SE 4) seems to straddle the navel of Freud’s own making. On one side, the perfect mother of the son-mother relationship, on the other side the mother who did not give us enough milk, love us enough, did not give the little girl a penis, wants to devour us and in between the hole. This then is

the hole that Freud attempts to fill but how can he when this hole seems to follow the example of the melancholic as he gave in Draft G. of his 'Project' 'in melancholia the hole is the psychical sphere' (SE 1: 205). And it might be remembered that this description of the melancholic is particular to the 'anaesthetic woman' who Freud argues is still attached to her parents and therefore is incapable of sexual love – itself a substitute for the general category of love. Thus if we are all a bit melancholic or at least melancholic mourners of the lost object, the mother as Donald Capps argues (in Jonte-Pace, 201: 138) and also a little bit neurotic,⁶⁴ and neurotics as Freud depicts 'are anchored somewhere in the past; we know now that it is at a period of their past in which their libido did not lack satisfaction, in which they were happy' (SE 16: 365) then we are 'squarely' in the 'space' of the mother. It might be as Freud once wrote of himself, 'a void formed about me' (SE 14: 21) in response to the silences that met his lecture on Hysteria – 'a "scientific fairy tale" said Kraft-Ebing' (Freud, 1989: 97). Here we have the fairy-tale and the hole both and it might be said that in Freud's overwhelming desire to escape he created a scenario full of displacements and 'repressions' against the very object he/we most desired. But escape is impossible we are tied to the mother like no-one else, a fact Freud emphasises, 'There are thus good reasons why a child sucking at his mother's breast has become the prototype of every relation of love' (SE 7: 222). A 'hole is a hole', says Freud cynically in *The Unconscious* (SE 14) and this thereafter is a reference to all the competing metaphors he attributes to the 'hole', as woman/womb/mother/*Mater*.

'*My son the Myops*' says Freud, which is the title of a dream where Freud's eldest son does not recognise him as his father. Regardless of subsequent interpretations and Freud's own engagement with this dream we could say that this could just as easily be attributed to Freud, who myopic like closes his eye(s) when he does not want to see anything. This relates to Freud's dreams of his dying/dead father. Freud remembers how like 'Garibaldi' his father had 'looked on his death-bed' (SE 5: 447) and this made him think of his second son Oliver, named after the 'great historical figure, Cromwell'. The association in the dream is an association between the child and the dying man; they had both soiled their beds. But Freud also remarks on the feeling of

⁶⁴ '... psychoanalytic research finds no fundamental, but only quantitative, distinctions between normal and neurotic life...' (SE 5: 373).

‘high satisfaction’ that Oliver’s birth gave him. Only a year before he comments I had thought that if my new-born baby was a son I would name him after Cromwell a man who had ‘powerfully attracted me in my boyhood’ (SE 5: 448). Freud argues:

It is not a matter of chance that our first examples of absurdity in dreams related to a dead father. In such cases, the conditions for creating absurd dreams are found together in characteristic fashion. The authority wielded by a father provokes criticism from his children at an early age, and the severity of the demands he makes upon them, for their own relief, to keep their eyes open to any weakness of their father’s; but the filial piety called up in our minds by the figure of a father, particularly after his death, tightens the censorship which prohibits any such criticism from being consciously expressed (SE 5: 435).

You must ‘keep your eyes open to any weakness of the father’s’ but you are ‘requested to close the eyes’ (SE 4: 317), as Freud says in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and in a letter to Fliess (SE 1: 233). In the letter to Fliess the ‘nice dream’ occurs after his father’s⁶⁵ funeral and takes place at the barber’s, which Freud goes to every day. ‘You are asked to close the eyes’, means also, ‘one should do one’s duty to the dead’ (SE 1: 233). On the day of the funeral Freud is late to ‘the house of mourning’ as he is delayed at the barber’s. The barber’s by definition since it is involved in ‘cutting’ is a symbol of castration (Freud makes this link clear in *Totem and Taboo* (SE 13) where he comments in a footnote that children equate castration anxiety with circumcision, hair cutting and loss of teeth (153 n 1). The question being is it Freud or Jakob his father that is castrated? In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud’s account of the dream is somewhat different. He reads the quotation on a noticeboard like the ones forbidding one to smoke in railway waiting-rooms, the night before the funeral (SE 4: 317). Apart from the change of address, ‘asked’ to ‘requested’, the move from the barber’s to the railway seems to indicate some form of anxiety on Freud’s part. I addressed Freud’s travelling phobia above and its associations to a naked mother’s body that covers over/up Freud’s dead baby brother, to Hell and to nanny. Here then we have a dead father brought to our attention through signage expressly about closing the eyes and located in the barber’s, where the castration is in the cutting (reminiscent of Samson). And the railway where the no-smoking sign is substituted for one concerned with ‘closing the eyes’ and ‘doing

⁶⁵ Freud’s father actually died on October 23, 1896.

ones duty to the dead'. Freud argues that the most commonly disguised Oedipus dream is the one concerned with eye-symbolism (SE 5: 398 n 1). But the anxiety concerning eyes here seems to suggest that it is Freud as Oedipus who is blinded/castrated with his father's death, although it is his father whose eyes are closed. Freud in fact says it himself: to close the eyes after the death of the father is to 'tighten the censorship' around criticism of the father. Rilke says in the poem *Gong*, 'We must close our eyes and renounce our mouths...' (in Derrida, 1993: 40). Quoting Matthew 13 Derrida says, '...you will indeed look, but never perceive ...they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes...' (in Derrida, 1993: 18 (In one version of *The Holy Bible* (1977) it is quoted as, 'For this people's heart is waxed gross...and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes' (Matthew 13: 15)). Derrida continues asking, why is it that in drawings so many women weep and so many men are blind? Freud argued that eyes that weep are interchanged with other organs that 'secrete' in dreams: the penis, the urethra, the nose with their 'secretions' of semen, urine and mucus respectively. When we are 'requested to close the eyes' as 'our duty to the dead', the associations of the dead body with the erect penis, as argued above, are evoked, albeit, unconsciously. Derrida argues that one can see with a single eye and one can wink, but this single winking eye seems to suggest the eye of the penis or the vulva, since Freud argued 'the female genital orifice' was represented in dreams by the bodily organs of mouth, ears and eyes (SE 5: 358). He also, and perhaps more commonly substituted the eye for the penis given that this substitutive relation exists in 'dreams and myths and phantasies' (SE 17: 231). What does it mean then when one has a 'thousand eyes like Argus ...whose eye is multiplied on the surface of his body... like the manifestation of the soul' (Derrida, 1993: 127).⁶⁶ The multiplication of eyes is regarded as a manifestation of the symbol of the eye to ward off castration. Somewhat like the idea behind the 'evil eye', which is a combination of a stare and a wink, a myopic squint we could say and is depicted duplicated – eyes everywhere.

⁶⁶ Interestingly Argus was ordered to watch over Io (or Isis) who Zeus loved and was therefore Hera's rival. Hermes killed Argus and out of respect for her faithful servant Hera moved his eyes to the tail of a Peacock. Io/Isis was then set free but Hera ordered a horsefly to attack her, which drove her mad. After the birth of her son, who Hera stole and hid from her, she resumed her human form and ruled Egypt as Isis, the goddess of the feminine principle, of the earth, the dead and magic.

In Freud's account of the Sand-Man in *Das Unheimliche* (PE 2003) it is the father who begs the Sand-Man (as Coppelius the lawyer) to save his son's eyes (PE, 2003: 137). The Sand-Man 'who tears out children's eyes ...to feed his children' (SE 17: 227-228) is involved in some kind of experimentation (a 'brazier with glowing flames') with Nathaniel's (the son) father. One night eavesdropping and hearing the Sand-man call out 'Eyes here! Eyes here!' the little boy is seized by the Sand-Man who is about to throw hot coals into his eyes but the father intervenes. The outcome of this for Nathaniel is a long illness. Another visit by the Sand-Man/Coppelius is responsible for 'closing the father's eyes' in an explosion in his study. The theme of the double here is depicted in the duplication of the father, as the good dead father and the bad deathly father the Sandman/Coppelius/Coppola. The good father has his eyes closed. The bad father wants to close the eyes. Along a similar theme to the death of the good father, Nathaniel's eyes are closed when the threat of castration, this time accompanied with a laugh, becomes too much and on seeing the Sand-Man/Coppelius/Coppola in the crowd below he jumps to his death. There is more to the Sand-Man story of course, of love, albeit to an inanimate doll with empty 'bleeding' eyes. And as Jonte-Pace argues the Sand-Man 'has deadly maternal qualities: he tears out children's eyes as food' for his own owl beaked children. Jonte-Pace suggests that this can be read 'as a fantasy concealing the fear of death at the hands of a dangerous mother' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 65). We have heard this laugh before in the little Han's case-study, where the eye that looks sees a 'piece missing', and laughs at the castration as a means to distance himself from it. In this instance laughter protects his 'feeble ego' and makes him feel secure. I will look at how the 'clowning mother' helps to establish ego boundaries in Chapter Five. The following chapter looks at how castration anxiety becomes indistinguishable from anxiety proper in Freud's terms and how through the process of repression anxiety is finally as Weber depicts it a 'Witch's letter' (Weber, 1991: 167).

Chapter Four

Freud, Rank's Anxiety

'When I happen to be without anxiety, I am still ready to take on all the devils; and you have never known anxiety' (Freud to Fliess in Masson, 1985: 219).

Freud was troubled by the problem of anxiety, returning to an analysis of it throughout his life. Freud's 'troubling' of anxiety troubles me. Freud will make anxiety prototypical in the act of birth (SE 5: 400-401). But this prototypical affect of anxiety contains a dread of the womb and of death that Freud will link to God and a hereafter. Freud does not pursue this line of reasoning, instead attaching one 'unconceptualised' object after another to the ever d/evolving concept of anxiety. In his *New Introductory Lectures* he will argue that anxiety is the reproduction of an old event but that something is missing in our understanding of anxiety 'which would bring all these pieces together into a whole' (SE 22: 84-85). The following chapter will address Freud's changing, often contradictory relationship with the concept of anxiety. Freud's repositioning of his 'economic model', repression is a 'product' of anxiety to anxiety as an affect of repression seems to create a kind of unease, in anxieties 'companion' concepts of repression and libido. Rather than a 'one for the other' there is instead a sliding between the original meaning, anxiety before repression and thereafter repression before anxiety. While anxiety may have no 'proper place' Freud is quite certain, indeed has to be certain that repression and libido do.

Rank unsettles this. Perhaps we could say he turns Freud's Oedipal theory and castration anxiety on its head. By placing birth trauma and separation from the mother as more important Rank illustrates that not only is the Oedipal theory wrong it could in fact be called a secondary typography to Rank's first. Rank argued in his lecture *The Anxiety Problem* (1996 (1926)) 'I began with the Freudian supposition 'that, under certain conditions, anxiety takes the place of libido; indeed in place of every repressed affect, anxiety may appear' (Rank in Kramer ed. 1996: 116). Freud made the castration complex the nucleus of anxiety whereas for Rank the nucleus (*kern*) was separation anxiety. Freud argued that he had no need to introduce the topic of anxiety as 'everyone' would have experienced its affective state at one time or another (SE 16: 392-393). And yet in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (SE 20)

Freud will say, anxiety is something felt but we are 'ignorant of what an affect is' (SE 20: 132). What follows is an engagement with 'anxiety' looking at how and even why, Freud's thinking around anxiety appeared to change so significantly. This raises several questions not least did the repositioning of anxiety and repression lead to a different understanding of anxiety? Or was anxiety like the Emperor who needed new clothes but who was tricked into parading naked? Freud maintained that in neurotic anxiety repression came first and then anxiety made an appearance. But neurotic anxiety comes under the banner of his 'new' model, as a part of the 'greater' realistic anxiety although anxiety neurosis still followed Freud's original/economic model. And while Freud maintained a form of separation anxiety at birth he will not give it the centrality that Rank does. As I said a troubling conundrum. It is as if anxiety is the issue at hand but anxiety is also the problem. Or as Weber puts it, 'anxiety turns upon a question that it never really resolves' (Weber, 1991: 154). Anxiety then is a worrier, but of itself as much as to the person it 'affects'. But there is a question that remains both at the centre and the limit of anxiety, where is the mother in the act of birth (and the following 'traumas' of early childhood) and how is anxiety attached to her?

Anxiety, Repression and Libido

Freud argued in the *Interpretation of Dreams*:

If 'the unconscious', as an element in the subject's waking thoughts, had to be represented in a dream, it may be replaced very appropriately by subterranean regions.—These, where they occur without any reference to analytic treatment stand for the female body or the womb.—'Down below' in dreams often relates to the genitals, 'up above', on the contrary, to the face, mouth or breast. — Wild beasts are as a rule employed by the dream work to represent the passionate impulses of which the dreamer is afraid, whether they are his own or those of other people. ... It might be said that the wild beasts are used to represent the libido, a force dreaded by the ego and combated by means of repression (SE 5: 410).

An interesting turn of phrase given that Freud never really lets go of his association of the feminine to repression and the libido as masculine. Thus in Freud's line of reasoning, the male libido is repressed by the feminine but only through the mediation of the ego, itself frightened of the libido. The ego is both the seat of anxiety (SE 20: 93) but it is also the 'true and original reservoir of libido' (SE 18: 51). But in *The Ego and the Id* (SE 19) Freud states that the id is 'the great reservoir of libido' (SE 19: 30 n 1). Strachey in his editor notes attempts to remedy this by reiterating Freud's

statement in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (SE 20) that the ‘apparent contradictions is due to our having taken abstractions too rigidly’ (SE 20: 97). The ego states Freud is ‘bound to the id’, is ‘identical’ to it, but is also different. It is the ‘organised part of the id’. The ego, in the process of repression is both powerful, in protecting itself, and powerless against the instinctual impulse that caused the repression in the first place argues Freud.

What does it mean then, that the libido is only realized in the beginning to make clearer the theory of anxiety neurosis? If anxiety is initially that which causes repression and only later is it the product of repression; if it is there in the beginning – whether we take Rank’s (and Freud’s) argument for birth anxiety as the prototype of all future anxieties then is libido some kind of third thing for Freud, situated between a feminine repression and an answering anxiety? Put another way, if libido is only understood – in the beginning – because of neurotic anxiety, what is it – or more appropriately, *who* is it – that mediates this relationship? If libido acts like some kind of wild beast(s), if the ego feels angst when confronted with it and then quickly represses it, how might we best understand the confrontation of these phenomena that Freud has defined as male and female? If the conflation of anxiety as repression and thereafter repression as anxiety, mindful of the fact that what is repressed as anxiety is libido that fails to find an object, is considered – and I don’t think that Freud was very rigorous in his attempt to separate the differing equations – then how are we to understand this?

Freud suggests that if we were to represent the unconscious as a conscious thought in a dream then we would do so through the representation of the breasts and genitals of a woman. The wild beasts that so frighten the ego, and force their way into the ‘dream’ are as a rule libido. Thus, what escapes attaching to the object, here represented as the ‘female body’ or more explicitly the ‘womb’ are basically rejected ‘wild beasts’. I may be taking liberties with Freud’s ‘equations’ here but anxiety always seems to lay unresolved in psychoanalysis. Just as I used the example of Hawking’s black hole in Chapter Two as something female and therefore unknown I now want to apply the same kind of principle to anxiety. That is not to say that I am arguing for anxiety to be recognised as female – not at all. But anxiety keeps reconfiguring itself as somehow embryonic – as if there is no end to it. If anxiety is a

nodal point to which everything else converges then it is reasonable and certainly uncontroversial to suggest that it is also a black hole. But following this line of reasoning anxiety as a nodal point would also be a navel. After all a node is a 'protruding knob', a lump, a knot, a place on a plant stem where the leaf is attached or fallen to use a favourite botanical analogy of Freud's. Thus anxiety lays unresolved because Freud separated it from the mother's body at birth and instead rather ungainly (or even ungallantly) attached it to his sexual theory. But it does not ever sit right. In Freud's own terminology, it is a part of a puzzle that 'blurs' the edges of the parts of the puzzle because we cannot quite find its place in the puzzle. Or as Lacan has said in relation to the mirror stage, the child attaches a prosthetic ego to itself, which never quite fits. Thus anxiety then remains in the field of the prosthetic, it never really belongs and yet we all of us, and some more than others are left with the uncomfortable feel of it, rubbing up against the edge of something in the guise of something else. The child experiences castration anxiety because it realizes that its mother does not have a penis and it is frightened that it will lose its penis (or never grow one as is the case for little girls) – and yet Freud will make the breast – the nipple – analogous to the penis (and the cows udder) and thereafter the baby. In line with other theorists that argue for the castration complex to be widened considerably Freud replies, very reasonably one might add, that where would castration end?

Freud is confused, anxiety first causes repression and then Freud changes this to repression causes anxiety. Since repression is basically an unconscious act and anxiety as an affect issues from the unconscious, behind repression if you will, what does that say about the association between these three terms? Freud tells Fliess that 'I' want to get behind – *coitus a tegro* – repression; I want to get to the essential that lays behind it' (Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris, 1954: 231). In this same letter Freud refers to the internal libido as a kind of secretion reminiscent of Lacan's Hommolette/*lamella* that I introduced in Chapter One. Something that escapes with the baby at birth, that covers it. Clement argues that Lacan's Hommolette/*lamella* is the libido but is also perhaps the soul. Freud tells Fliess that he will give up the idea that repression is feminine and libido is masculine (Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris, 1954: 234) and yet it persists both directly and as a metaphor throughout his writing. Repression argues Freud is a 'failure of translation' – something gets lost. For Lacan what gets lost with the act of repression, tied up that is with the unconscious affect of

anxiety is his untranslated term, *objet petit a* (the little thing, or little other). It is the object *petite a* that we perceive at the moment of anxiety before or perhaps in conjunction with the repression itself. Billig will say ‘particular ways of concealing desires from the self, such as projection, sublimation, denial, etc are all forms of repression’ (Billig, 1999: 25 n 49). And yet Anna Freud denies this general category of repression, in a similar way that Freud defended the castration complex from commonality. Anna Freud will argue that the correct general term is defence mechanism, repression in its true sense is always unconscious (A. Freud, 1966). In this sense Freud’s maneuver (a kind of turn-around as opposed to a turn-away) with ‘anxiety producing repression rather than repression producing anxiety’ has the meaning of discord – it jars a bit; we are left ‘squinting at a point’ that seems, in fact, nowhere to be seen. To return to our ‘naked Emperor’ which Freud used to explain exhibitory wish-fulfillment, Freud will argue that the people knew the Emperor was naked but that the invisible cloak the Emperor wears becomes a touchstone of sorts – who is brave enough to ‘shame’ an Emperor by pointing out his nakedness, seems to be the question (SE 4: 244 and Masson, 1985: 255). In actual fact, says Freud, a child ‘suddenly exclaims’, ‘But he has nothing on!’ (SE 4: 244 n 1). Children, argues Freud although unashamed about displaying their nakedness are stopped by the ‘mothers prohibition’ (the prohibition before the ‘fall of paradise’), ‘Ugh! Shocking! You musn’t ever do that!’ is the command that inhibits them. Represses them suggests Freud, a strange thing to have in a dream but the distress felt at being found naked, even in a dream is one of shame and dread he argues. In the case of the exhibitionist scene that Freud gives, it has escaped censorship says Freud. In the language of Freud’s first typography then, the watchman turned away.

Going back to anxiety

Weber argues that anxiety, because it was not realised as a ‘true’ psychoanalytic concept, in that it was not ‘discovered’ by psychoanalysis has not received the signal importance that it perhaps deserves (Weber, 1991: 49). After all Freud will link anxiety to repression the ‘cornerstone’ of psychoanalysis and state, ‘the problem of anxiety is a nodal point at which the most various and important questions converge, a riddle whose solution would be bound to throw a flood of light on our whole mental existence’ (SE 16: 393). But he also as I argued above connects it to libido, suggesting that libido was only discovered in the beginning to make clearer the theory

of anxiety neurosis. Rank in contrast will say that his work on birth trauma made it clear that *Angst* (anxiety) held a position more central than libido, which in Rank's terminology could be read as the mother outranks the father. Rank will argue that Freud's positioning of the mother as 'merely the coveted sex-object' meant that he could turn away from the 'spectre' of the castrated mother, whose 'open wound' was seen as an abyss equivalent in some aspects to a Pandora's box where all manner of nasty things might fly out. Freud argued that hate was the oldest known relation to objects 'older than love' (SE 14: 139) but that the mother-son relationship was exempt from this. This belies the knowledge from his own case-studies, that the relationship to the mother is one of ambivalence, there from the start for all of us. After all, even if we do not consider birth as the proto-type for anxiety all future reference to situations where anxiety is present, in the presence/absence of the mother, whether she will feed us or not, whether she smiles or frowns and so on illustrate this position. A position Freud alludes to in his 'reworking' of anxiety as the form of 'helplessness'.

What might be problematic to psychoanalysis (after Freud) is that anxiety lies up against physiology. Weber will argue that anxiety is located on 'the periphery of both the psyche and of psychoanalysis itself' (Weber, 1982: 49). But at the same time it gnaws at the heart of both the subject and of psychoanalysis. Anxiety is central, argues Freud but its ability to attach, albeit as 'free-floating energy' (Weber, 1982: 49) also designates it as marginal. The 'double-character' of anxiety, not in a *doppelgänger* sense but as the two sides of the proverbial coin (Janus-faced maybe) is partly why it poses such a problem for psychoanalysis. Anxiety like the displaced, dethroned, prejudiced infant – and this is an apt comparison – has 'no proper place'. According to Weber anxiety 'marks the impossible attempt of the ego to construct or delimit such a place, but this place is inevitably displaced, dislocated' (Weber cited by Stonebridge, 1998: 192). How then are we to understand anxiety?

Freud suggests that in trying to answer this we will find that 'anxiety is not so simple a matter' (SE 20: 132). We are like the 'benighted traveller' says Freud, singing in the dark to allay his fears. This evokes Freud's lovely little vignette given in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) on the side-effects of migraines. One effect of migraines says Freud is the forgetting of names and in fact at the height of the

migraine attack all proper names are forgotten (SE 6: 21). To illustrate his point Freud offers a story of a robbery on a deserted street undercover of the night. Suppose, Freud says, I report the robbery to the police with the words 'loneliness and darkness took away my watch and my purse' (SE 6: 21-22). Although the statement is true argues Freud, the wording of it would 'put me in danger of being thought not quite right in the head' (SE 6: 21-22). This state of affairs could only be described correctly by saying that favoured by the loneliness of the place and under the shield of darkness unknown malefactors robbed me of my valuables. Freud will say in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that 'Robbers, burglars and ghosts, of whom people feel frightened before going to bed, and who sometimes pursue their victims after they are asleep, all originate from the same class of infantile reminiscence' (SE 5: 403-404). Ghosts in the dream are invariably the mother. Likewise, robbers represent the father. Thus, undercover of the night, robbers reminiscent of my father, and ghosts in the shape of my mother frighten me suggests Freud. Freud continues, stating we repress these repetitious and seemingly banal moments until they return in the darkness at another time. Freud calls this type of repression 'familial' and as I have shown in Chapter Two it is indicated by a 'continuous current of archaic personal reference' (SE 6: 24).

But this nocturnal spectre of our mother as a ghost and which Freud will argue creates our belief in ghosts is initially the mother responding to her infants 'helplessness'. In the shadow of a 'half-light' suggests Freud the mother checking that her infant is okay leaves it with the impression of her 'ghostly shape'. Taking this image into their unconscious, any nightly terrors thereafter will be interweaved with the spectre of the mother. But the anxiety that accompanies these 'nightly terrors', the nightmare, is more severe, according to Ernest Jones in his aptly named book *On The Nightmare* (1931) than anxiety proper. For Jones the nightmare can cause 'morbidly acute feelings of *angst*' and exercises a 'greater influence on the waking phantasies than any other dream' (Jones, 1931: 40-73). Lacan will say that the nightmare is 'the most massive, unreconstituted, ancestral experience rejected into the obscurity of ancient times from which we are supposed to have escaped, a necessity which unites us with these ages which is still current and which curiously we speak about only very rarely: it is that of the nightmare' (Lacan, 1962-63: 7). The nightmare deserves further exploration then, as in children according to Freud the first phobias are darkness and

solitude (SE 16: 407). These first phobias of darkness and solitude persist throughout life but are felt initially and perhaps keenly in the absence of the mother: ‘both are involved when a child feels the absence of some loved person who looks after it—its mother, that is to say’ (SE 16: 407). Again, there is something hidden here, something Freud does not, or cannot say. If darkness and solitude are phobias then they are conceptualised as objects, uncanny objects even. And if a phobia is the ‘object’ that anxiety ‘creates’ then how are we to understand the relationship of the ghostly mother to solitude and darkness, if in fact what seems to be in question – is always the question – is what type of object is the mother herself?

Freud will argue that children are anxious about a situation in the beginning because of unfamiliar people: ‘A child is frightened of a strange face because he is adjusted to the sight of a familiar and beloved figure—ultimately of his mother’ (SE 16: 407). Freud offers a family story of his son, who afraid of the dark calls to his Auntie in the next room: “‘Do speak to me, Auntie! I’m frightened!’” “‘Why, what good would that do? You can’t see me.’” To this the child replied: “‘If someone speaks, it gets lighter.’” Thus a longing felt in the dark is transformed into a fear of the dark’ (SE 16: 407). Freud then will link longing with anxiety, with the nightmare and the ghost, with the womb and with death, with birth itself and yet he does not attribute any of these directly to the mother. The mother figures prominently in Freud’s exploration of finding anxieties proper place and yet he cannot conceive of this proper place as belonging to the mother. His exposition of *The Uncanny* illustrates a similar sleight of hand. *Das unheimliche* and *heimlich* argues Freud make the unfamiliar familiar but do so without any attribution to the mother. Lacan argues that *The Uncanny* is ‘the absolutely indispensable hinge for approaching the question of anxiety’ (Lacan, 1962-63:12). And further that anxiety like *das unheimliche* has the linguistic equivalent of making the familiar unfamiliar. Here though argues Lacan, anxiety frames the known (*Heim*) but with the added sense that the unexpected guest who is both arriving and arrived is already known. This sounds remarkably like Geller’s argument concerning the Jew’s position as ‘*Gastvolk*’ who is both guest and host in an impossibly parasitical relationship. Geller points out that this makes of the Jew someone who in arousing anxiety appears to ‘straddle’ the opposing barriers of dread and fascination at the same time (Geller, 2007:44).

Freud felt that 'little Rank', as he referred to him, with his 'birth trauma' overstated the experience of birth as 'separation anxiety' because the mother in her role as object is completely unknown to the 'narcissistic foetus' (SE 20). In a letter to Jones regarding Rank's 'birth trauma' Freud states that 'Anyone else would have used such a discovery to make himself independent' (Sprengnether, 1990: 135-136. Jones, 1953: 61). And in a letter to Ferenczi Freud writes that Rank's 'birth trauma' was 'the most important progress since the discovery of psychoanalysis' (Sprengnether, 1990: 136). And yet Freud cannot accept Rank's contribution to *his* psychoanalysis. To do so would undermine both his castration anxiety and his Oedipal theory. Sprengnether notes that the concluding remarks of *The Ego and the Id* (SE 19) written at the same time Freud was reading Rank's draft of *The Trauma of Birth* (1924) links the 'subject of birth anxiety with that of the death instinct, although Freud fails to develop this train of association' (Sprengnether, 1990:136). Here Freud states that 'once again the same situation as that which underlay the first great anxiety-state of birth and the infantile anxiety of longing—the anxiety due to separation from the protecting mother' (SE 19: 58). Freud seems to be saying that the ego 'gives up the ghost' quite literally when it no longer feels under the protection of the loving mother. Freud argues that 'We have long been familiar with womb phantasies and recognised their importance, but in the prominence Rank has give them they achieve a far higher significance and reveal in a flash the biological background of the Oedipus complex. To repeat it in my own language: some instinct must be associated with the birth trauma which aims at restoring the previous existence' (Freud cited by Sprengnether, 1990: 13 and Jones, 1957: 64). Here suggests Sprengnether Freud makes the connection between the impulse to return to ones origin – 'the aim of all life is death' (SE 18: 38) – and 'the figure of the preoedipal mother' but makes no attempt to unravel it (Sprengnether, 1990: 137). The death instinct may well be there, but Freud suggests that it might be called 'the urge for happiness', with the acknowledgement that the concept of happiness here is used in its wider, erotic meaning (Jones, 1957: 64). Rank in collusion with Sprengnether argues that Freud built a 'shallow' and 'unsuccessful' edifice over the original experience of birth anxiety (Rank in Kramer ed. 1996: 118).

Rank insisted on the primacy of the mother-child bond and in turn undermined Freud's Oedipus and castration complexes (Sprengnether, 1990: 139). In fact Rank

illustrated in his discussions on animal phobias that the big fat horse that Little Hans was so frightened of was in fact the mother and not the father as Freud maintained (although unsuccessfully as I have shown in Chapter Three). Rank calls the separation from the mother at birth the ‘primal castration’, the ‘primal repression’, but also the ‘primal catastrophe’. Quoting from Bachofen, who Freud referred to but did not follow, Rank states: “‘Everywhere Woman appears as bearer of the laws of death, and, in this identification, at the same time appears as affectionate and as a dark threatening power, capable of the deepest sympathy but also of the greatest severity, like the maternal formed Harpies and the Egyptian-Phoenician Sphinx who bore in herself the law of all material life’” (Bachofen quoted by Rank in Sprengnether, 1990: 141). Sprengnether argues that Rank repositions the pre-Oedipal mother as one of ‘maternal power’ and ‘maternal love’ which undermines Freud’s theories but also illustrates Freud’s own regressive tendencies where the mother is concerned (Sprengnether, 1990: 141). ‘Leaning on’ (*Anlehnung*) Bachofen’s ‘Mother Right’ Rank illustrates that Freud’s investment in a ‘father-God’ who ‘threatens castration’ is a ‘sham’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 142). Oedipus, in Rank’s study is subordinate to ‘the Sphinx’ (Sprengnether, 1990: 142).

It is no wonder then that Freud experienced a feeling of shock when he read Rank’s ‘Trauma’ because his life’s work was on the line (once again). Here was his most talented ‘disciple’ and he was about to lose him. Freud in contrast to Rank will say that anxiety is a ‘special state of unpleasure’ different to mourning and loss because the latter are only affects, anxiety contains ‘motor manifestations’ (SE 20: 132-133). And further that the unpleasure affect and experience attached to birth (and here he means to the infant) still ‘provides a prototypic experience’ and that psychoanalysis is therefore inclined to regard ‘anxiety-states as a reproduction of the trauma of birth’ (SE 20: 133). This does not mean that Rank’s ‘extensive concatenation’ is without merit but that it neglects too many variables during the process of birth to make it valid argues Freud. Freud asks, how can we know what the baby experiences or even how it experiences the act of birth? The important thing states Freud, is to know ‘what recalls the event and what is being recalled’ (SE 20: 135). Again Freud will stress that the danger of birth can only be seen physically, there is no danger in the psychological sense. It is important to realise that Freud’s reasoning only considers

the baby, the affect of anxiety on the mother and how this might be transferred to her infant is not considered.

Both Freud and Rank attribute a happy intra-uterine existence to the foetus but Freud questions (even though his own analogies, throughout his work constantly make reference to a return to the womb as ‘canny’ and welcoming) Rank on the child’s ‘happy recollection’ of this time. If the womb experience is so happy asks Freud then why would the child be frightened of the dark and of being alone? Freud answers, as he did with his migraine analogy that the child feels a ‘longing’ in the dark for its mother, it is loss that the infant is frightened of. Rank will argue that women in general feel less anxiety than men but corrects this to women feel a ‘*different* kind of anxiety’ (Rank in Kramer ed. 1996: 136). In fact Rank will argue that the anxiety women feel in parturition ‘at least partially re-experiences the anxiety affect originally experienced at her own birth and thus abreacts it, whereas man reproduces it only at birth’ (Rank in Kramer ed. 1996: 137). Just as anxiety itself for Freud is caught in a double-bind so to is women’s experience of anxiety according to Rank. Rank’s argument is not dissimilar to Kristeva’s who argues, ‘What does a mother want, especially in childbirth? She wants her mother’ (in Oliver ed., 1993: 6). Caught in a two-way mirror then, the mother loves herself as Other which in this case is herself as a mother. If anxiety accompanies this then it is an anxiety peculiar to what can only be called, a mother on mother encounter: the mother meets herself as mother. The ‘uncanny’ experience of meeting one’s *doppelgänger* takes us back to the infantile, to a feeble and under-developed ego. But this meeting of our double, here evoked by Kristeva and Rank as being especially prevalent in childbirth, shows a prescience of the mother as immortal but also as ‘the uncanny harbinger of death’ (SE 17: 235). I shall engage with this argument in more depth in chapter five.

What follows is an engagement with ‘anxiety’ in particular looking at a story of a boy of the holocaust. Here we have a picture, a literal picture even – a photograph that the little boy attributes an omnipotence and care, as a celluloid stand-in for the mother. His reunification with his mother at the end of the war causes severe anxiety and subsequent nightmares. Significantly the father is of little consequence to this story. The story of Dori Laub’s little boy is interspersed with other stories of children whom

do not play the *fort/da* (gone/there) for fun but who play it for 'real'. There is no *da* here the mother never came back.

Little Sylvia

Dorothy Burlingham in her studies of sighted and blind children offers the story of Sylvia, four years old on admittance to the Tavistock Clinic (formerly the Hampstead Child-Therapy Clinic) and blind from a gonorrhoeal infection contracted at birth. If the experience of birth is both toxic and the prototype of the affects of anxiety then this was little Sylvia's relationship to her mother. Sylvia's acute feelings of loss of her mother were illustrated in her acting out of this loss. To alleviate anxiety when her mother left her alone (once more) Sylvia sat on a chair with her arms around her neck. This enactment could be seen several ways. Her arms become herself holding onto her mother while sitting on her mother's knee. Or alternatively the arms were her mothers holding onto Sylvia. A doll given to her she calls 'Mummie' and 'Mummie' becomes some kind of intermediary - a transitional object perhaps - between the actual loss of the mother and Sylvia's internalisation of this loss. She tells Burlingham that she only likes being at the Institute because 'Mummie' is there. One day says Burlingham:

she invented a game with a ball, which she called her child. She would throw the ball away and become very upset and unhappy if she could not immediately find it. When she finally retrieved it again, she kissed and hugged it, but could not resume the game: she was too afraid of losing her dear child. Instead, she took the ball and lay down on the sofa, tightly clutching the ball in her arms. It is clear that this game depicts separation and reunion between Sylvia and her mother. She throws the ball away as she felt she was thrown away by her mother (Burlingham, 1972: 265).

She told Burlingham, 'My mother sent me away because she did not love me, because she wanted to get rid of me...so that I can die here' (Burlingham, 1972: 226). Freud argued in *Femininity* (SE 22) that playing with dolls, which for little girls is on the same chain of symbolic substitution, i.e., the doll stands-in for the penis, is not an 'expression of her femininity' but rather, 'an identification with her mother with the intention of substituting activity for passivity. She was playing the part of her mother and the doll was herself: now she could do with the baby everything that her mother used to do with her' (SE 22: 128). Deutsche states that the playing with dolls could be

viewed as a 'parthenogenetic fantasy' and is a continuation of the child's self-created fantasy child – him/herself, which excludes the father and resorts to a pre-Oedipal valuation of the mother (Deutsche, 1965: 194).

If we agree with Rank that the literal separation of birth is also the very first an act of castration, then little Sylvia is castrated/blinded by her mother. This is no imaginary threat, the threat is real, little Sylvia is literally blind. If the cutting of the umbilicus is for Irigaray the first act of castration then little Sylvia is castrated by her mother, twice. This is not the self-blinding of Oedipus because of the mother, but a blinding by the mother. In fact, what seems evident in both these encounters with the mother, is that she is 'dead'; literally through suicide with Oedipus, metaphorically for Sylvia because she is 'unavailable'. Sylvia illustrates in her game with 'Mummie' and the ball, her dear child, that even though her mother has 'thrown her away' she is unable to throw her mother away. Burlingham argues that children are naturally responsive to the mother's unconscious and their perception of this can be seen in the empathetic relationship that mother and infant develop – or fail to. If the mother's unconscious is itself severely traumatised then the infant will, in all probability develop an unconscious along similar, if not harsher lines, given that the combination of the mother's ego and her id must surely have a bearing on the development of the ego in the child.⁶⁷

Winnicott's boy

An interesting comparison arises here with little Ernst, and a Winnicottian boy. Both boys are involved in string play. For our 'good boy' the game involved 'the child's great cultural achievement – the instinctual renunciation (that is, the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction) which he had made in allowing his mother to go away without protesting' (SE 18: 15). The now famous reel game which imitated the mother's leaving and returning orchestrated it might be said from the magical omnipotent

⁶⁷ Freud states in 'On Narcissism' (Freud, 2006) that 'there is no entity present in the individual from the very beginning that is equatable with the ego; the ego has to be developed' (Freud, 2006: 361). The id in contrast is chaotic argues Freud, but it has a 'blind inflexibility' (SE 20: 205). It wants its demands met by the ego. The ego mediates the id's demands with external reality, for we must live in the world after all. Or as Freud put it 'One cannot run away from oneself' (SE 20: 203). It is abetted and hindered by this through the agency of the super-ego or the censor/watchman as Freud originally called it.

stage⁶⁸ of little Ernst to demonstrate his mastery over his mother, was an example of the compulsion to repeat. It could also be understood as an act of revenge of which he took an active part (and I will address this later in this chapter). Ernst, Freud's grandson, was 'greatly attached to his mother' states Freud, who 'not only fed him herself but had also looked after him without any outside help' (SE 18: 14). But he had a curious habit, says Freud of 'taking any small objects he could get hold of and throwing them away from him'. Freud argues that he, in agreement with his mother, his daughter Sophie, believed that the game focused on the word '*fort*' ['gone']. A description of the extended game is as follows:

One day I made an observation which confirmed my view. The child had a wooden reel with a piece of string tied round it. It never occurred to him to pull it along the floor behind him, for instance, and play at its being a carriage. What he did was to hold the reel by the string and very skilfully thro it over the edge of his curtained cot, so that it disappeared into it, at the same time uttering his expressive 'o-o-o-o'. He then pulled the reel out of the cot again by the string and hailed its reappearance with a joyful 'da' ['there']. This, then, was the complete game—disappearance and return. As a rule one only witnessed its first act, which was repeated untiringly as a game in itself, though there is no doubt that the greater pleasure was attached to the second act (SE 18: 14-15).

The game was a means of controlling his anxiety and sense of loss at his mother's departure (although as Freud illustrated he showed no grief at his mother's death four years later (SE 18: 16 n 1)). Similarly Anna Freud offers an account of a six-year old boy who after being hurt by the dentist also felt a need to transfer his pain. He does this by cutting up objects that belong to Anna, a rubber and some string, which he cuts into smaller pieces. He is enacting, it might be said a form of castration upon objects that he substitutes as himself – a self that must be got rid of, hence the cutting up into tiny, 'insignificant' pieces. This goes some way to alleviating the anxiety he experiences in the pain inflicted on him, which could be recognised as a form of castration anxiety. Anna Freud explains 'A child introjects some characteristic of an anxiety-object and so assimilates an anxiety-experience which he has just undergone' (A. Freud, 1966: 120-121). In contrast, Freud's 'good little boy' loved his mother, and wanted her to return so he pulled the reel back to him, as he might hug the mother when she actually returned.

⁶⁸ Ferenczi's magical omnipotent stages will be discussed later in this chapter.

Winnicott's boy did not have a mother that was quite as good as Freud's Sophie. This little boy's mother was depressed and like little Sylvia he experienced a series of separations from her, one in fact a hospitalisation for her depression. Thus, Winnicott's seven-year old boy had lost his mother at an early age through her depression which both figuratively and literally took her away from him, and through the birth of another child. His string play involved tying things together. This Winnicott said was a denial of separation, by joining things together (a re-established umbilicus?) he could express the loss of his mother, bring her back to him. When the boy was eleven the string play developed a new phase, one that imitated his mother's morbid anxiety (Winnicott, 1971: 18). In this the boy now using rope would imitate hanging, acting dead. The father ignored the 'play' but the mother responded with hysterical anxiety. This boy also had a 'family' of teddy bears that no-one dared to call toys as for him they took the role of children. He was the mother and cared for them deeply although no-one outside the immediate family was allowed to know of his attachment to them. Like Sylvia with 'Mummie' and her 'dear child', the ball, these inanimate objects are animated in roles that involve caring in response to not being cared for. Freud explicates this readily in *Das Unheimliche* (SE 17) in Nathaniel's love for the doll Olympia, which is finally to be seen as a kind of dissociated narcissism. And it can be noted that Rainer Rilke's lifelong fascination with dolls occurs as a motif in much of his work. But whereas Freud has the little girl play with dolls as imitative of the mother's 'play' with babies, Rilke saw dolls as 'horrible foreign bodies' who pervert love and make one unlovable. Although Rilke admits that dolls 'provoke assertiveness, inventiveness and fantasy' (in Mandel, 1965:107), it is in the relationship to the 'disillusioning silence' of the doll that God, Angels and destiny make an appearance in Rilke's work.

For Rilke, who had Lou Andreas-Salomé as a friend and confidant but who refused a psychoanalysis – it might rid him of his demons, but it might take his angels too – dolls were at the intersection of life and death. We saw this in *The Uncanny* with Olympia but Rilke's story is more tragic. When his baby sister died his mother not able to deal with the loss, made Rilke take her place. Thus his playing with dolls was to appease his mother, who also 'played with me as a big doll' (in Mandel, 1965: 4). Freud says little about the loss of his brother Julius apart from the fact that his death created remorse in him because he had wished (from the perspective of the dethroned,

despoiled and prejudiced child) his demise. But what is often neglected in the story of Julius's death is the story of a mother's mourning. And in turn how the mother's mourning would have impacted on her 'Golden Sigi'. Freud says little about his mother, in either his letters or his work but he does argue that the myth of Oedipus reveals a true psychological insight, 'I have found that people who know that they are preferred or favoured by their mother give evidence in their lives of a peculiar self-reliance and an unshakable optimism which often seem like heroic attributes and bring actual success to their possessors' (SE 5: 398 n 1).

The significant difference for Ernst as opposed to Sylvia and Winnicott's boy is that he had a 'good-enough mother'⁶⁹ so that even with her death when he is five his initial childhood experiences of her were stable, loving and secure. Winnicott suggests that 'success in infant care depends on the fact of devotion' (Winnicott, 1971: 10), that is to say mother-love. For Winnicott the string becomes 'a thing in itself', an act of symbolic play to master the loss in the separation but also to engender hope. For this boy hope eventually ran out, the mother's pattern of depressive illness remained which conditioned the boy into finding an object for his loss. In his case a drug addiction prevailed. What little Ernst and Sophie experience is anxiety over the mother's loss, a loss though that they reorchestrate in the objects around them to alleviate the helplessness they feel because of the loss. Winnicott will say that guilt, anxiety and physical pain are integral for the development of us as healthy human beings. But that these 'emotions' can only be developed in a 'healthy' way in the secure environment of what he calls a 'good-enough mother' (cited in Bowlby, 1979: 3). In turn they teach us, argues Winnicott to negotiate our feelings of ambivalence; in particular towards the person we love and hate the most, our mother.

Testimony

⁶⁹ Winnicott argued that the 'good-enough' mother was the 'the 'ordinary devoted mother...an example of the way in which the foundations of health are laid down by the ordinary mother in her ordinary loving care of her own baby' (Winnicott, 1973: 17, 44). Winnicott's own experiences of being mothered, of having a depressed mother, are essential to how he understood this concept. He spoke of his own early childhood experiences of trying to make 'my living' by keeping 'my mother alive' (Minsky, 1996: 134).

Dori Laub in 'Truth and testimony' (1995) offers a story of a young boy, aged about four who is saved from extermination by being smuggled out of the Krakow ghetto by his parents. His mother wraps him in her shawl and gives him a photograph of herself as a student. She gifts 'magic' to the photo by telling him to look at it in times of need. Also, and importantly here as Bowlby points out in his work on mourning, children who have had a parent die - and separation can be viewed as metaphoric death - need something of the parent to hold onto. Into this they put the hope and the yearning of a return. This little boy has a shawl (which I would have assumed would become a transitional object but we hear no more about it other than he was wrapped in it when he left his mother) and the photograph. He is sent out into the street with an address for a 'safe' house and an assurance that his parents will find him and importantly bring him 'home' after the war.

The little boy, even though he is only four (and not fully Oedipalised, which is significant in the reunification) finds the safe house which is actually a warehouse and after being received with 'open' arms is given a glass of milk. The little boy's trauma is soothed as this strange place becomes familiar with its milk and 'helping' hands. The colour white, which has long associations with the soul and is represented in the glass of milk, a replacement for his mother's milk, her breast, his security, becomes paradigmatic for him throughout his life. After a period of time the warehouse becomes a dangerous place for him to live (which is interesting in itself!) so the little boy is sent out into the streets once more. Here he meets up with other boys roaming the streets and is taken in by Gentile families for short periods of time. Mere survival meant that he has rare moments of solitude, but when he does he takes out the picture of his mother and talks to her. Interestingly when he is in houses where prayer is practiced nightly, rather than pray to God, he prays to the photograph of his mother saying as a kind of mantra, "Mother, let this war be over and come back as you promised" (Laub, 1995: 71). He never doubted that his mother would not keep her promise. In this the photograph of his mother becomes a talisman and the mantra that he recites identifies her with the magical omnipotence of God. Miraculously the young boy and his parents are reunited after the war, but the god-like attribution he has given to the mother's photograph was never going to fit the image of the living mother, much less so since she returned as a death camp survivor. Unable to figure the loss the little boy resorts to calling his parents, Mr and Mrs. Now

that the trauma of the earlier loss has come back to haunt him in the loss of his safeguard, the internalised good/God 'image' of his mother the little boy 'falls apart'. 'He begins to have a nightmare that will recur all his life' (Laub, 1995: 72). Because the 'god-like' mother failed to save him, the longing he had suppressed, a longing internalised and expressed only in prayer in front of a photographic image comes hurtling to the surface and is felt through the nightmare as total disorientation and terror. The little boy no longer has a home/*heim*. What was familiar has now morphed into its opposite *unheimlich*/unhomely. Importantly the photograph, which the little boy had invested with hope, failed him. This might be because the photograph of the mother, which carried with it the overvaluation attributed to her as both the 'source of authority' (a magical omnipotence - God) and thus his Oedipal object becomes fetishised. Freud suggests that libido becomes fixated because of the masochistic components of the sexual instinct onto the authoritative figure. This is a male trait as the sexual over evaluation men exhibit towards women, women transfer to their children. Of course, Laub's little boy is still a child at the time of his reunification with his parents but his living mother has become a fetish caught in a celluloid image, 'a remnant and precipitate' of a forgotten sexual phase of early childhood. Freud likens then, the 'returned' fetish to the screen memory (SE 7: 154).

For Laub's little boy the mother is not only felt as a loss, she is lost, so his nightmares continue until as a man he faces the nightly terror by transforming the loss and therefore the lie, 'mummy' didn't keep her promise, into a truth; a truth irrevocably wound up with the actual experience of the Holocaust. Laub argues, and it is important to note that this is in relation to an exploration of the testimony of the witness, that it is only perhaps through reconciliation of the two worlds – 'the one that was brutally destroyed and the one that is' (Laub, 1995: 74) that a redemption 'of an abruptly interrupted innocent childhood' can be addressed (Laub, 1995: 74). This is a process through which the 'repetition' of separation and loss allow a repossession of it (Laub, 1995: 74). The little boy from the Krakow ghetto only truly felt the loss of his mother when she returned. She was absent then because her presence, which was founded in a photograph had been internalised. The little boy it could be said carried around with him the ghost of his mother. 'If someone speaks, it gets lighter' says Freud's son. To which Freud adds, a 'longing felt in the dark is transformed into a fear of the dark' (SE 16: 407). The little boy who longed for his mother, kept the fear

of the dark and all its associations away by praying to her photograph. There could be no darkness when he could look at the photograph of his mother's face and the anxiety he felt with her loss was kept at bay. The darkness and thus the anxiety arrived when the mother came back with the changed face. His longing was transformed into fear and his nightmares began. Or, put another way, the loss associated with the longing was only felt when the object was conceptualised, that is, when the living mother returned. To a degree then, the return of the mother, in this context at least, is the return of the repressed.

Laub's little boy is brutally separated in what is still a pre-Oedipal stage, he is only four. That his response to this is to cling to the magical omnipotence given an object, importantly a photograph of his mother, bespeaks of a developmental stage he does not achieve. Freud argues in *Moses and Monotheism* (SE 23) that 'what children have experienced at the age of two [three or four] and have not understood, need never be remembered by them except in dreams... at some time later it will break into their life with obsessional impulses, it will govern their actions, it will decide their sympathies and antipathies and will quite often determine their choice of a love-object, for which it is so frequently impossible to find a rational basis' (SE 23: 126). For Laub's little boy the dream is a nightmare one that 'breaks into his life' with recurring frequency. One could say it breaks his life up. Importantly it confirms Freud's analysis that darkness and loneliness are finally to be seen in the figure of the mother. Of course it also raises the inherent contradiction that the body of the mother offers. On one hand the womb is depicted as 'warm and comforting' in its darkness and togetherness with the mother. On the other hand, the womb as a place of darkness and aloneness is depicted as uncanny and frightening. This then is the liminal figure of the mother. As giver of life and as representation of death she is to be always a threshold, a portal, (hole, womb, 'slightly ajar), which according to Freud involves a straddling of types: there at the spot of the 'unplumbable navel' – 'this far and no further'.

As a result of the experiences the little boy has in his time of being without his mother, instinctual demands arise, which 'call for satisfaction'. The ego refuses the instinctual 'satisfaction', whether because it is 'paralysed' by the 'magnitude of the demand or because it recognises the danger' we cannot be sure states Freud (SE 23: 127). Freud will argue that the ego most often freezes in response to the demand of

the instinct and then represses it so it can move on. Thereafter through a 'substitutive satisfaction' the instinctual demand will try to 'push' its way through the ego's defences. Where it pushes through is interesting, because Freud will call it the 'scar of repression'. Here at the site of the scar, which Freud will call a weak spot reminiscent of the other weak spots Freud depicts in his psychoanalysis 'that lay bare his/her entire mental life' (SE 10: 243) a 'scar of repression' remains. Freud will argue that 'Affective states have become incorporated in the mind as precipitates of primeval traumatic experiences, and when a similar situation occurs they are revived like mnemic symbols' (SE 20: 93). Thus Laub's little boy suffering a severe psychological shock with the separation from his mother resorts to a kind of 'pagan' worship of her image. That the image and the real mother do not coalesce results in a dramatic breakdown of his 'ego' and a flooding of the affect of anxiety felt in the repetition of the nightmare.

Freud argues that danger is both a loss of objects and a loss of perception for the ego and as Weber makes explicit the danger is understood as a 'trauma' it shocks the ego from 'retaining and maintaining fixed cathexes (that is energy more or less stably invested in representation)' (Weber, 1991: 155). Weber extends this description of trauma by taking us back to Freud's definition of 'perceptual identities' in *The Interpretation of Dreams*: a concept that combines wishes (desires) 'out of which the very relationship of trauma emerges' (Weber, 1991: 155). Weber reminds us that the perceptual identity 'arises when a memory trace or image is reproduced in a quasi-hallucinatory manner, in order to repeat the experience of satisfaction with which it has remained associated' (Weber, 1991: 155). This is the experience of Laub's little boy. The photograph and the praying fall into Freud's conception of a perceptual identity as a means to avert anxiety. When his mother returns the anxiety 'ruptures' into the most 'dense' form of anxiety according to Lacan and Jones, the nightmare. This is because, Weber states:

The radical discrepancy between the representation, and that which it signifies, but cannot represent – for the simple reason that a shift in tension is not as such representable – is the structural essence both of the heterogeneity that separates all desire from its "object" and of the "trauma" discerned by Freud as constituting the ultimate danger to which anxiety responds (Weber, 1991: 155-156).

Weber tells us, that yes confusion tends to abound towards a description of anxiety but a return to Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, once again, might untangle it. In the description Weber uses Freud is defending his dream analysis against the charge that 'all accounts of dreams only falsify the latter'. 'Yes', says Freud, 'the recounting of the dream disfigures it'. 'No', states Freud, "such a disfiguration does not disqualify itself as an access to the dream" (Weber, 1991: 156). The movement between the affirmation and the denial is what Weber calls 'psychoanalytic thinking':

The "it" of the discourse of psychoanalytic theory, like the Id that theory seeks to describe, entails a region of indeterminacy in which object and subject, signifier and signified, far from being clearly distinct, tend to redouble one another in a play of mirrors and shadows that one should not to hastily disqualify as "imaginary" (Weber, 1991: 156).

It is precisely this 'it' then that makes of Freud's discourse in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (SE 20) so 'seesawing' to use Weber's word. Thus, as I argued above Weber will state that Freud's theory on anxiety becomes what he is describing, anxiety in 'affect', trumps anxiety.

With Freud's new (final) theory of anxiety he shifted the parameters of not only anxieties relation to the ego, the ego as the 'seat of anxiety' but to repression and libido also: by reversing his equation anxiety now lays behind repression instead of before repression. Freud told Fliess that he wanted to get behind repression, to the essential something behind it. In doing so he finds anxiety but the problem with anxiety is it seems to have a slippery countenance. It has no 'proper place'. But in fact Freud finishes his exposition on anxiety by saying, 'I don't really have much more to offer you, that's all we know'. Freud is right to critique Rank's theory of birth trauma; all animals give birth says Freud and Rank's proposition of this trauma 'floats in the air' because it is not based on 'observation'. There is no 'evidence' of a correlation between birth trauma and anxiety says Freud. But Rank's argument is that finally the repetition of birth trauma of the separation anxiety is *unconscious*. By making the ego the seat of anxiety Freud effectively displaces the id.

It is the psychoanalyst's task argues Freud, to reconcile the ego to the id's demands, therefore, to make the ego free from the restrictions of the super-ego and to 'give it

back the command over the id which it has lost owing to its early repressions' (SE 20: 205). But if what is lurking behind these early repressions is anxiety then how do we give the ego back the command when it seems that the act of repression effectively keeps anxiety at bay? Obviously we feel the affect of anxiety but there seems to be the suggestion that there is more happening here behind the scenes as it were that anxiety for all its 'discontented' mantra simply will not let us *see*. This could well be a protective mechanism against the loneliness, darkness and helplessness we experience because of the affects of anxiety.

This 'behind' and 'before' is evocative of the position of the mother in Freud. If she is a before in the sense that as a before she is pre-Oedipal then she loses something in a theory that rests on the resolution of an Oedipus complex. She will as Sprengnether points out be forever haunting 'the house of Oedipus' (Sprengnether, 1990: 5). If she is behind then like Jonte-Pace's depiction of a counter-thesis she lays beneath Freudian theory proper we could say. Like Sprengnether's ghost, Jonte-Pace's counter-thesis is always in the process of coming to the surface, of being seen. But the difficulty in both of these positions is that while they attempt to give a 'presence' to the mother, where she seems to be marked by an absence, she is never able to be 'whole'. The position of the mother then is always already returned to a 'hole' whether as an asylum for the penis or as something Freud needs to straddle, because he cannot get through it (the tangle of hair) and the unknown quality of it (death) is too frightening so he turns away.

Weber states, 'Anxiety' as Nietzsche among others, and here we can include Freud and Rank, argue is 'related etymologically to the idea of "confinement"' (*Angst*, from Enge: narrow): to 'lack', if you will, but above all, to a lack of *breath*. Anxiety is perhaps what one feels when the world reveals itself to be caught up in the space between two frames; a doubled frame, or one that is split, who can tell?' (Weber, 1991: 167). One final remark says Weber. At the end of Kierkegaard's thesis on anxiety ("the pivot upon which everything turns") he states:

Anxiety discovers destiny, but just when the individual wants to put his trust in destiny, anxiety turns around and takes destiny away, because destiny is like anxiety, and anxiety, like possibility, is a "magic" picture (Kierkegaard cited by Weber, 1991: 167).

Weber continues,

The Danish word that is here rendered as “magic picture” is: *Heksebrev*, literally, witch’s letter. A “witch’s letter” is a set of picture segments of people and animals that recombine when unfolded and turned.” If we ever get “beyond the limits of anxiety,” beyond transference, or to any of the other “beyond” one might conceive, we might find a witch’s letter waiting there to greet us (Weber, 1991: 167).

A witch’s letter beyond anxiety, beyond transference...what kind of witch’s letter might be waiting for us? Freud argued that it never failed to dismay him, and that he did not really like it very much, when he was identified as the mother in an analysis. To get beyond transference then, we are moving beyond the mother. Or perhaps we are getting to the mother given that she remains for the most part unrecognised. As for the figure of the witch, well the mother is always already the witch according to Klein and Horney: ‘The witch...only introduces a figure...of the mother imago...split off from his beloved mother, in order to maintain her as *she is*, the woman with the penis’ (Klein cited by Torok, Sylwan and Covello, 1998: 71 (italics added to emphasise Horney’s concept of the mother as ‘*she is*’ – see Chapter Two, page 38). But we have met this Witch before, as the Witch Freud calls on to aid him in his metapsychology as I discussed in Chapter Three.

Rethinking Freudian anxiety through Lacan

Weber argues that Lacan’s theory of anxiety functions on the famous ‘fallen object’ the object *a* which cannot be contained in the mirror image but might be found in the frame of the window or the curtain of the theatre argues Weber (Weber, 1991: 161). The subject says Weber encounters the object *a* in and as anxiety. Lacan states that the problem of anxiety is a ‘snag’, ‘one should not come to terms too quickly with anxiety’ (Lacan in Weber, 1991: 162). Weber argues that Lacan addressed anxiety in his lectures for a year and then ‘nothing’ (or not much). ‘Could it be’ says Weber, ‘that by thus dropping out, anxiety assumes the role of the o [object *a*] in Lacanian discourse itself?’ (Weber, 1991: 164). A valuable question when one considers that for Lacan anxiety was the means through which the ‘disparate membra’ of Lacanian discourse would be bought together (Weber, 1991: 153).

The next part of this chapter will look at Lacan's mirror-stage and his object *a*, which seem to have an intimate relationship with both the mother and anxiety. Alongside of these will be a discussion of Winnicott's transitional object which seems to be never quite what it is represented as – which might be precisely the point given that Winnicott specifically asked 'intellectuals' to think of it as a paradox. Interspersed with Winnicott and Lacan's theories is Ferenczi's magical omnipotent stages, which while they are explicitly about the infant's belief in his/her own 'supremacy', the baby as the 'bundle of id' Ferenczi makes clear that these stages are only effective if 'constructed' in the realm of a 'good-enough mother'. It might be pertinent to note that Ferenczi came before Winnicott so his idea of the 'good-enough mother' which I assume will be similar to Winnicott's conception may not in fact have been the same 'thing'. Also as Torak and Rand point out Winnicott relied on several of Ferenczi's ideas without acknowledging that he did so (Torak and Rand, 1997: 133). The following then is a detour of types, taking another pathway as Freud might have it with the intent of arriving back where we left, that is, at the nodal point of anxiety.

The mirror-stage

According to Sheridan, the Imaginary⁷⁰ was Lacan's first 'stage' and was conceived at a time when Lacan regarded 'identification as the fundamental psychical process' (Sheridan, 1977, 1966: ix). Possibly working through Lorenz and certainly favouring studies in animal ethology Lacan's mirror stage grew out of, is synonymous, one might say, with the Imaginary (although Stuart Schneiderman in his introduction in *Returning to Freud: Clinical Psychoanalysis in the School of Lacan* (1980) argues that the mirror-stage came first and then the three registers: Imaginary, Real, Symbolic.)⁷¹ Catherine Clement argues that what Lacan identified in his

⁷⁰ Lowe argues that the Lacanian notion of the Imaginary is rewritten by Kristeva 'as a female pre-Oedipal phase' which 'privileges the infant's identification with the mother rather than the specular identification stressed by Lacan': 'The child is bound to the mother's body without that body being, as yet, 'other'; rather, her body 'pleasures' with the child's body itself, in a kind of natural/social continuum' (Kristeva cited by Lowe, 1993: 154).

⁷¹ According to Sheridan, the 'Real' 'stands for what is neither symbolic nor imaginary...but the Real cannot exist without the Symbolic' (Sheridan, 1977: x). Sheridan quotes Lacan as saying 'the real is the impossible' (1977: x), which Clement argues is because the Real is 'always already there' and in being so 'it is impossible to see, to speak, or to hear' (Clement, 1983: 168). In Lacan's words, 'It is there, identical with its existence, noise from which one can hear everything, and ready to

‘investigation’ of feminine paranoia, specifically, Christine and Léa Papin and Aimée was the ‘mirror-stage’. This was revealed in the act of the double: Christine and Léa as ‘twin-selves’ and Aimée with her series of masks, which she viewed as duplications of herself. Clement suggests that Lacan ‘glimpsed the crucial importance of an essential phase in the constitution of her human personality: the moment when one becomes oneself because one is no longer the same as one’s mother. What Lacan finally discovered in his studies of women and never repudiated thereafter was the danger of too much closeness, the misfortune of one person’s identification with another’ (Clement, 1983: 76). The mirror stage shows us that there is a ‘correct distance’ and this ‘correct distance’ needs to be established in our early identifications with self and Other otherwise psychical or physical disintegration may occur. This is obviously, as Clement argues the case with Oedipus and Jocasta; their reunification is

demolish what the ‘reality principle’ constructs under the name external world’(in Clement, 1983: 169). The Real describes what is lacking in the symbolic order ‘the ineliminable residue of all articulation’ but it is something that can never be grasped. It is ‘the umbilical cord of the symbolic’ according to Sheridan (1977: x). It is important to note that Lacan’s notion of the Real has nothing to do with reality. But the fact that he juxtaposed the Real to the impossible should illustrate something about the Real that is too difficult to express and which when it does ‘break through’ the Symbolic barrier is ‘terrifying’ (Clement, 1983: 168). Clement sums up her notion of Lacan’s Real by stating, ‘the Real partakes of both the Id’s disconcerting and unpredictable powers—always ahead of its time—and the terrifying archaic images associated with the Mother’ (Clement, 1983: 169). The link between the Imaginary, the Ego and the Mirror-stage suggests that the ‘ego’ is a kind of cover to keep the subject safe. Clement suggests that it is ‘a kind of garment, the first layer of which is armor, a protective covering that puts the subject beyond harm’ (Clement, 1983: 169). The *cognito* has no place in Lacan’s ‘structure’ because the act of seeing and therefore of knowing what the mirror stage should afford does not occur. Thus the mirror stage and the Imaginary are primarily narcissistic. Clement suggests that we think of the three registers, the Real, Imaginary and Symbolic as ‘every individual’s life game’ following Lacan’s predilection for games, thus the ‘Symbolic precedes the game: in contrast to the Real, which is ‘always-already-there’, the Symbolic endures forever’ (Clement, 1983: 168-169). The Symbolic then could be understood as the determining order of the subject and as Sheridan argues, ‘its effects are radical’ (Sheridan, 1977: ix). Weber argues that part of Lacan’s issue with the schools of American ego-psychology is that they neglect the ‘symbolic processes that were at the heart of Freud’s discoveries’ (Weber, 1991: 107). To understand the Symbolic is to understand that it is the ‘showing of itself’ not the ‘show’ that is the reality of the Symbolic (Weber, 1991: 108). Weber argues that without the Imaginary the Symbolic would ‘fall’ to pieces, an adequate metaphor given that the child’s ‘ascension’ to the Symbolic is through the mirror stage of the Imaginary (Weber, 1991: 108).

too close. Correct distance can also be too far away as Bowlby made clear, albeit in different language to Lacan, with his Attachment theory.

The 'Mother' argues Clement, 'is first of all the image of the All':

The "good" All, the perfect All, nostalgic, integrating: the circle rejoined, the Magdeburg sphere, the ball, the complete organism, the mandala . . . the atom, the glass bubble, the earth as in Hieronymus Bosch's triptych, The Garden of Earthly Delights. A greenish-grey sphere speckled with tiny clouds and above it the trunk of God. The triptych opens up; the sphere explodes. This is the separation. . . . It is also the weaning. . . . The root of separation, then, lies in weaning. . . . But at this point...Lacan discovered a handy little device. . . .the mirror stage.

Elizabeth Grosz argues that 'Lacan's account of the ego is chronologically his first, and most accessible, intervention into the 'reading' of Freud' (Grosz, 1990: 31). The mirror stage, understood as a developmental stage encompasses the ages of 6-18 months and occurs when the child views him/herself in front of the mirror for the first time. The child laughs, 'the jubilant assumption' says Lacan (1977: 2). The laugh is not sarcastic, ironic or a chortle argues Clement, is it, 'pure enjoyment'. We can understand this 'jubilant assumption' argues Clement as both biblical and mythological, as in the 'Assumption', the Virgin being impregnated by the Holy Ghost, which as Clement writes involves an intermediary, the Angel Gabriel. But also from the verb 'to assume', which is a derivative of assumption and can be interpreted as 'assuming responsibility for oneself' (Clement, 1983: 85). Lacan extends the metaphor of the 'jubilant assumption', the laugh, with the 'purifying' measure of the 'child at the mirror, *turning around* to the person carrying it, appeals to the witness who decants, by verifying it, the recognition of the image from the jubilant assumption, in which, to be sure, *it* [such a recognition] *already was*' (Lacan quoted by Weber, 1991: 116). The use of Lacan's word 'decant' will be seen in his use of the word 'precipitate' to describe the way that the signifier 'falls out' into the signified: a process of sedimentation according to Lacan (in Weber, 1993: 117). Thus the child *turning around* to 'decant' its image, has the meaning to 'purify it' to separate and decontaminate (Weber, 1983: 117). That there is an-other involved in this 'turning around', as the 'measure' of this process of 'decanting' alleviates the child's anxiety suggests Lacan. But also, the *turning around* here signifies the

infants/child's turning away from the Gestalt and toward the look of another (and here I am going to say its mother). Lacan refers to this as the theatre of the Symbolic. That the process of decanting, if we were to take it literally, is to 'pour out', to 'transfer' to 'empty' suggests that 'the witness who decants' (the mother) who in the process of decanting, 'creates' sedimentation is involved in a 'recognition' (and I include all meanings of recognition here) and the 'shaping' of the infant/child. To be sure, and as Lacan verifies the mirror stage is the crucial first step in the development of the ego. Through the use of the terms 'decant', 'sedimentation' and the description of the signifier 'falling' into the signified, seems to lead us back to the etymological meanings associated with both mother and mud as I have argued throughout this thesis. Importantly, the mirror-stage occurs after weaning, which is indicated in the actions of the infant/child both a *turning around* and a *turning away*.

The child's reaction to its mirror-stage distinguishes it from a chimpanzee's recognition of itself in the mirror because once the chimpanzee realises the image is itself it loses interest. The infant/child in contrast perceives the unity of the image but cannot place this unity in its own body (Weber, 1991: 12). This is because the human infant is 'premature'. Human babies are dependent on the care of their mothers for a longer period of time than any other animal. The child though has a sophistication that other animals do not have. It perceives itself but does so by perceiving an-other, usually its mother in the mirror image with it. From the recognition of its self in the mirror derives the constitution of the ego 'and above all: the destiny – of the ego' (Weber, 1991: 12). Before all of Lacan's theoretical machinations argues Clement came this important biological first step, the image in the mirror (Clement, 1983: 86).

The ego then according to Lacan is constituted through the child's identification with an image, an image that is not wholly 'I'. But the child overlooks this difference, sees instead a similarity that does not, and will not ever really exist. Lacan calls this mis-recognition of the self, orthopaedic and adds, 'the armour of an alienating identity ... will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development' (Lacan, 1977: 4). The ego thereafter offers and fluctuates between a series of different guises (as well of that which the subject understands as normal), which Lacan describes as 'phantasies of dismembered bodies, hallucinations of doubles, Hieronymus Bosch's paintings, and Hans Bellmer's puppets' (Weber, 1991: 14). The mirror stage is a

phase, a turning-point that will be repeated incessantly, 'caught up in the "inexhaustible squaring of its own vicious circle of ego-confirmations"' (Weber, 1991: 14). According to Lacan this vicious circle is not the result of social conditions or of subjective interaction its roots are *intrasubjective*, 'deriving from a relationship of mis-recognition, through which the ego comes to be by taking the place of the imaginary other' (in Weber, 1991: 14). Thus in order to be an 'I' the subject is subjected, if that is the word, to a alienation of itself. Clement calls this 'being a prisoner of his/her identity'. For the subject to say 'I am' it must deny the irrevocable alterity of the image, that which constitutes the ego and instead internalise what it understands this relationship to be. As Weber argues the ego becomes auto-reflective rather than hetero-reflective which is acknowledged by the subject's own self-consciousness (Weber, 1991: 14). Lacan suggests that the ego forgets that the 'I' is another' (in Weber, 1991: 14). But this forgetting seems also to forget that the image of 'another' is in the first place an image of the mother.

The mirror-stage takes account of the fictive nature of the ego and in doing so, illuminates the myth from which the Freudian ego arises, that of Narcissus. Lacan argues that the Greek myth of Narcissus from which Freud formulated the concept of 'primary narcissism', has forgotten its own mythic root. Narcissus fell in love with the *image* of himself and this image with its 'siren call' ultimately (untimely) caused his death: through death, the image and Narcissus were now one. It might be remembered that the image is not a representation of the subject in Lacan's schema. Rather the image as object affected in a *Spaltung*, the irremediable split reinscribes the split as a chain of doubles, which ultimately depend on the image and its ostensible original (Weber, 1991: 16).

One could read the mirror-stage then as both a 'representation' of what Kristeva will call a 'gaping hole' at the centre of the psyche, albeit as a visible band-aid for the subject's growing sense of 'identity' and as a phase or developmental stage as Clement argues. This would suggest that Lacan is aware the mirror-stage is saying something about 'the human psyche' that is so integral to the development of the ego/'I' that he can only offer 'supplements' to help am-mend it. For Kristeva it is Freudian narcissism (primary narcissism) in conjunction with the *emptiness* (as discussed in Chapter Two) that hold Lacan's child of the mirror-image at bay and not

as Lacan would have it the visual representation that adds up to some form of ‘orthopaedic totality.’ Lacan in fact questions both the structure and function of the representation of the image. To elaborate this Lacan introduces us to a common enough example in Western culture, lavatory doors segregated by the denominations of male and female. Two children, a boy and a girl are looking at the signifiers of the difference of these two lavatory doors as a railway train pulls into a station and both declare that they see the ‘other’, and thus the relationship between the sexes is called into question. In fact Lacan says that henceforth, ‘Ladies’ and ‘Gentlemen’ will be ‘two countries towards which each of their souls will strive on divergent wings, and between which a truce will be the more impossible since they are actually the same country and neither can compromise on its own superiority without detracting from the glory of the other’ (Lacan, 1977: 152). Weber argues that Lacan’s use of the toilet doors is no accident because the toilet is ‘a place that is never entirely “proper”, and to which access is generally more or less regulated’ (Weber, 1991: 43). In Lacan’s illustration the toilet doors are closed which suggests that we can never be sure what is behind the doors and argues Weber, for Lacan ‘this is probably the most important aspect of the story’ (Weber, 1991: 43) because only someone ‘who doesn’t have holes in front of his eyes’⁷² (Weber, 1991: 43) ‘could possibly confuse the place of the signifier and the signified in this story’ (Lacan, 1977: 152). Only someone without holes in front of his eyes could not see the signifier sent forth from a radiating centre ‘into the shadow of incomplete signification’ (Lacan, 1977: 153). Weber argues that the ‘traditional pathos of a metaphysics of light and darkness’ (Weber, 1991: 44) is evoked here by Lacan and that further there is a suggestion that what ‘radiates behind the bar of the signifier is the light of a *hole*’ (Weber, 1991: 44). This is not a light that emanates through holes but is that *of* the hole. We *see* objects only because of the precipitation⁷³ of the signifier but in fact we only *see* them because ‘we can see the

⁷² In the Sheridan translation of Lacan’s *Ecrits*, this reads, ‘...who didn’t have his eyes in front of the holes...’ (1977). I have quoted Weber’s translation of this sentence although he refers to Sheridan’s edition of *Ecrits* as well as the original in French. There is a wealth of difference between having ‘holes in front of your eyes’ to having ‘eyes in front of the holes.’ I have used the translation that makes sense to the argument, presented by Weber.

⁷³ Here Lacan is playing on ‘condensation’, ‘fall’ and ‘ground’. “‘One sees,” writes Lacan, “that metaphor occurs at the precise point where sense takes place in non-sense.” This taking-place, Lacan argues, is described in Freud’s theory of jokes, as well as in his account of condensation [*Verdichtung*]’ (Weber, 1991: 57).

holes: that is, the *interstices*, through which they relate to one another and delineate themselves' (Weber, 1991: 44). Thus it is not just the holes between objects and words that we *see* but the holes within the words and objects. What one is allowed to see or what one thinks they see is not invisible as such but acts as, or at least *is* perceptually concealed by a hole/holes. Whether we open the door (the not proper place of the toilet) or leave it shut and imagine we already know what is behind the door touches on Freud's conception of the 'lost object' and also the phallus and 'desire' as Lacan conceived of them according to Weber (1991: 45). There is word-play here of course with Lacan, between the rails and the *raillery* of word-play, of joking which suggests the ambivalence of the object itself. Lacan appears to be saying that the object is in a constant state of fall (which in physics would suggest it has stopped, or alternatively is a measure of entropy) and that only the signifier or signifiers can save it from 'falling out of this world' to paraphrase Freud.

To make clear the 'irreconcilable difference' that 'Ladies' and 'Gentlemen' evoke Weber takes Lacan back to Freud. In Freud's dream theory he offers a fairy-tale to help explain the ego's place in the wish-fulfilment of a dream. Freud argues, 'Thus, in his relation to his dream-wishes, a dreamer can only be compared to an amalgamation of two separate people linked by some important element' (SE 5: 580-581 n 1, SE 17: 246, Weber, 1991: 78). The 'familiar fairy tale' Freud offers is that of a husband and wife who are offered three wishes by a good fairy. The wife, in spite of the couple's desire to use their wishes wisely, is tempted by the smell of cooking sausages and wishes for a couple of them. The husband angry with his wife and her ridiculous wish, wishes that the sausages were hung from his wife's nose. Finally, and because they must, the husband and wife wish together, as it were, that the sausages were never there. And thus, they are back where they began, the knowledge of the wishes offered but never really fulfilled because they finally amounted to nothing. The story of the husband and wife is made clear and the objects of their desire (her desire), the sausages (as a displacement for something else) are because of a perceptual invisibility rendered as holes in the final analysis of the fable. Freud's story argues Weber, 'confronts us with nothing less than the constitutive relationship between desire and the phallus – or more exactly, between desire and castration'

(Weber, 1991: 79). Husband and Wife are not two separate people but one, in that the one is the dreamer him/herself displaced as it were on to an-other. Freud argues that 'I may safely assume that my own ego lies concealed, by identification, behind this other person; I may fill in my ego [*Ich darf mein Ich ergänzen*]' (SE 4, 322-323, Weber, 1991: 80). Alternatively when the dreamer's own ego is represented in the dream, it may be that some other person lies behind my ego. Weber argues that the German is ambiguous, 'I may fill in my ego' means to both complete my ego and to complete the scene by adding my ego to it – precisely at the place where the non-ego appears (Weber, 1991: 81). The dream like the mirror-stage creates an imaginary illusion of the ego as whole and more as omnipotent in spite of its obvious fragmentation. Both the mirror-stage and the dream have the factor of repression, albeit in different ways, aiding this egoistic game of hide and seek, that is a game wholly about the presence and absence of the dreamers own ego. Lacan takes this multiplication of the 'I' and suggests that what Freud was trying to say can be configured in the question, 'Is the place that I occupy as the subject of a signifier concentric or eccentric with respect to the place I occupy as subject of the signified? – that is the question' (in Weber, 1991: 85). The anomaly in the function of the 'I', the 'I' as 'scribe' in a dream, who 'receives' the dream but is not author of it, is 'recognised by Freud as that which constitutes the norm'⁷⁴ a norm that encapsulates an other, variously described by Lacan as 'the signifier, of enunciation, or of the unconscious'. One is quite literally, '*subject to the other*' (in Weber, 1991: 86). Lacan enacts his own return to the first train journey depicting sexual difference on toilet doors, and here adds, that the 'I' of the shifter⁷⁵ and here we might say 'drifter' 'whose only "home" is the rails of the signifying train (or the metonymic chain). What deranges in this re-inscription of the subject is that its destiny is no longer simply to follow the rails of the signifier, but rather to be *derailed*' (Weber, 1991: 89-90). The subject then is located in a place where it can never arrive. The subject is determined by its own 'impossibility' and translated into an image of itself, is called a '*fader*'; 'The subject only appears, insofar as it *fades*' (Weber, 1991: 90).

⁷⁴ And as Weber makes clear 'norm' does not really figure in Freudian terminology.

⁷⁵ Structural linguists such as Roman Jakobson and Emile Benveniste (working from Jakobson) describe the 'I' as a shifter. The 'I' is both product of the enunciation and also subject as enunciated. 'I' then is always other/you (importantly not linked to any signified).

Object *a*

There are very few authors concerned with Lacan's work who do not posit the object *a* as unconditionally a Lacanian concept. Schneiderman states that Lacan considered the object *a* as one of his major contributions to psychoanalysis (Schneiderman, 1980: 7). Schneiderman defines Lacan's concept as 'an object that causes someone to desire' (Schneiderman, 1980: 7). Clement argues, 'In the Lacanian lexicon the 'objet-petit-a' represents the little machine that unleashes desire' (Clement, 1983: 99). In contrast Sheridan does not explain the concept in his glossary of Lacanian terms suggesting that Lacan himself refused to comment on it, advocating that the reader come to terms with it through the 'working through' of his work. The 'objet-petit-a' is to be left untranslated at Lacan's instruction (Clement, 1983, Schneiderman, 1980, Vanier, 2000). Jacques-Alain Miller says that 'The object *a* is a singular Lacanian substance, made of a lack, but a lack that is constant gives to a subject an illusion of synthesis' (Miller, 1980: 51).

The 'objet-petit-a' is almost as indescribable as it is untranslatable. Clement sees it as being intricately connected to the *Hommelette* as I discussed in Chapter One, the *Hommelette* offering a fable irresistible to this project. But the object *a* – the remainder, leftover, trace – says something important about the process of what Freud called '*Ichspaltung*' the first separation. Clement calls the object *a* a 'fallen object' and I like this description because as she writes it, it falls from the body at birth – and importantly this is the *mothers* body – alongside the baby, the afterbirth and the *Hommelette*. Thus what defines Freud's fundamental cleavage are the 'things' that 'fall/out' at birth, which leave something behind. Narcissism and anxiety seem to have a direct relation to these 'things'; direct in that they are an integral part of the process, but indirect in that narcissism as Kristeva would have it covers an emptiness and anxiety as Lacan argues 'Is not the fear of nothing, the flight or fright before a void, but rather the encounter with the object *a* that marks the spot where there is a lack' (in Schneiderman, 1980: 8).

The object *a* has its roots (its 'umbilicus' even) in Freud's description of his grandson's play. The *fort-da*, a psychoanalytic classic according to Clement, and which I described above. Little Ernst made no protest when his mother left, he compensated as it were, by himself staging the disappearance and return of the objects

within his reach' (Freud, 1989: 600). The object of this drive according to Freud is indifferent. It serves only to attain a goal, a goal as Freud rightly points out, appears at least in this game, as unpleasurable/*Unlust*. This drive, variously described as the death drive, the death instinct, 'perhaps even as the only primordial force' (in Laplanche, 1976: 5), urges as it were, the child to play at his mother's disappearance in the hope that she might reappear. He substitutes the mother for a reel, and now this object, the reel, invested with libido stands in for the mother who has become the 'radically lost object' (in Vanier, 2000: 56). Vanier illustrates Lacan's argument by stating,

As the *fort-da* game shows, the cut made in the real by symbolisation makes the mother into a lost object of which *objet a* is just a remainder, a fragment. This object is lost not because it has gone away but because of the process of symbolisation that, substituted for a symbol for her, has "absented" her. ... this object orients the life of the subject into a quest for the refinding of what was lost. For as soon as he is in language, the subject has only language available to try to refind the object that was lost by virtue of language. This, then, is the paradox: it is at the moment of its loss that the object appears as such. ... Before this, it was not separate from what was not yet the subject. And so it is all the more lost for being something that falls away in the operation that constitutes the subject. And each attempt to refind it will define it as a bit more missing (Vanier, 2000: 56).

It might be remembered that this 'good little boy' played a similar game of *fort-da* in front of the mirror, although this time the object and the subject are himself. Again the mother was absent and to make up for her absence little Ernst finds a full-length mirror that does not quite touch the ground and in which he plays his own game of peek-a-boo. The baby then takes himself as his own object but importantly an object constituted in the mirror as the specular image of himself. The object as a composite object/subject is caught in what Winnicott called an intermediate area, a third thing. Although for Winnicott the mother's face is the child's first mirror and her expression, whether it is accepting and the child sees itself reflected there, or rejecting, whose very rigidity makes the child unsure of this reflection are very real stakes in the development of the ego. The mother, it would seem is present, even when she is absent, the mirror and the reel emphasise this for the child. Whether we see this as 'origin' or 'primordial' which is how the object-relations school see it presumably, misses the point according to Lacan. The alternation between the two

sounds ‘o-o-o-o’ and ‘a-a-a-a’ signify for Lacan the beginning of a linguistic form (in Weber, 1991:133). It is the bridge between the thing-language, symbolised by the reel and enunciated through the sounds that oscillate between loss and gain, absence and presence. The game taken in conjunction with the mirror-stage, illustrates how the ego is formed as ‘the figure of irremediable alienation’ (Weber, 1991:133). But importantly it is the figure of the mother, her leaving and coming back, that ‘forms the matrix of narcissistic identifications’ for the child, even for Lacan (Weber, 1991: 133).

I have spoken of Kleinian object-relations theory in Chapter Two but I sense that there is something in the child’s relation to the object or objects that gets misappropriated. This may be as Rose argues, that the best known version of object-relations concentrates on the child’s relatedness to the object as a whole as opposed to the auto-erotic propensity of the child that ‘introjects’ parts of objects, ‘objects that are not quite objects’ in *absentia* of the mother (Rose, 1998: 135). Joan Rivière elaborates the Kleinian stance by suggesting that the:

Painful experience does much to bring about the recognition of an external object. The infant oscillates between ‘seeking, finding, obtaining, possessing with satisfaction’ and ‘losing, lacking, missing, with fear and distress.’ In this scenario, and despite references to satisfaction obtained, the emphasis is far more frequently on the negative pole. For the loss of the object forces a breach in the primitive narcissism of the subject, a breach which, in a twist, then produces the object as its effect: ‘the ego’s need to dissociate itself from the unpleasure is so great that it requires an object upon which it can expel it . . . For such an experience of unpleasure is too intense to be merely “killed,” hallucinated as non-existent. Narcissistic phantasy would thus in itself lead to object-relations and these object-relations will at first be of a negative order’ (in Rose, 1998: 135-136).

The *unlust*/unpleasure of this lost object is so intense that it cannot be hallucinated. Further this lost object is unable to be negatively hallucinated which causes it to attach to the ego so that the ego – as Lacan says of the ego of the mirror-stage, albeit, once again with different ‘tools’ – begins to see itself as alienated, ‘nothing good within lasts’. Kleinian analysts can then invoke Freud by arguing ‘hate is older than love’. Object-relations, argues Rivière are “‘improvements on” and “protections against” primordial narcissistic anxiety; distrust of the object is better than despair’ (in Rose, 1998: 136-137). Rather than ‘primordial’, or ‘origin’, Kleinian negativity can

be understood as a 'psychic activation' of the *fort-da*. Klein believed that she answered (more than anybody else) Freud's question, 'When does separation from an object produce anxiety, when does it produce mourning and when does it produce pain? Let me say at once that there is not prospect in sight of answering these questions' (in Rose, 1998: 137). Freud saw the *fort-da* as 'the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction' – the mother as not All, but he did not see the mother's absence as a loss of love for the child.

Ragland-Sullivan argues that the object for Freud was not the whole object any more than it was for Lacan, (or for that matter, Klein) but the hallucinatory pleasure associated with the object attempted to make it whole. For Lacan, the 'lost object has become loss itself, while the leftover residue of unconscious effects is the *objet a*' (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 44). *Objet a* does not imply an object relation or even a relation to a unified whole but rather an expression of the loss of reference occurring in the gesture of reference itself. 'What is lost is any chance for a totalising experience of Oneness with the maternal body or gaze' (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 44). This then is the limit of human freedom initiated in the refusal for mother and infant to be 'all' for one another (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 44). *Objet a* represents an impossible yearning, a leftover from the mirror-stage which recognizes repression as an incomplete mode. 'Desire is not only an erotic (or positive) function, then, but also a signifying (negative) function when representations are linked to repression. Desire, therefore, always exceeds the lack it denotes, marking a place of incompleteness or aphanisis in language and unconscious representations, thus pointing to a hole in being that must continually fill itself up, oscillating between being and nothingness' (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 45). The push for Oneness is so strong that *unlust* and *lust* work together/against each other—create a paradox—a denial that they control their own destinies, make their own choices (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 45). Lacan not only argued that the unconscious was structured like a language but that language and desire are there from the start of life (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 48). But this seems to belie Freud's contention that repression is not there from the beginning but arises through a *Spaltung*, a cleavage between the conscious and the unconscious (SE 14: 147). To Freud's primordial objects, the breast and faeces, Lacan adds the voice, the gaze, the phoneme, the 'nothing', and the imaginary phallus argues Ragland-Sullivan (Ragland-Sullivan, 1989: 48). As we have seen, for Freud each developmental stage

is 'marked by a dominant object: oral, anal, phallic, and, later, genital' (Vanier, 2000: 57). The whole object poses a particular problem for Lacan because as he puts it, 'How can we conceptualise the refinding of a whole fully gratifying object?' (Vanier, 2000: 57). As I have noted with the mirror-stage, the object-relations school has existed in collaborative juxtaposition with Lacan at particular developmental stages – however they use different tools to explain these periods. Although Lacan would argue that the tools are almost profound opposites because a part-object presupposes a whole object and a 'whole object is not conceivable because both whole object and part object are on opposite sides of a line of demarcation that cannot be crossed or undone....' (Vanier, 2000: 57).

It is interesting that Vanier like Clement (although Clement's focus is 'play') compare Winnicott, who following Klein is placed in the British school of object-relations theory, with Lacan. Vanier suggests that Winnicott's notion of the transitional object comes closest to Lacan's *objet a* (Vanier, 2000: 57). I pointed out in Chapter Two that Winnicott's theories in particular the transitional object and transitional phenomena seem to me, to be, more often than not, misinterpreted. Vanier argues that Winnicott's transitional object and Lacan's *objet a* are similar because as he states, 'Winnicott emphasizes that, though it [the transitional object] represents the mother or a part of her, it is not the mother' (Vanier, 2000: 57). This is not what Winnicott states at all, 'I should mention that sometimes there is no transitional object except the mother herself' (Winnicott, 1971: 5). Certainly there is linkage between Lacan's *objet a* and Winnicott's transitional object and transitional phenomena. A connection that Lacan himself allows for. In his papers on anxiety (1962-1963) he suggests that the object *a* in the appearance of what he calls cedable objects – that is the object *a* through the very processes that constitutes it as a 'lost object' 'cedes' its position – its function to that loss. This is what Lacan refers to as 'lack' (in Weber, 1991: 159). Winnicott's transitional object(s) take up the function of this lack according to Lacan (Lacan, 1962-1963: 4). He understands Winnicott's transitional object, in the position of his cedable object *a* as 'a little piece of cloth, torn from something', usually a bigger piece of cloth. He argues for this cedable object as a support for the 'subject/child' and positions Winnicott's transitional object as the 'substitute for the subject'. The subject is not 'dissolved in it, he is comforted by it' says Lacan (1962-1963: 4).

Winnicott argues that his terms ‘transitional objects’ and ‘transitional phenomena’ occupy an intermediate area of experiencing, a third part of human life. This is a ‘not challenged’ area, which he refers to as a ‘resting-place’ (Winnicott, 1971: 2). He argues that it is the substance of the *illusion* that he is studying, ‘that which is allowed to the infant, and which in adult life is inherent in art and religion, and yet becomes the hallmark of madness when an adult puts too powerful a claim on the credulity of others, forcing them to acknowledge a sharing of illusion that is not their own’ (Winnicott, 1971: 3). He specifies that he is not referring to the actual object but an area between the possession, the not-I, the subjective and ‘that which is objectively perceived’ (Winnicott, 1971: 3). Of transitional phenomena, in which thinking and fantasising are included, sound – an infants babbling, a toddlers repertory of songs, and bits of things, such as the edge of a blanket, cotton wool to caress a cheek; the child’s own body before it distinguishes that it is its own body, the external, as in actual, breast, objects that are other-than-me stand in for a ‘internal/illusory’ breast, but indirectly. This sounds like Klein but as Winnicott points out the transitional object is not an internal object, which is a mental concept, ‘it is a possession. Yet it is not (for the infant) an external object either’ (Winnicott, 1971: 9). The transitional object is never under magical control like Klein’s internal object, although it has a magical omnipotent quality, ‘nor is it outside control as the real mother is’ (Winnicott, 1971: 10). What Winnicott stresses which is quite different to Klein’s mother who is constantly being ‘pulled apart’ then pasted back together only to be pulled apart again, is that for the transitional object to be successful, that is, for a healthy psyche to develop then the baby must have a whole mother. The intermediate area needs a ‘good-enough mother’ to start it off or it will never be successfully completed. Thus, the mother initially at least, adapts to the infants demands, affording it almost a hundred percent of herself. This is gradually lessened and the infant through the mother’s ‘failure’ to meet its demands learns to adapt in turn and thus make of its objects living things that are hated as well as loved. Winnicott warns, like Lacan, that if the dyad of mother and baby is not subject to this failure, if the mother is not seen as separate to the infant then *disillusion*, which would be ascension to the reality principle and beyond primary identification, will not occur. There is slippage between transitional phenomena and the transitional object although the transitional object as I understand it, is transitional phenomena that is privileged by the infant

above all else. Thus the mother for some, a 'gugee' for others.⁷⁶ Initially the infant is given a mother – and a mother is given an infant – who creates an illusory experience for the infant (and Winnicott distinguishes this from Freud's hallucinatory object) of which the infant imagines that it controls. A shape is given to this (these) *illusion(s)* and to that Winnicott applies the function of the transitional object and of transitional phenomena (Winnicott, 1971: 12). This intermediate area, where *illusion* and *disillusion* are played out finds continuity in child play. The paradox that Winnicott called our attention to at the beginning of his description of the transitional object and transitional phenomena leads to a resolution of sorts and the development of true or false personality types according to the Winnicottian schema.

Just as the *fort-da*, the mirror-stage and the transitional object say something about the lost object or the missing object (the primordial object?), play or the game says something about 'mastery', over this loss. Perhaps that's not quite correct, perhaps it is more of an acceptance, coupled with play designed to 'magically' bring the object back. For Winnicott, 'To play is to do' (Clement, 1983: 164). Further Winnicott states, 'Play is natural, and psychoanalysis is a very sophisticated twentieth-century phenomenon. It is useful to remind the analyst constantly not only what he owes to Freud but also what all of us owe to that natural and universal thing, the game' (Clement, 1983: 164).

For Winnicott, the game is an extension of the child's omnipotent phase. It is the 'space' in which s/he first exerts control over his/her environment, or at least s/he believes s/he has: 'The precariousness of magic itself is in question, of magic born of an intimate relationship of whose reliability the child wishes to assure itself' (Clement, 1983: 164-165). The magic born of this intimate relationship and transferred to one special object, of which the child will never mourn because s/he never believes it is lost, is for Vanier, Lacan's object *a*. Certainly the fantasy attributed to this object, a fantasy constructed out of a belief for the child that the object is 'real' in the sense that it exists seems to lend some corroboration that the transitional object and the 'object *a*' are sourced from the same 'loss'. But I am not so sure that given an explanation of them both I agree. Winnicott's intermediate area

⁷⁶ For one of my twins I am the transitional object, for the other a 'shawl' gifted the name of 'gugee' is the transitional object.

where the transitional phenomena reside is not quite the same as the fallen object, Lacan's *objet a*. That being said, the transitional phenomena and the *objet a* do have some relation to the mother, although Winnicott's expression of this maybe more accessible than Lacan's. Sprengnether argues this well, “(m)other” represents that which cannot be appropriated by the child's or infant's desire and hence signals a condition of division or loss. That which cannot be appropriated, in my view, is also what precipitates the organization of a self, which in turn enfolds and awareness of absence, or, in Lacan's terms, “lack” (Sprengnether, 1989: 300). And further in a footnote she writes citing Juliet Mitchell, “A primordially split subject necessitates an originally lost object.” That the originally lost object is the mother seems clear in Freud's accounts, less so in Lacan's' (in Sprengnether, 1989: 300, n. 6).

Sandor Ferenczi's ‘magical omnipotent’ stages and the development of the ‘I’

Ferenczi suggested that the ego goes through four preliminary stages before becoming differentiated as an entity in itself. He argues that the first stage is an idealised state in actuality and also imaginatively. This is of course the foetus in the womb, which lives as a parasite on the mother's body according to Ferenczi (Ferenczi, 1916: 218). In this state, the ‘nascent being’ exists in complete gratification of its ‘needs’ and Ferenczi would say ‘desires’, for the idea of an unconscious mind must surely begin to function before birth he argues. In this then he moves away from Freud who would have it that the unconscious begins after birth although he admitted that there appeared to be archaic vestiges to the unconscious, an unknown, perhaps innate part.⁷⁷ For the foetus in the womb the impression of omnipotence must occur suggests Ferenczi because all his/her wants are met and s/he has nothing left to wish for. Thus the foetus ‘falls into the world’ with a feeling of ‘majesty’ and Ferenczi identifies this as the *Period of unconditional omnipotence*. Ferenczi presents a rather idealised

⁷⁷ The ‘It’ according to Georg Groddeck, which is not the same as Freud's ‘id’ although they have the same meaning in the German translation as ‘Es’. The ‘It’ has some relation to the *hommelette*, even maybe the object *a* as it falls from the body at birth, but importantly it falls with the baby as part of the baby. It is perhaps analogous to the unconscious part of the id, something innate, which Freud had suggested but never fully elaborated. Freud saw similarities in his unconscious with Groddeck's ‘It’ which Groddeck did not. Groddeck felt that Freud took his ‘id’ from Groddeck's ‘It’. Freud did not disagree saying to Groddeck in a letter that my id ‘derived from yours’ even though ‘I’ do not recognise ‘my civilised, bourgeois, demystified Id in your It’ (in Groddeck, 1977: 93).

version of the womb, although in a footnote he does comment that disturbances through illness or injury to the mother or indeed to the infant can result in an infant born without this feeling of omnipotence. Thus unless this omnipotence is gratified by an extremely 'giving' mother (the *illusory* mother according to Winnicott) the child could grow up with a sense of dread as outlined by Harold N. Boris (1994) or Wilfred Bion (1967). In Boris's book *Envy* in the chapter titled 'Tolerating nothing' he gives an account of the dread attached to nothing as that, which has something there. Where absence should be 'there is instead a presence of an absence' (Boris, 1994: 21). A patient tells Boris that where the nothing should be inside the zero is instead a 'breast sticking its tongue out' (Boris, 1994: 21). The nothing is 'evacuated' into an object of which a few people discover or see. Just as Lacan can say in his seminar on anxiety that Pascal's interest in the 'vacuum' – which is why he wasn't altogether liked in his era or ours - is concerned with the horror associated with the thought that there could be a vacuum, a void (Lacan, 1962-1963: 13-14), so to Boris's argument that 'there is something in some human natures that abhors a vacuum' (Boris, 1994: 22). The breast, says Boris, should be full and giving, not defiant and with-holding; 'The presence of the absence, the malign force, is the conjunction of the breast and the imperative' (Boris, 1994: 24-25). The infant, born with a premonition of its impending death is met with an empty breast; empty in the sense that the mother gives *nothing* back. Just as most of us are met with loss in the continual repetition of the *fort-da* argues Boris, for others this loss is filled with a menace that overlays the loss. The sense here is not that presence and absence oscillate between each other, but that a malignant presence fills the place where a void should be. That this is frightening is self-evident, and some babies maybe able to surmount this, for others argues Boris, their sense of doom is due to the fact that they are not 'fully into possession of their lives' (Boris, 1994: 25). He uses a case-study of Bion's to illustrate this point. This patient, Samuel Beckett no less had an inchoate sense of his return to his mother who made him feel 'dead'. Bion took Beckett to a lecture by Jung where Jung is explaining the case of a young girl who had dreams, which foretold her early death. Jung argued that in fact the girl had been born too soon. Although she had had her prerequisite nine months in the womb she was not fully in herself. Bion and Beckett saw that this might also be the case with Beckett who apparently thereafter saw himself as cured and who made a theme of this in several of his novels. Boris asks, if the spool for Freud is represented as the absent mother and

the child's 'magical control of the absent object' why can't the spool also be thought of as the child who plays at a game of 'himself' being thrown away with the knowledge that the *da* might also restore him (Boris, 1994: 26). This seems to be an apt description of Burlingham's little Sophie that we saw above. I might also note, that the notion of 'unconditional omnipotence' was first seen in Freud's obsessional/delusional patients, who like the Wolf Man remarked that 'Life makes me so unhappy! I must get back into the womb' (SE 17: 100).

The infant's megalomania begins to give way to the power of natural forces according to Ferenczi – and he defines this as the essential component in the development of the ego – but before he understands the 'concatenation of cause and effect' the infant believes that his or her wishes – which s/he imagines in a hallucinatory way are what brings things to him/her. This phase Ferenczi calls the *Period of magical-hallucinatory omnipotence* (Ferenczi, 1916: 222). The infant – if it has Winnicott's a hundred percent mother – believes that s/he only has to wish for something and it will appear. There is of course slippage between the wish – for the breast – and the hallucination of the breast. Caught up in this magical-hallucinatory stage are the beginnings of education – or *failure* as Winnicott put it (Freud's economic model). Ferenczi suggests that education in sleep patterns where the baby imagines he has the breast even though the breast is denied him/her continue throughout life. Sleep he argues is nothing less than the remnant of the earlier magical-hallucinatory phase. Sleep which Freud also argued could be viewed as a phantasised return to the womb is understood by Ferenczi as illustrative of the 'absolute omnipotence of the womb situation' (Ferenczi, 1916: 223). The *magical-hallucinatory* stage, which is already characterised 'by the occurrence of uncoordinated motor discharges (crying, struggling)' (Ferenczi, 1916: 223) are now utilised by the infant as 'magic signals'. The infant realises that it need only to perform a gesture, reaching out, smiling, smacking its lips together, and it will receive the attention it craves. To this stage Ferenczi titles *Period of omnipotence by the help of magic gestures*. There is a language to these gestures, a language that is universally understood according to Ferenczi. At this stage the infant begins to have a sense of the outside world. This is the period where inanimate and animate things are equated, symbolically. Also the infant understands that there are higher 'divine' powers, such as those possessed by his mother, 'whose favour he must possess if the satisfaction is to follow closely on

the magic gestures' (Ferenczi, 1916: 229). Following this, the infant begins to make noises that imitate those made to him. This ensures him attention from the higher 'divine' powers. The child Ferenczi argues thinks it is in possession of magic capacities as through its expressions the mother or another adult respond to its very needs. This is the *Period of magic thoughts and magic words*. This is the stage of reality development – the spool/reel play of little Ernst – where the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction is obtained and the reality principle overtakes the pleasure principle. The 'cause and effect' of the natural world is understood but as Ferenczi notes, the return of the repressed, of the magical-omnipotent phases is evidenced in the adults own role as parent and the telling of the fairy-tale. For Ferenczi then, the question is whether 'we' ever really associated with it.

Turning back to Anxiety

Lacan links anxiety to Freud's understanding of *das unheimliche*, which I have discussed in Chapter Three. In Lacan's discussion of the mirror-stage he states 'there is a moment at which this look which appears in the mirror begins to look no longer at ourselves, initium, aura, the dawning of a feeling of strangeness which opens the door to anxiety' (Lacan, 1962-1963: 4). The object *a* has some relation to the double, anxiety, and the mother. But it also, through the intimate association of 'falling' has a relationship to the *Hommelette /lamella*, and the soul. Given that all of these things have a *first*, one could say originary or primordial relationship to the mother – admittedly at the beginning as body – and an integral relation to the baby, being that they are in effect his/her things, then we can see why the object *a* seems to occupy such a privileged position in the Lacanian doctrine. It is difficult not to imagine the mother, represented by the (w)hole from which dangles, drags, 'falls', the baby and all its things, the object *a*, the *Hommelette/lamella* and the soul. And this composition then is reflected back to us as some form of specular image: but it appears as if the image is caught in a fun-house mirror, of the kind you experience at the circus, everything is distorted, lumped together, dissociated and returned as fragmented whole. No wonder then we experience anxiety, and why Freud was at pains to separate realistic anxiety from neurotic anxiety is made clear in this 'house of horrors'.

‘Three knocks’, ‘the rise of the curtain’ and ‘Suddenly’, ‘all of a sudden’, *das unheimliche* makes its presence felt within Lacan says, the field of anxiety. But fascinated by the contents of the mirror (this fun-house mirror) you forget that a mirror has edges, has limits, and forgetting you let anxiety in. A mirror is just a metaphor, a window will do just as well, perhaps as Winnicott would have it the mother’s face can also be such a metaphor, even Narcissus drowning in his own image, each pertains to a kind of horror, an oscillation between *heimlich* and *das unheimliche*. In Lacan’s mirror, or indeed within the frame of Lacan’s mirror where all these things exist simultaneously and not separately, phantasy and the Real make an appearance. Or it could be said at that the limits of the mirror, in a *lacuna*, an opening, phantasy and the Real ‘seep’ through. *Heimlich* with its association to *heim* to things known and comforting is what allows the phenomenon of anxiety a foothold says Lacan. And arguing through Freud’s analysis of the uncanny, Lacan keeps the Freudian formula, *heimlich* necessitates *das unheimliche*. Anxiety is the cut in the Real that lets the signifier in. Lacan argues that this cut in the Real is understood in the term ‘presentiment’, ‘which is not simply to be understood as the presentiment of something, but also the “pre” of feeling, that which is before the birth of feeling’ (Lacan, 1962-1963: 7). *Before* the affect: this is Freud’s first formula for anxiety, which Rank made explicit and Freud let go, that ‘the act of birth is the first experience of anxiety, and thus the source and prototype of the affect of anxiety’ (SE 5: 400-401). Freud concludes his exposition on *The Uncanny* by saying that infantile anxiety, aroused by solitude, silence and darkness remain with us throughout our lives, it is ‘something that most of us never wholly overcome’ (PE, 2003:159). Lacan’s ‘presentiment’, his ‘before’ almost slips into a ‘beyond’, beyond anxiety, before anxiety, at an archaic level. As Weber would have it, they often amount to the same thing.

Rose states that Freud attempted to deny experiencing the ‘oceanic feeling’ that most of us are familiar with. She argues that Winnicott enters this space where Freud did not dare to tread:

This particular form of danger – that there might be a world without boundaries where all founding distinctions are lost – seems, for the most part, to have been ignored (repressed one might say). Indeed, you could argue that the emphasis on the adequacy and inadequacy of the mother – what she can and should do – has served to make safe or occlude this space: not the space of

a necessary lack-in-being in Lacanian terms, but the opposite, a space too full, a space that will become our dream of the mother, but which is in fact a space with no simple origin, and for which no one is accountable, where the divisions inside my own mind, and between me and the other, are unclear. One of Bollas's strongest early points – and a great deal follows from here – is that if Freud refused the mother as referent, he more than embraced her into the setting of analysis' (Rose, 2004: 154-155).

Rose argues that to read Bollas is to (re)enter the previously inscribed domain of the maternal from several unknown entrances. But if Bollas is not content to show the mother as she is or was, he could in Rose's words, 'be seen as bringing to the surface of a whole tradition in relation to the mother what she is being asked to carry. He could be showing us what psychoanalysis – writing of her and returning to her in what so often feels like a punishing scrutiny – no less than any other discourse, repeats' (Rose, 2004: 161-162). Kristeva argues that what passes through the mother, 'gnaws away at the all-mightiness of the Symbolic' (in Rose, 2004: 159). Lacan states that 'if desire were primordial, if it were the desire of the mother which determined the bringing into the play of the original crime, we would be in the field of vaudeville' (Lacan, 1962-63:12). According to Bollas, it is. In what might be one of his most interesting essay's 'Cracking Up' (1995) he has the mother play clown to the infant. In fact he argues that the clowning mother might be our very first other and he suggests 'I believe we are entering a primary area and encountering a primordial object' (Bollas, 1995: 236). At this early constitution of the ego then, the clown takes precedence. Freud said something similar when he argued that 'The ego here plays the ludicrous part of the clown in the circus, who, by his gestures, tries to convince the audience that every change in the circus ring is being executed in response to his command. But only the most youthful in the audience are taken in' (SE 14: 53). Like Rose, I think I like this mother as clown best. Although what is most funny in a clown is sometimes most unsettling: when the clown becomes too much, goes to far. In the following chapter then, a discussion of Christopher Bollas's clowning mother will be explored as a possible alternative to the maternal images discussed so far.

Chapter Five

The Clowning Mother

‘Look up at the sky! There’s a balloon there!’ ‘If I just said “look up” you would look, but would you see?’ (SE 16: 437).

‘Know yourself’⁷⁸ that is the Oracles decree, in ignoring it Oedipus trespassed on the boundary of propriety, he ‘did’ the forbidden act. And his crime, self-blinding, ‘Oedipus blinds himself and forsakes his home’ (SE 4: 262). But as Tiresias had illustrated Oedipus was already intellectually blind. The Oedipus complex, Freud’s bulwark against the black tide of mud, is resolutely concerned with ‘sight’; *as* the myth itself *is* concerned with loss, a loss literally of sight, allegorically with seeing the mothers’ horrifying genitals, the Medusa’s head Freud will say. Freud looks, *and* he tells us to look, he tells us that we all look, and that we all turn away in horror. But the question might rather be, does he see? Freud tells us that the boy looks away in fright because he fears that he will lose his penis – be castrated. The eye is a symbol of this loss, but it is also a symbol of the soul and therefore of death and like Gloucester in King Lear, (who Freud compares himself to), ‘I have no way, therefore want no eyes; I stumbled when I saw’ (IV.1.18-19), Freud looks away. Perhaps this looking away involves a rejection of “seeing” through “women’s eyes”: ‘And let not women’s weapons, water drops, Stain my man’s cheeks. No, you unnatural hags...’ (II.4.272-273). Rank argued that not only could Freud not “see” that behind the Oedipus situation was a more powerful and primal object – that of the mother, but that through Freud’s repression of the ‘castrating mother’ fear and hatred are *in-corporeal*-ated in women (Rank in Kramer ed., 1993:37). Is this a reference to Anna Freud’s suggestion, as I stated in Chapter Three, that without the Oedipus Complex there would have been no psychoanalysis? That Freud became ‘blind’ to the trauma theory for this very reason? But the trauma theory, as does ‘The Project’, haunt Freud’s oeuvre, and like the red thread of Goethe’s ‘effective affinities’ (an umbilicus) weave there way throughout his work. As this thesis has shown and as this Chapter will conclude, Freud never really escapes “seeing” and the Witch/Hag/Mother, far from only being called on when needed, has accompanied him all the way.

⁷⁸ ‘Look into the depths of your own soul and learn first to know yourself, then you will understand why this illness was bound to come upon you and perhaps you will thenceforth avoid falling ill’ (CP 4: 355).

Mother Mary Mud

Freud makes clear the link between mother and mud – *dejecta* as Ferenczi states, which incorporates faeces as well (Ferenczi, 1916: 322) without realising he is doing so. In an example of the ‘contrariness’ – ‘condensation’ of words in dreams Freud offers the title of a book by Clerk-Maxwell, ‘*Matter and Motion*’ that he saw (in the dream) bound in ‘brown cloth’ (SE 5: 456, 520). This makes him think of Molière’s ‘Le – ‘*La matière est-elle laudable?*’ ‘Is the matter laudable’ (it has a feminine application). Old medical terminology for ‘Is the excretion healthy?’ ‘A *motion* of the bowels’ states Freud (SE 5: 520). Freud uses *Mater/Matrem* to describe his mother in Latin when she is *nudem*. Here then is a connection to the example of ‘contrariness’: *mater*, *matter*, *motion*. Freud’s example of ‘matter and motion’ is to illustrate ‘forgetting’ in dreams but also judgment, which he will say is deterred in dreams. If there is judgment in a dream it comes from the manifest content of the dream not the latent component. *Forgetting*, as Freud makes explicit is about resistance to something or someone. He connects the forgetting in the ‘matter and motion’ dream to the embarrassment he felt when he gendered a starfish at the seaside. He tells the little girl that ‘He is still alive’ and then embarrassed corrects himself. He argues that this is an innocent example of ‘bringing’ sex in at the wrong place (SE 5: 519-520). In ‘The Dream and the Primal Scene’ in the Wolf Man (SE 17) Freud says, ‘(i)t is always a strict law of dream-interpretation that an explanation must be found for every detail’ (SE 17: 42 n 2). *Mat(t)er/Motion* as Freud argues has a feminine application. Given that Freud utilises Latin in his explanation of *Matrem/Nudem* and knowing that *Mater* means mother, one would think, knowing Freud’s insistence on the philology of words and the often antithetical meanings, in a ‘primal’ sense, that the ‘obvious’ detail in the dream would be the link between *Mater* and faeces/motion? More so, if one considers that the ‘*Matter and Motion*’ book is bound in brown cloth!

It is an equation Freud has offered before, faeces/baby/penis/mother/hole. Admittedly the correlation here is my own, but throughout Freud’s discourse he constantly links one with the other, one despite the other and this too is an example of the stages of infantile sexuality, oral, anal, phallic, genital.

Before the ‘matter and motion’ dream Freud offered the recollection of getting ‘sex’

in the ‘wrong place’ (SE 5: 519). Freud states, in the misappropriation of gender, here a starfish he refers to as ‘he’ in response to the ‘charming’ little girl’s inquiry, ‘Is that a starfish?’ ‘Is it alive?’ we have the ‘keys’ to the solution of the dream (SE 5: 519). And yet when offered the ‘key to The Mothers’ (once again) Freud turns away, offering a different interpretation, one that seems to ignore the most obvious details – ‘Is the matter laudable? It has a feminine application’. Freud writes in the preface to Captain Bourke’s ‘Scatalogic Rites of all Nations’ (SE 12) that to ‘begin with, excremental and sexual instincts are not distinct from each other for children’ (SE 12: 337). For the child, as we have seen, the idea that they could eat some type of food, like in a fairy-tale and birth a baby though the anus is believable. But the separation between them remains incomplete argues Freud, and is ‘still felt in many ways in normal adults. ... Some portion of the old preferences persist, some part of the coprophilic inclinations continue’ (SE 12: 337). But just as Freud turns away from going to the depths of the Mothers, he turns away in this instance from an example in a dream that suggests the link between mothers, sex and excreta. And what after all is excreta but ‘dead’ *mat(t)er*. For Kristeva it is to the mother, that all ‘part-objects’ of ‘digust’ and ‘anality’ are projected (Kristeva, 1995: 119). In Chapter Three of this thesis Freud’s own analysis of the dream of his ‘dead *Mater*’ with a ‘peculiarly peaceful expression on her face’ is given as, primal desire for sexual intercourse with the mother, not as recognition that one might harbour matricidal phantasies. Perhaps Freud’s repeated turning away then is because like Oedipus he did not see, *or want to see*, what was right in front of his eyes.

Numbers, 3 and 8

Freud will argue it is ‘remarkable what a small degree of attention the other part of the male genitals, the little sac with its contents, attracts in children. From all one hears in analyses, one would not guess that the male genitals consisted of anything more than the penis’ (SE 19: 142 n 1). And further, ‘In any case the number three has been confirmed from many sides as a symbol of the male genitals’ (SE 5: 358). Replying to Jung’s accusation of positivism in relation to Freud’s theory of infantile sexuality, Freud states that Jung was like the peasant who chalked three crosses on his door to ward off danger (McGuire, 1974: 19 n 7). Freud translates this to mean that Jung fears

‘dangerous sexuality’ and writes, ‘+++sexuality. You thrust it aside in dealing with this question, I make use of it but arrive at no solution; so it is not surprising that neither of us knows anything about it. *‘Nemo me impune lacessit’* rings in my ears from my schooldays. The ancients knew how inexorable a god Eros is’ (*‘No one provides me with impunity’*) (McGuire, 1974: 19). Bollas argues the number three ‘is a number with a disseminative destiny of unusual power in our civilisation’ (Bollas, 1995: 62). One of the Wolf Man’s obsessive symptoms was his association with three heaps of excrement on the road with the holy trinity (in Abraham and Torok, 1986: 94-95). And yet in *Dreams in Folklore* Freud overlooks the number eight which it is argued is the symbol for the female genitals: ‘But it was there plain and clear, only you didn’t work [it] out...And the number 8 belonging to the series—the cunt shows you that—its like a number 8’ (SE 12: 203). Freud will say in conclusion to this short paper, that it was not their (written with Professor Ernst Oppenheim) intention to offer material that was ‘often repulsively dirty and indecent’ but that in its comparison to psychoanalysis one sees that ‘behind these ugly facades are concealed mental reactions to impressions of life which are to be taken seriously, which even strike a sad note...’ (SE 12: 203). Here then, amidst these sexual/excremental dreams and folklore, is the dream of the female genitals described as resembling the number ‘8’. Freud comments that ‘Excremental things are all too intimately and inseparably bound up with sexual things; the position of the genital organs – *inter urinas et faeces* – remains the decisive and unchangeable factor’ (CP 4: 215). Freud borrows this from Lou Andreas-Salomé and in line with most of his remarks concerning female genitalia, it suggests the animal (and horrifying) cast that the female genitals have on ‘whoever’ views them. But here we have a number, like the number three, which holds such inordinate power in ‘our civilisation’ and the number eight it might be noted in numerology at least is the number of Fate. The three Fates may decide the destiny of ‘Man’ but the number eight (the “cunt”) is that destiny. Freud returns, reasonably constantly it might be said, to an appraisal of the number three. The number eight only features in this passage (in his theoretical work at least) and so briefly that we might read past it. Here then, is Freud’s response to the mother, and the mother’s genitals with their Medusa like configuration (turning men to stone/stiff/dead), he turns away.

It has been a purpose of this thesis to understand this turning away but just as Breuer

ran away when confronted with Anna O.'s simulated birth pangs, 'Now Dr. B.'s child is coming!' (E. Freud, 1960: 413), Freud while suggesting he is more Faustian in nature by mere dint of the fact that Breuer was not, also took flight when offered this 'key to The Mothers'. Breuer turned away from Freud's sexual theory, as Freud sees it, as later Jung and Rank will do also. Freud tells Karl Abraham that this made him even more confident that 'his' Oedipal theory was correct and that he was on the right path (in Donn, 1988: 174). Rank in contrast argues 'and from this one fact Breuer fled. Freud, on the other hand, succeeded in interpreting it, by justifying it as a repetition of an earlier situation—which he called Oedipus situation' (Rank in Kramer ed., 1996: 230). What is it then that Freud is turning away from? If forgetting in a dream is a kind of resistance, then what is Freud resisting? Freud does connect the birth of Breuer's youngest daughter not long after the treatment of Anna O., to the 'hysterical pregnancy' and Breuer's flight, but he does not elaborate on the associations he makes (E. Freud, 1960: 413). Thus, Breuer's turning away from Freud's sexual theory began with a 'pathogenic pregnancy'. Freud's own turning away from the mother (or Mothers) seems less easy to define.

The mother offers a strange position for Freud. *She is*, as I have made clear throughout this thesis *Mater* to be uniformly overlooked. But she is also for the son at least a love-relation that has the essence of surpassing all others. Freud offers us a tale, as he is accustomed to do. This is the tale of Schopenhauer's 'famous simile of the freezing porcupines' (SE 18: 101). Freud offers this tale to illustrate that we all need distance from our neighbour. The story goes that a group of porcupines crowded together to keep warm on a 'cold winters day' but their quills got in the way so they moved apart again. But because it was so cold they moved back together but once again the quills got in the road. Thus they were driven backwards and forwards until they found a comfortable distance in which they could 'tolerably exist' (SE 18: 101 n 1). Thus argues Freud all lengthy intimate relations between people 'contain a sediment of feelings of aversion and hostility which only escapes perception as a result of repression' (SE 18: 101). The only exception to this he states is the relationship between mother and son, a relationship without parallel. Kristeva will disagree with Freud, instead suggestion that 'loving one's neighbour as oneself', which Freud felt was an illusion (too much closeness suffocates and here we have Proverbs to support Freud's argument: 'Let your foot be seldom in your neighbour's

house, lest he become weary of you and hate you' (Proverbs, 25-17)), 'returns us to the enigma—darker even than the mystery of gestation—that is the “good enough mother”': she who allow the *infans* to create the transitional space permissive of thought' (Kristeva, 2009: 42). The 'good enough mother' is the one that allows the child '*the pleasure of thinking her*' suggests Kristeva (2009: 46). But what does this mean when we consider Rose's/Bollas's question, 'what does thinking about mothers do to thinking?' If the 'good enough mother' is the one that allows the child to think, or more particularly the 'pleasure of thinking her' then when does the child become aware of the distance that such a thinking must entail? A distance that must be observed argues Freud or the accompanying feelings of 'aversion and hostility' will ultimately threaten to overwhelm the child. Just as too much love will suffocate the child, how do 'we' negotiate a distance from the mother when the repression that should take place, indeed must take place is rendered precarious in the 'symbiotic oneness' of mother and infant/child. If the 'good enough mother' allows this thinking of her, is this thinking reciprocal? Can the mother think the child as the child thinks of her? Is this a kind of 'love one's neighbour as one's self', an 'oceanic oneness' peculiar to mothers and that cannot be undone? Or is it a continuation of the parasitical relationship that first takes place in the womb? Irigaray will argue that we have a debt to the mother that we will never repay but is this debt so unconscious (if indeed we recognise an unconscious not previously realised – a definitely before language unconscious) that it cannot be thought – is beyond thought (and this has echo's of Bollas's 'unthought unknown), and pleasure, desire even? Are we always aware then (without really being aware) of a prickling, suffocating sense of the mother? And how do we turn away from this? And is the 'good enough mother' the one that both allows the 'pleasure of thinking her' but also allows a turning away from this thinking?

God, the Devil, the Word, and the Dog

In Freud's discussion with the Impartial Person in *The Question of Lay Analysis* (SE 20) he states, 'And incidentally let us not despise the *word*. It is a “powerful instrument”':

It is the means by which we convey our feelings to one another, our method of influencing other people. Words can do unspeakable good and cause terrible wounds. No doubt 'in the beginning was the deed' and the word came later; in

some circumstances it meant an advance in civilization when deeds were softened into words. But originally the word was magic—a magical act; and it has retained much of its ancient power (SE 20: 187-188).

Freud's Ariadne like thread is at work here suggests Prokhoris, because the borrowed words, 'In the beginning was the deed' are weaved effortlessly into his own text.

Taken from Faust's mouth, 'in the beginning was the deed' itself an inaccurate translation of the Biblical expression, 'In the beginning was the Word'. Of course, this is Faust's point, but just as he considers that God's word is misinterpreted the Devil arrives in the form of a dog. A fitting disguise because Freud makes clear in *Civilizations and its Discontents* (SE 21) that in the evolution of man and the adaptation to an upright gait, we diminished our olfactory stimuli and 'fell victim to organic repression' (SE 21: 105-106 n 3). Fitting also, because Freud compares Ariadne's thread to the umbilical cord and 'the legend of the labyrinth...as a representation of anal birth, the twisting paths are the bowels' and Ariadne herself, we know is a symbol of the phallic mother (SE 22: 24-25).

'Cleanliness next to godliness' became the mantra, particularly in regard to excreta with the child who learns control of its bowel motions early deemed good. Less praiseworthy if it takes pleasure in the production and tactile quality of its faeces. We call those people who are not clean, who smell, 'dogs' states Freud and in doing so we do an injustice to mans 'most faithful friend in the animal world' (SE 21: 99-100 n 1). But the dog's dominant sense is smell and it has 'no horror of excrement' or its 'sexual functions'.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Kristeva will argue that it is not the lack of cleanliness that causes horror but what disturbs the borders of that cleanliness. This introduces Kristeva's theory of the abject, the 'jettisoned object' that occurs 'at the place where meaning collapses' (Kristeva, 1982: 10). Abjection is 'a hatred that smiles' argues Kristeva and in this she seems to signal the abjects 'uncanny' relation to the mother (Kristeva, 1982: 4-5). Kristeva will argue that the abject is different from 'uncanniness', it is more violent, and it is recognised through the lack of recognition. For Kristeva, the child that experiences the abject has 'swallowed up his parents too soon' (Kristeva, 1982: 5). Frightened the child rejects everything; his/her boundaries have been breached, fear keeps the abject – the horror – from seeping in:

Yes, Horror smiled at him . . . Seldom/did you, Mother, smile so tenderly.
How could he help/loving what smiled at him?' (Rilke in Mandel, 1965: 101).

The 'organic repression' of our sense of smell shows the doubling that we have become familiar with in Freud in his expression 'repression stinks'. This says Freud works with the theory of 'internal stinking': libido and disgust are linked in such a way that makes a current memory stink just as an actual object stinks. We turn away in disgust as the conscious/ego and preconscious/super-ego turn away from the memory: this then is *repression* (SE 1: 269). Freud will tell Fliess, 'I can scarcely enumerate for you all the things that I (a modern Midas) turn into excrement' (SE 1: 273). And through the word money with its associations of dirt and excrement he offers a chain of words that he tells us all go back to the toilet: birth, miscarriage, menstruation (SE 1: 273). What stinks then, seems to be anything to do with a 'birthing body' since all these things are concerned with a woman's body that becomes a mother. Freud had already told Fliess that the upright stance was accompanied with a sense of 'the earth becoming repulsive' (SE 1: 268). Thus Mother Nature and the mother, which are intertwined in their positioning as the three Fates, among other things, stink according to Freud: we turn our nose up at them as we turn away (SE 1: 269). Freud extends this analogy in his example of the child that sucks eagerly at the breast of its mother, in a nutritional and sensual way says Freud, only to develop several years later an aversion to drinking milk emphasised in the disgust when warmed milk develops a skin. Freud suggests that we cannot exclude, 'the possibility perhaps that the skin conjures up a memory of the mother's breast, once so ardently desired' (SE 16: 366). Thus the wrinkled skin on milk makes us think of the wrinkled skin of the breast. But this is where Freud neglects his own

Kristeva argues that the child has 'swallowed up' emptiness instead of maternal love (and this seems different to the emptiness that Kristeva discusses in Chapter Two): the emptiness here signalled as maternal hatred. For Kristeva the abject collapses the 'wall of repression and its judgements' (Kristeva, 1982: 15). It is triggered by 'food loathing' – the 'most elementary and most archaic form of abjection'; 'The corpse (or cadaver: *cadere*, to fall), that which has irremediably come a cropper, is a cesspool, and death'...excrement and blood' (Kristeva, 1982: 3). In contrast to Freud, none of the abject 'objects' stink. The point is, we recoil from them because somehow they have fallen outside, have collapsed the boundaries between inside and outside, between proper and improper. For Kristeva, 'Mother and death—both abominated, both abjected...' (Kristeva, 1982: 112). Kristeva states that the 'eroticisation' of bodily wastes is in the 'space' of the mother, is even a function of the mother, which highlights the mother's abjection and our relationship to it.

argument because as he states in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (SE 6) the mnemic image of the mother remains in our unconscious ‘looking beautiful and slim – forever Jocasta we might say (SE 6: 49-51): ‘being in love with one’s own mother one is never concerned with her as she is in the present but with her youthful mnemic image carried over from one’s childhood’ (SE 6: 178). This form of ‘deferred action’ (and really what else are we to call it) on Freud’s part where the mother is at once young but also old, where the breast is firm and full of milk, but wrinkled and akin to disgust, also raises the spectre of the ‘Witch’. I wonder at this ‘Witch’ who offers us an important clue to aid our “‘taming” of the instinct’ (SE 23: 225). Because Freud tells us, only two paragraphs later that the strength of certain instincts are ‘almost’ beyond “‘taming”, those during puberty ‘and, in women, at the menopause’ (SE 23: 226). Thus ‘we must call the Witch’ to our help’ but it seems to be that we must ask who is this Witch? Because in-between the menstruating and the menopausal ‘untamed’ woman is the mother.

We have met this Witch before in her different guises in the preceding Chapters. Freud writes to Fliess telling him that Emma Eckstein’s symptoms, her haemorrhaging, her near death, are reminiscent of a ‘scene’ that as a ‘hysteric’ she had offered before. This ‘scene’ where the devil ‘sticks pins into her finger and puts a piece of candy on each drop of blood’ (in Masson, 1985: 103) says Freud marks her as the devil’s concubine, a ‘Witch’. Here then Freud amalgamates the bodies of mother-witch and father-devil, so we are left with the Platonian example of Aristophanes’s creature, forever wanting to become one/whole from two/parts (this after all was Zeus’s intention). A strange creature, Freud’s Witch, an incubus maybe, itself compared by Freud to his psychology, psychoanalysis: ‘This psychology is really an incubus’ (to Fliess in Bonaparte, A. Freud and Kris, 1954: 123). The incubus in this context, and in its linguistic usage, particularly in Freud’s native German, is a *mare* (*night-witch*), nightmare. The nightmare as we saw in Chapter Four, is itself, according to Lacan and Jones the epitome of anxiety, and anxiety is the witch’s letter. But in the perpetual roundabout that Freud’s ‘labyrinth’ takes, the witch as incubus, as *night-mare* not only suggests the archaic in Freud’s and Lacan’s arguments but suggests that this ‘archaic’, both a *before* and a *beyond* is irresolutely bound (by our Ariadne thread) to the witch’s letter and thus to the anxiety that precedes it.

Freud wrote to Lou Andreas-Salomé ‘we must have recourse to the witch Prehistory or Phylogenesis...’ (Pfeiffer, 1972: 80), which suggests as I argued in Chapter Four that the significance that Rank gave to ‘separation anxiety’ and womb phantasies and that Freud argued ‘reveal in a flash the biological background of the Oedipus complex’ (in Sprengenther, 1990: 13 and Jones, 1957: 64), point instead to an ‘unknown’ here referred to by Freud as a restoration of the previous existence (ibid.), the ‘biological oneness’, symbiotic union of mother and child. Further, Prokhoris argues that ‘Freud turns, like Faust to the Witch, the “Witch metapsychology” to find a “love with which we operate”’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 73), and that Freud’s Ariadne thread travels down through his self-analysis with Fliess, his other half, his demon as he refers to him and finally is worked out as a pact with the Witch: ‘the instinct to investigate is in turn transformed: initially associated with the paternal function...it is gradually transmuted into unsettling, uncontrollable maternal terrain, subject as it is to the Witch’ (Prokhoris, 1995: 74)

What is an instinct but a kind of passion that must be tamed according to Freud? Kristeva will ask, ‘what do we know, what do we have to say today about maternal passion? Does what was once a “beyond” not seem to take refuge in the maternal belly today? Omnipotence and madness of mothers: *the desire* for maternity at any cost goes hand in hand with the *denial of pregnancy and the denial of maternity*’ (Kristeva, 2009: 42). The ‘maternal object’ cannot be represented argues André Green and this seems to be what Freud is also saying. She can be fought over, after all this is what the basis of the Oedipal complex is about, the sons and the father fighting over the right to have the mother. Yerushalmi offers a pertinent response to this, stating ‘Curiously, desire for the mother, so significant in your account of the Oedipal conflict of the individual, disappears along with the wives of the Primeval Father in your account of the history of religion’. And asks, ‘Who, then, at the juncture we have reached, is the mother?’ (Yerushalmi in a monologue with Freud, 1991: 92). In Yerushalmi’s reply the mother need not be a person, but ‘brazenly’ he states, she is the Torah, the teaching, the revelation’ because the Torah in Hebrew is ‘grammatically feminine and which is midrashically compared to a bride’ (Yerushalmi, 1991: 92). It seems then that we might have lost the mother to the bride, but the bride is eternally the Virgin Mary, the Mother of ‘God’. We arrive back at the mother then through an Eternal Return, which illustrates to us the ‘split’, the *Spaltung*

of maternal passion. Kristeva argues that 'Religious myths wove their webs around this split' and therefore, woman is to be thought of as "hole" 'this is the meaning of the word *woman* in Hebrew: *nekeva*...and a queen in the Bible; the Virgin is a "hole" in the Christian trinity father/son/holy spirit and queen of the church' (Kristeva, 2009: 46-47). Freud seems to allude to this point without actually saying it.⁸⁰

The skin on the milk then, reminiscent of the skin of the breast makes us want to spit the mother out as Freud argues in his paper *Negation* (SE 19). To negate something through a judgment argues Freud is to repress it. As Rose reasons, Freud manages to, and not for the first time 'set the mother up as blindness and insight' (Rose, 2004: 151). The 'No' of the negative judgment claims Freud is the 'hall-mark' of repression, a 'certificate of origin—like, let us say, 'Made in Germany' (SE 19: 236). Thus the 'No' is the hall-mark of repression but it is also the certificate of origin; the 'un' is the token of repression; and repression stinks avows Freud. But we have a scar left-over where a repression occurs states Freud. Thus if we were to say, 'Made in...' wouldn't the corresponding mark then be the navel, which might be thought of as the scar of repression, or at least the scar of a 'first' repression the spot that reaches down into the unknown. Which would suggest that, 'Made in' would correspondingly be, 'Made in Mother'. After all, what is a certificate of origin if not our mother?

What Freud seems to be telling us here, is that the mother, of whom initially we were so fond 'I'm so fond of you Mummy. When you die I'll have you stuffed and I'll keep you in this room, so that I can see you *all* the time' (SE 4: 254); and who we owe our lives to: 'The mother gave the child his life and it is not easy to replace this unique gift with anything of equal value' (CP 4: 201); becomes negated. Again we turn away from the mother as Freud says we turn away from Mother Nature who becomes repulsive to us, or at least the dirt – 'the distressing trace of the Earth' – with its equivalence to *dejecta* does.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Groddeck argues that 'Thus the desire for happiness is the innermost impulse in a woman's soul; that she does not succeed in taming it is the ultimate reason for woman's suffering' (Groddeck, 1977: 255).

⁸¹ Freud in his preface to Bourke quotes Goethe's *Faust* (once again) to illustrate with Bourke how 'civilized man' finds the 'problem of their physical nature' embarrassing and too close to the 'animals'. Mankind attempts to 'emulate the 'more perfected angels' in the last scene of *Faust*, who complain':

Repression leaves a scar as the navel leaves a scar. Both of these scars, as I have argued are linked to the mother, or more particularly the mother's body. And anxiety seems to have a 'primal' or at least 'original' relationship with both of them. How is it then that the mother seems to be left out of Freudian theory? Or is only seen as 'something' that everybody else gets to do something to? The baby gets to be born and to feed; the boy gets to dream and scheme; the daughter gets to hate and envy; the man gets to use and replace. What does the mother get? Freud offers her recognition in her position as first love-object and as integral to the child's mental health. All things I have said before but this is a piecemeal mother, one who is also breast and genitals. She is also the navel, in that the navel illustrates to us the place we have been before and are all striving to return states Freud. A navel that Freud straddles in an attempt to get closer to the unknown component of the dream. But still, he fails to designate this place as maternal.

Groddeck, the 'wild psychoanalyst'

Freud said that 'the aim of all *life* is death' (SE 18: 38). And here Groddeck, Freud's 'wild analyst', although self-proclaimed and not in the sense that Freud understood in *Wild Psychoanalysis* (SE 11) wrote that man fears death, and thus longs for it (Groddeck, 1977: 200). Because, suggests Groddeck, fear is finally to be understood as a wish, if we really fear something, at a deeper and apostate level we wish it. To this then Eros and Thanatos coincide. Symbolically argues Groddeck 'we possess a religion which still seems to us the symbol of our human existence' (Groddeck, 1977: 200). Thus Eros, the God of Love says Groddeck will, as an exemplar for humankind, die on the cross, be buried (entombed/en-wombed) and there after be resurrected. The truth is, contends Groddeck, 'man has a longing for death because he longs for love, and a longing for love because he craves death, the mother's womb' (Groddeck, 1977: 201). This is not far from Freud's argument that in all likelihood man still longs for the mother's womb where he was safe and warm. Where it is

Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest
zu tragen peinlich,
und wär' er von Asbest,
er ist nicht reinlich.

Literally states Freud, 'We still have a trace of the Earth, which is distressing to bear; and though it were asbestos it is not cleanly' (in SE 12: 335).

different in Groddeck's argument is that the womb is not necessarily to be thought of as a lost paradise for Groddeck, rather the womb becomes a 'prison' for the child from which s/he, in cohesion with the mother's desire, wants to escape (Groddeck, 1977: 145). Groddeck makes the act of birth, not wholly a 'mechanical' process but 'a mutual agreement between two unconscious individualities' (Groddeck, 1977: 144-145). Children's fear of the dark then is a fear relating to the wish to escape the prison/womb, which formerly had been a comforting home. This is different to Freud who as we saw felt that children were frightened of the dark because of a *longing* for the mother. The correlation of womb and prison frequently occurs in dreams argues Groddeck and represents the ambivalence, carried over into childhood that is characteristic of the human condition. 'The strongest negative and positive effects are always directed against the mother, and the fear of being buried alive, like the fear of darkness at night and of hell, go back to prenatal conditions. Here, too, one can see that the fundamental direction of man's and mankind's life is already given in the womb' (Groddeck, 1977: 145). Freud argues that his old nurse taught him the difference between heaven and hell but according to Groddeck this differentiation is already there, as it were, *in utero*. For Groddeck the battle between the mother and the unborn baby begins in the womb and is orchestrated by the conflict between the mother's consciousness (the Ego) and her unconscious (the It). The It wants the Ego to get rid of something that it regards as 'poisoning it/It. There is a war going on and it does not seem to really matter/*Mater* who wins argues Groddeck.

Groddeck makes his It omnipotent and also a manifestation of the ambivalence that we all feel in relation to the mother. 'The mother, the love of the mother and the hatred of the mother, gives man everything, even his God' (Groddeck, 1977: 152). The root of religion and every religious feeling stem from the mother complex argues Groddeck, where love of the mother predominates, this is the oceanic that Freud professed to have no feeling for, no knowledge of. Groddeck would argue that this is because Freud turned away from the mother. An atheist in Groddeck's view is someone who wants to deny their childhood and in doing so 'get away from the authority of his mother complex' (Groddeck, 1977: 152). He covers over the godhead with words, and in so doing, in his rejection of God he believes he has surmounted his mother, and thus his own childhood (Groddeck, 1977: 152).

Kriteva extends Groddeck's argument, although her engagement with the maternal is quite different in interpretation to Groddeck's. In a discussion of *The Bible* (in reading *The Bible* (her capitals)), she will say:

The Bible offers the best description of this transformation of sacrifice into language. ... And further, 'In my view, the fulcrum of this biblical process can be located in its particular conception of the *maternal*: the maternal is a promised land if you are willing to leave it, an object of desire if you are willing to renounce it and forbid it; the maternal is delight as well as murder, an inescapable "abject" whose awareness haunts you, or which may very well be the constitutive double of your own awareness (Kristeva, 1995: 120).

Kofman suggests something similar to both Groddeck and Kristeva stating that it is the 'Son' who acts as the mother's Saviour, '(a)ll religions have known this all along: the child takes the mother's wounds to himself and restores to her an intact body. The mother thus becomes a Virgin Mother, whom nothing can penetrate. ... Motherhood is a path to salvation' (Kofman, 1985: 215). And further that Freud's double gesture "turns up everywhere". Freud both acknowledges the fantasmatic "maternal omnipotence", transformed argues Kofman, into 'a Fate or a great goddess' and undermines it by 'turning this power to the profit of man, who runs up against the real "resistance" of the mother' who in Kofman's argument is "irreplaceable and "unsublatable" (Kofman, 1985: 80).

While some of Groddeck's work on women as mothers is contentious his positioning of the mother as our personal God resonates with this paper as a whole. In particular, his argument that labour pains start from the backbone and that the backbone is comparable to the cross on which Christ is nailed is suggestive. The cross (backbone) argues Groddeck is the mother herself. 'Suddenly' says Groddeck, 'I am confronted with the question: 'isn't it perhaps the unattainable longing to become one with the mother-unattainable because the son is nailed to the cross on the outside, turned away, his back to the mother – isn't this longing perhaps the deepest meaning ... and there are still others, even darker, unrecognisable meanings?' (Groddeck, 1977: 201).

Freud in a letter to Fliess states, 'What oppresses me can hardly be helped. It is my cross and I must bear it, but God knows my back has become distinctly bent from the effort' (in Choisy, 85). Perhaps Freud's turning away from the mother was a resistance to what Kofman calls above, her omnipotence, her "unsublatability", her

position as ‘God’ as Groddeck would have it. Freud makes the mother-son relationship ‘the most perfect’ and by doing so makes the mother impenetrable. Freud’s turning away from the mother, his pulling away from the mother – “my back has become distinctly bent from the effort” – whether as a means for mastery, or as something always already preordained, or as something else besides is echoed in Groddeck’s suggestion that a trip to *Faust*’s ‘realm of the Mothers’ might help us understand the ‘depth of meaning’ attributed to the *longing* for the mother.

Perhaps Freud’s turning away has as much to do with the mother, *his* mother as with the guilt he felt at the death of his baby brother Julius. The ‘Cain phantasy’, as we saw in Chapter Three, that all men are brothers but only one brother is truly good, the other brother is cursed to walk the earth for all eternity: Ahasuerus/Cartaphilus/Cain, three names, perhaps the same personality, ‘all’ wanderers for forsaking God. Freud the ‘non-believer’ turns from God as he turns from the mother: ‘Eli, Eli, láma sabach-tháni?’ ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ (Matthew 27: 45-46). In what is called ‘The Seven Expressions’, Christ’s last words, this cry to God is ‘The Word of Abandonment’. The son cannot see the Mother, this is Groddeck’s contention, that in any event she is the cross on which he is nailed. But he can cry for her, as he cried for her as an infant. Groddeck’s suggestion seems to imply that this longing for the mother, no matter the tears we shed, has an ‘Infallibility’ to it: the mother with the ‘crown’ of immortality. This is interesting because Rudnytsky will argue that Freud at his ‘best’ ‘could be as inspiring as Jesus, at his worst he arrogated to himself the infallibility of a Pope’ (Rudnytsky, 2011: 4). If we combine these arguments then we could say that Freud takes the ‘mantle’ of infallibility from the mother, albeit in aversion to leaving it with a Catholic Pope.

Auf Geseres/Auf Ungeseres

In the dream of ‘*My Son, the Myops*’ Freud states, ‘This dream was constructed on a tangle of dream thoughts provoked by a play which I had seen’ (SE 5: 442). The play, by the Zionist Theodore Herzl is titled, *Das neue Ghetto* (‘*The New Ghetto*’ in Masson, 1985: 293). In the dream Freud is in Rome, sitting on the side of a fountain and ‘almost in tears’. A nun brings two boys out and hands them over to their father who is not Freud, although in the ‘farewell’ the eldest boy who Freud recognises as his son showed a preference to Freud. Freud in interpreting this dream concentrates

in particular on the words, '*Auf Ungeseres*' and '*Geseres*'. Freud states he had to get help from philologists (even though Jones in his biography on Freud argues that Freud had a knowledge of Hebrew from his father),⁸² to translate '*Geseres*' which is a 'genuine Hebrew word', and is best translated as 'imposed sufferings' or 'doom' (SE 5: 442) or more commonly (in slang) as 'weeping and wailing'. Of *Ungeseres* Freud suggests it was 'a private neologism of my own and was the first word to catch my attention, but to begin with I could make nothing of it' (SE 5: 442). Noting the preference both to himself in the dream by his son and to the word, *Ungeseres* Freud compares it to caviar; '*unsalted* [*ungesalzen*]' caviare (*sic*) is esteemed more highly than *salted* [*gesalzen*]' (SE 5: 442). Freud decides then that the association to *Geseres* (salted caviar) and *Ungeseres* (unsalted caviar) is to *leavened* (*gesäuert*) and *unleavened* (*ungesäuert*). Freud argues that in 'their flight out of Egypt the Children of Israel had not time to allow their dough to rise and, in memory of this, they eat unleavened bread to this day at Easter' (SE 5: 443). This is of course a reference to the Exodus led by Moses, of the Israelites from Egypt: Moses led the Israelites to Mount Sinai where God offers Moses/the Israelites the Law (*Torah*). Freud continues with 'a sudden association'. I was walking with my Friend (Fliess) 'through the streets of Breslau, a town in which we were strangers' (SE 5: 443). A little girl approaches and asks for directions, Freud tells her he does not know the way, and comments to Fliess that one hopes that when the little girl has grown, she will have better discrimination in who she gets to direct her. They pass a house with a door-plate bearing the words 'Dr. Herodes. Consulting hours...' Freud remarks wryly to Fliess, 'Let us hope that our colleague does not happen to be a children's doctor' (SE 5: 443). In the space of a few sentences then Freud moves from a reference to Moses and the Exodus of the Israelites, to one of Jesus. After all the biblical King Herod is responsible for the 'Massacre of the Innocents': the systematic murder of all baby

⁸² Freud though, most often stresses his lack of knowledge when it comes to Hebrew. He tells a 'Dr. Roback' that 'My education was so un-Jewish that today I cannot even read your dedication, which is evidently written in Hebrew' (in E. Freud, 1960: 395). Yerushalmi offers a convincing reply to this, questioning Freud's statement that 'my education was "so un-Jewish"' (1991: 68). After all Freud was tutored by his father and he 'studied Bible, Jewish history and religion, as well as Hebrew throughout his Gymnasium years with Samuel Hammerschlag, whom he hails as a wonderful teacher and to whom he remained almost filially devoted for the rest of his life' (Yerushalmi, 1991: 69). I think, as I remarked in Chapter Three of this thesis Freud is like Hamlet's mother, 'The lady doth protest too much, methinks' (*Hamlet* Act 3, scene 2). And by this, I do not associate Freud with 'womanliness', only the content of the quote.

boys under the age of two in the town of Bethlehem in an attempt to kill the ‘new born-king of the Jews’ (Matthew 2: 13-16). Freud may well be a ‘godless Jew’ but here he cites – although seemingly indirectly – two important biblical and Jewish people, one might say ‘Hero’s’. Of course, later Freud makes Moses an Egyptian and Jesus is excluded from Judaism but it would seem that Freud favours the Jew, in his rather complicated doubling which here operates as a division of opposites:

Geseres/Ungeseres, salted caviar/unsalted caviar, leavened bread/unleavened bread, Jesus/Moses, Gentile/Jew. Jesus might be displaced here, being a Jew, (as Yerushalmi states, there is no reason to suggest that Jesus did not think of himself as a Jew. Christianity as we might know it was only founded later (1991: 38)) but as the ‘father’ of Christianity he is associated with, is perhaps seen as, ‘Gentile’ (‘a Galilean Aryan’ even (in Yerushalmi, 1991: 46)).

Freud continues with his emphasis of the Jew in the comparison of his dream position ‘sitting on the edge of a fountain and was greatly depressed, almost in tears’ to Psalms 137 ‘By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion’ (SE 5: 442). Freud collapses a longing for Jerusalem by the wandering Israelites into his longing for Rome (‘My longing for Rome, is by the way, deeply neurotic’ (Masson, 1985: 285)) as Freud in his dream is sitting by a fountain in the ‘Porta Romana’ at Siena. All this doubling though returns us to the ‘spectre’ of the uncanny, which is both homely and unhomely, familiar and unfamiliar. We have seen the uncanny invoked by Geller in his position of the Jew as *Gastvolk*, the parasitical body who in an uncanny ‘*doppelgänger* effect’ is part of the ‘host body’ that the ‘parasitical body’ resides. The only equivalent metaphor to this is of the pregnant body, which ‘acts’ as the ‘ground/matter/*Mater*/mud’ through which self and Other are uncannily, we might say, interacting. Freud alludes to two famous Jews and in doing so, through reference to the ‘Passover’, to a Christian celebration of it as Easter, and to the ‘Massacre of Innocents’, itself having an implicit reference to Christmas, he refers to them as infants. Infants who are both subject to infanticide, one at the hands of a King (Herod) and one we could say at the hands of *the* King (God). The celebrations of birth and death are intertwined, one invokes the other: Gentile and Jew, Christianity and Judaism, Easter/Passover, Christmas and the ‘Massacre of the Innocents’. The ‘Passover’ saves the Jew, and in the ‘Massacre of the Innocents’ the Jew dies.

Herzl's play is concerned with 'The Jewish Problem', that Jews have no home to give their children, and therefore they must 'educate them in such a way that they can move freely across frontiers' (SE 5: 442). Freud is 'almost in tears' as he considers this but he takes comfort from the preference given to him by his 'son'. But what appears to be most prominent here and indeed most uncanny is 'our' knowledge that for Freud Moses is later to be re-typed as an Egyptian and Jesus the Jew becomes a Christian-Gentile. It is interesting then that Freud's neologism that illustrates his son's preference to him is finally a preference to *be* a Jew. Freud explains this with the final analysis of the dream, '*My son, the Myops*' which brings to mind he states a comment by 'my Berlin friend' (Fliess) who 'had begun a sentence with the words '(i)f we had an eye in the middle of our foreheads like a Cyclops' (SE 5: 443). This is to give substance to Fliess's 'biological doctrine' of *bilateral symmetry*, which Freud then undercuts with a story about the disease of the eyes that correspondingly gave rise to anxiety. Freud's doctor tells the anxious mother that as long as the disease stayed in *one eye*, it was of no consequence but if it 'passed over to the *other eye* it would be a serious matter' (SE 5: 443). The *one eye* clears up but then the *other eye* becomes affected and the 'terrified mother' calls the doctor, who yells, "Why are you making such a "*Geseres*"?" he shouted at the mother, 'if one side has got, well, so will the other.' And he was right'. The doctor argues Freud now went over '*to the other side*' as Freud will later do in relation to Fliess's theories.

What does this complicated and rather tumultuous engagement with Freud's dream tell us? Boyarin will argue that if Freud is not the father to the son then he must be the mother given that the child cannot have two fathers (Boyarin, 1997: 227). Boyarin's argument is different to mine, since two fathers, at least in this dream is not impossible. After all Jesus according to biblical scripture has two fathers, a heavenly one, God and an earthly one, Joseph. Boyarin's argument though, suggests like Gilman, and this is echoed in Yerushlami's argument above, that the mother is the "Torah, the teaching, the revelation" and that what Freud sought to reject was the femininity ascribed the Jewish male.

Freud rejects biblical scholarship and belief but tells us that 'It will be noticed that the name Josef plays a great part in my dreams ... My own ego finds it very easy to hide itself behind people of that name, since Joseph was the name of a man famous in the

Bible as an interpreter of dreams' (SE 5: 484 n 2). He will call Jung his Joshua to his own position as Moses (in McGuire, 1974: 196-197). And will tell Jung that as Moses/Freud he can only glimpse 'the promised land of psychiatry...from afar' (McGuire, 1974: 197), but that Joshua/Jung can claim it (Yerushalmi, 1991: 76). Yerushalmi (1991) reveals that Goethe 'had already speculated that Moses had been murdered' (Yerushalmi, 1991: 5) but here the assassin was Joshua no less, a fitting parable for the later (perhaps not murderous) split between Freud and Jung, expressed no less as a division between a Jew and a Gentile. Here though, in this dream is a conflation of himself as Moses/Jesus, a double-sided figure whose own stories mimic each other: babies saved by their parents from genocidal kings: saviours of their people the Jews: and wanderers, as Ahasuerus and Ephraim are. In a move reminiscent of 'The Uncanny' *Geseres* and *Ungeseres* 'merge' together, as references to Moses and Jesus, to *one eye/one side* and *the other eye/other side* do, in seemingly complimentary albeit oppositional ways. Inadvertently Freud invokes two "stations" of Christ/cross here, of his birth (with the decree of Herod) and his death in the use of Easter instead of the Hebrew 'Passover'/'*Pesah*'.⁸³ In doing so Freud aligns himself to Groddeck's contention that 'Man' weeps for the mother, who is 'blind-side' to the Son we could say, and is here evoked by Freud in his repetitive and biblical doubling of terms, that finally has us at the foot of the Mother-cross, '*Geseres*'. But in biblical tradition it is Mary (the Mary's) who lies at the foot of the cross weeping. Thus the figure of the mother for Groddeck, and for Freud we might say, is split, one laying at the 'foot of the son' the other the 'backbone' to which he is 'grafted'. A strange creature this, somewhat reminiscent of the mythological centaur that Freud uses as an allegory to the 'philosophical theologian' that we saw in Chapter Three (Gay, 1987: 67). Here the son is finally understood to be reason/*Logos*. What then does this make God, a God who is immortal but has the power and fervour of Moses (perhaps gifted?), or even of a mother we might say. As I pointed out in Chapter Two, in Michelangelo's depiction of God and his son Adam, there was a space, and I wondered if this space might be understood as 'the mother', as the revolutionary aspect of the *chora* as Kristeva (and Plato) depict it. A 'lost territory' that might also be the 'promised land' that Kristeva suggests in her reading of The Bible (Kristeva,

⁸³ Freud quotes Leonardo da Vinci as questioning the mourning of Christ: 'In every part of Europe great peoples will weep for the death of a single man who died in the East' (in SE 11: 124).

1995: 120). But to get to this 'promised land' to reclaim your 'lost territory' you must be willing argues Kristeva, to first leave it, and thereafter renounce it and forbid it but be aware that it will forever haunt you, and in so doing, 'may very well be the constitutive double of your own awareness' (Kristeva, 1995: 120), which sounds for all the world, like a description of the 'soul' as Freud gave it in 'The Uncanny'.

It is perhaps not surprising that Freud might turn from the figure of Jesus, but less understandable is his turning away from the mother. If we look to Groddeck's formula the mother cannot be seen anyway given that she is always facing in the opposite direction to her son. But there is more here, as there always is with Freud. Perhaps it can be explained in part through a letter he wrote to Arnold Zweig where Freud states, 'one asks oneself again how the Jew came to be what he is and why he has drawn upon himself this undying hatred. I soon found the formula: Moses created the Jew' (E. Freud 1960: 421). Perhaps 'we' have become over familiar with Freud's argument concerning Moses but it seems to me that it is as contentious now as it was in 1938-39 when he published it. It is not the purpose of this thesis to question why Freud might have made Moses the Jew, Moses the Egyptian⁸⁴ but rather to recognise this 'turning away' as having some similarity to that of Freud's response to the mother. Freud will say in a letter to Barbara Low on the death of her brother-in-law, the psychoanalyst Dr. David Elder that 'We were both Jews and knew of each other that we carried that miraculous thing in common, which – inaccessible to any analysis so far – makes the Jew' (E. Freud, 1960: 428). 'Miraculous' and 'inaccessible' it may be, but it seems to me that what 'makes the Jew' for Freud is something that might also 'make the mother'. After all, as Yerushalmi illustrates, the terms that Freud describes as having some relation to his understanding of Jewishness, "dark emotional powers", "essence", "inner identity", "psychological structure" and which were not able to be expressed 'by this most articulate of men' (Yerushalmi, 1991: 15), are similar to the terms that Freud uses to describe the mother. And this seemingly 'inaccessible thing' is made more obscure by dint of the fact that it is so simply rendered by Freud, albeit in a mother-son relationship, which in itself, as I have shown in this engagement at least, is never as uncomplicated as Freud might make it.

⁸⁴ And as Yerushalmi makes clear, that in making Moses an Egyptian, Freud is no less a Jew (Yerushalmi, 1991: 7).

Love and prophecies

As we saw in Chapter Four, anxiety troubled Freud, but the mother remains a troubling – and troubled – figure in Freud. I am not entirely convinced that she exists on the periphery. Rather like Freud's secretious libido she seeps through everything and everywhere. Of course, libido remains masculine for Freud, well its aim is and repression does not quite lose its feminine nomenclature. Freud wants to get behind – *coitus a tergo* – repression he tells Fliess, to something essential behind it. Repression would not allow that, and given that *She is* unconscious, Freud's 'getting behind' would be impossible and possibly 'forbidden'. But Freud says we can see the affects of repression in anxiety. Here he undercuts the mother, pushes her unceremoniously out of his theory. First, she, or the act of birth, which is the personification of anxiety, creates repression and later anxiety is an affect of repression. The common feature to both these 'things' is the mother. Rank saw this and Freud as he did with Jung – his two favourite disciples – declared Rank mad. 'Mad call I It' says Shakespeare's Hamlet but could we be as audacious to suggest that Freud's 'It/id' was at play in these dissensions? Freud argued that one person's unconscious could work on another's, this is a psycho-analysis, and he analysed both Jung and Rank (Rank for several years, Jung only briefly. Jung did not appreciate Freud's lack of reciprocation. Freud felt he would lose his authority). The relationship to the mother is a 'mad desire' and Freud will reiterate throughout his work that she is our first love object, and integral for the mental health of the child. Bowlby and Winnicott would change this to a 'good-enough mother' who was important to the child's wellbeing. A 'good-enough mother' that importantly loved. 'Love is the cure', says Freud to Jung, and in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* (a new *Faust* maybe? And why not?), Voldemort will say to Dumbledore, '...nothing I have seen in the world has supported your famous pronouncement that love is more important than my kind of magic' (in Rowling, 2005: 415). Freud will write to Jung, 'To be slandered and scorched by the love with which we operate...such are the perils of our trade...' (in Prokhoris, 1995: 210). Prokhoris argues, if psychoanalysis's famous pronouncement, is, that 'the cure is love', one needs to consider just what type of love psychoanalysis is talking about: 'Original love, whose hoped for form the cure reveals to be maternal; transference love, which operates upon Freud as a result precisely, of his contemplation of Leonardo's work and inspires him to write this "psychoanalytic novel" ("like others I have succumbed to the attraction of this great

and mysterious man”). But such love is impossible for someone devoted exclusively to research. “He has investigated instead of loving...” (Prokhoris, 1995: 73).

As we saw in Chapter Three, Freud will say to Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) that he is shocked and surprised when the patient identifies him as their mother. And he does not like it because he feels so masculine. Gilman and Geller will argue that Freud rejects what is feminine – the mother – to make of himself an uncircumcised male, a Gentile. This then happens in the unconscious because Freud ‘was always a Jew and remained one’. But Freud tells us again and again that people, who do good deeds at the expense of all else, are fighting the opposing conflict in themselves. They do not really want to do good deeds they want to commit patricide states Freud they want to ‘kill the father’. First of all says Freud, quoting *Faust* ‘is the deed, and then the word’. This is echoed in the Hebrew maxim, ‘The deeds of the fathers are the signs of the sons’ (Yerushalmi, 1991: 7). But what did man do? (and here in the gendered not genetic sense). He transferred the deed to the woman to the mother we could say as this is a reference by Freud to Hamlet who transfers his own desires onto his mother but also Ophelia (SE 1: 266). Irigaray argues that men transfer their own madness onto women (Irigaray, 1993). And this is in fact what Hamlet does to Ophelia who dies ‘mad’ one might say, but not because of her own madness, rather it is madness put upon her. Ophelia offers a prophecy one that not only undermines, (perhaps extends?), the Delphic oracle, ‘Know thyself’ but that could also be offered as a compliment to Freud’s famous pronouncement ‘Where id was, there ego shall be’ (SE 22: 80). In fact I prefer Ophelia’s prophecy to the Delphic oracle/Oedipus myth, because it seems to resonate better with the ‘shibboleths’ of psychoanalysis: ‘Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be’ (Act IV, Sc. iv. 42).

Freud’s dream interpretation is structured on a journey, over hill and over dale our repressed infantile self seeks the path of redemption (the ego will out). But the point to the path is surely this, *pathē*: to be free of the ‘troubling forms’ of emotions, and repressed desires/traumas? Isn’t this what a psychoanalysis offers? In agreement with Irigaray, it is not the fear of the repressed patricide we are fighting but the original matricide that exists behind the former, like the Minoan-Mycenean behind the great Greek empire. Freud wanted to identify with the Greek. He takes from them their mythology in “his” Oedipus complex and tells us that ‘we were once, in germ

and in phantasy, just such an Oedipus' (SE 1: 265). In the *Interpretation of Dreams* Freud argues that the myth of Oedipus reveals a 'true psychological insight':
Favoured sons succeed (SE 5: 398 n 1). In Freud's lecture *Dreams* he amends this:

I do not wish to assert that the Oedipus complex exhausts the relation of children to their parents: it can easily be far more complicated. The Oedipus complex can, moreover, be developed to a greater or lesser strength, it can even be reversed; but it is a regular and very important factor in a child's mental life, and there is more danger of our underestimating rather than overestimating its influence and that of the developments which proceed from it. Incidentally, children often react in their Oedipus attitude to a stimulus coming from their parents, who are frequently led in their preferences by difference of sex, so that the father will choose his daughter and the mother her son as a favourite, or, in case of a cooling-off in the marriage, as a substitute for a love-object that has lost its value (SE 15: 207).

Let us pause for a moment on Freud's Oedipal drama. It is after all Freud's 'bulwark'. A Greek myth that somehow illustrated to us how down to our archaic roots we want to kill our fathers and marry our mothers, well have sex with them at least. It is an 'ancient drama' full of prophecies and ghosts and murder. But this is a drama that Freud tried to convince us was not old but lived on in all of us, contemporaneously as it were. I think J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series⁸⁵ continues this myth and maybe part of our enjoyment of it is that we realize this, albeit it at some kind of primordial level. The themes are all there, although perhaps not as directly as the Sophocles Oedipus myth. And Rowling is clever, she splits Harry the books hero into two making his nemesis Voldamort a part of Harry after a killing curse goes wrong and Harry absorbs a piece, one seventh of Voldamort's soul – his psyche that is too say. Harry, 'the boy who lived' is not killed by this curse, we are told, because he is protected by an ancient magic, love. But this is not any old love, this is a mother's love, and the protective spell is the love of a mother's sacrifice. Psychoanalysis, as we saw above is the cure through love: 'Your mother died to save you', Dumbledore tells Harry. 'If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign... to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin' (Rowling, 1997: 216). And isn't this precisely the point? The unknown spot,

⁸⁵ See Appendix 2 for a synopsis of the Harry Potter books.

the navel that Freud turns away from because he is stopped by a 'tangle' is also the unknown quantity, love. Freud puts a label on it – it is Eros with all 'her' attachments, libido in both its forms, object and ego, the pleasure principle, the sexual and self-preservation instincts. Freud argues:

One can never tell where the road may lead one; one gives way first in words, and then little by little in substance too. I cannot see any merit in being ashamed of sex; the Greek word 'Eros', which is to soften the affront, is in the end nothing more than a translation of our German word *Liebe* [love] ...(SE 18: 91).

Freud will tell us that words were originally magic and that they hold an inordinate amount of power but he will also say that when it comes to love words are a tiny bit of reality: 'Even in its caprices the usage of language remains true to some kind of reality. Thus it gives the name of 'love' to a great many kinds of emotional relationship which we group together theoretically as love...' (SE 18: 111). Freud continues his exposition on love (Eros). The love that psychoanalysis talks of is no different to the love espoused by the apostle Paul 'in his famous epistle on the Corinthians' argues Freud (SE 18: 101). But, he also states that jealousy of the other, whatever or whoever the other is, is always an undercurrent (or an out and out battle) in any group (SE 18: 101). Lacan offers a scene from St. Augustine's *Confessions* where a child watching his brother at his mother's nipple experiences the 'most terrible and the most beautiful manifestation of jealousy that there is' (Clement, 1983: 87 ('Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming; but who can stand before jealousy?' (*Proverbs* 27: 4)). Freud argued that jealousy, like grief can be described as normal because of the very commonality/universality of these emotions (CP 2: 232). The sole exception to this jealousy says Freud, is 'the relation of a mother to her son, which is based on narcissism, is not disturbed by subsequent rivalry, and is reinforced by a rudimentary attempt at sexual object-choice' (SE 18: 101 n 2). Further, Freud will say that between transference love and everyday love the difference is negligible, they both issue from 'old components', and repeat, 'infantile reactions': 'But that is always the essence of falling in love. Everybody repeats childhood patterns' (Freud, 2006: 349).

But this is just part of the story. Freud also talks of sacrifice. The son in his rescue phantasy must save the mother because he owes her his life. Freud calls the 'rescue-complex' an independent derivative of the mother-complex and adds that it changes to a 'saving' phantasy where the tender feelings for his mother remain but the feelings directed towards his father are transmuted into a saving phantasy. It is as if to say, states Freud, 'If I save my father I owe him nothing and I can replace the father and have my mother to myself' (CP 4: 200-201). Thus, one can surpass the father, standing on the Acropolis and experiencing "estrangement" but one is always "homesick" for the mother's genitals, that is to say her womb and it might be said for the mother herself.

To return to J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (as Freud returned to his *Faust*), Harry's substitute fathers are all a bit rogue and his eventual wife the flame-haired Ginny is a mother substitute, even down to the colour of her hair. Harry is marked, as the Jews are marked we could say, he carries a literal scar, the remainder, although indicative of the ambivalence caught up in the presence/absence game of *fort/da*, of his mother and the prophecy that sought his death. Oedipus anyone, we could ask? But it is a second death that saves him. Once more at the hand of Voldamort who seeks to fulfil a prophecy where only one can survive, Harry dies. He is castrated twice then but after visiting a place that we might call heaven, and heaven if we remember is the home of the uncanny as the womb is our uncanny home, he returns to kill Voldamort in his place. Thus Harry's return to *das unheimliche*, a return that takes him *beyond* the navel, saves him (this even begs the question is heaven the realm of 'The Mothers?'). Harry survives because the 'cut' takes a part of him that wasn't really him to begin with. This is reflected in another cut, the first cut we might say and asks of us another question, just whose umbilicus/navel is it really?

Freud would have loved Rowling's *Harry Potter* I think, it has similar 'elements' to it as E. T. A. Hoffmann's writing, which Freud called 'mad, fantastic stuff' (in E. Freud, 1960: 158). Harry, the boy who lived because of his mother's sacrifice: and this has an echo of Leonardo da Vinci, with the love of a mother cut short; and Harry's quest for the Horcruxes and his lack of fear. But there is more here, because this Oedipal drama is full of dead fathers, whether Harry wished them dead or not. And Freud's emphasis on the magic of words is here magnified. The prophecy that only one can

live, and like the Oedipus prophecy that foretells Laus's death at the hand of his son, Voldamort in an attempt to divert the truth of the prophecy, kills (well tries to) a child. But the mother steps in. Thus there are other types of mothers' then than Jocasta, who willingly or not, hands her son over to be murdered. Harry's mother Lily, in contrast, sacrifices herself. She gives up, gifts we might say her own life for that of her baby son. And finally Harry/Oedipus survives the second castration/death and becomes the hero. In a fitting feminist psychoanalytic understanding it is the loss of the mother that both protects and castrates at the same time. Her sacrifice, which protects him, is unable to stop the cut from happening. A part of *a* father lives within him, a part of the soul of the father. And we are told again and again, the point of recognition for other people to Harry is that he looks like his father, but he has his mother's eyes.

The Soul and Castration: Harry Potter and the Castration complex

Most of us are familiar with the maxim of old, 'that eyes are the windows to the soul'. If the threat of castration is a blinding of the eyes, then perhaps we need to consider where the threat of the act of castration actually lies. Is the fear of castration deeper than the loss of eyes or penis, is it in fact the loss of the soul we are frightened of? If we lose the soul, then don't we lose ourselves? In the Harry Potter series, in the penultimate book our sense that Voldamort has split his soul is confirmed when Harry and Dumbledore, in the aptly named Pensieve watch a memory of Voldamort's unfold. Voldamort as his younger identity Tom Riddle asks Professor Slughorn, by appealing to his vanity, what a Horcrux is. Slughorn, although evidently reluctant to tell him states that, "A Horcrux is the word used for an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul" (Rowling, 2005: 464). Tom acts bemused, saying he doesn't quite understand, Slughorn continues, "Well, you split your soul, you see," said Slughorn, 'and hide part of it in an object outside the body. Then, even if one's body is attacked or destroyed, one cannot die, for part of the soul remains earthbound and undamaged. But, of course, existence in such a form... few would want it, Tom, very few. Death would be preferable'"(Rowling, 2005: 464-465). Not content with this explanation, Tom asks Slughorn, how does one do it? Slughorn, now extremely uncomfortable, after all, this is classified information, tells Tom, "By an act of extreme evil – the supreme act of evil. By committing murder. Killing rips the soul apart... you must understand that the soul is supposed to remain intact and whole. Splitting is an act of violation, it is against nature'" (Rowling, 2005: 465). Tom

presses, ““Can you only split your soul once? Wouldn’t it be better, make you stronger, to have your soul in more pieces? I mean for instance, isn’t seven the most powerfully magical number, wouldn’t seven -?”” (465-466).

We learn that Tom Riddle as Lord Voldemort has indeed split his soul into seven pieces, one piece residing in his pet snake and one in Harry himself. In the synopsis of this series, I explained how Lord Voldemort tried to kill Harry when he was a baby, because of a prophecy, and that in fact the killing curse backfired and ‘killed’ Lord Voldemort himself, because of a mother’s sacrifice, her love. In this mangled curse we discover, Lord Voldemort has transferred a part of his soul, to Harry. Harry who is recognized in the wizarding world not only by his famous scar, the remainder/reminder of the killing curse, but by his eyes, he has his mother’s eyes we are told again and again. Hegel says, ‘that the eyes are the outer manifestation of the soul. Through the eyes, the inner soul presents itself to the outside’ (Hegel cited by Derrida, 2002). Further Derrida states, ‘It is the eyes and hands that are the site of recognition, the signs through which one identifies the Other’ (Derrida, 2002). We know that the snake is a representation of the phallus and that the multiplication of the symbol of the penis such as Medusa’s hair is both a denial of castration and an expression of it (SE 18: 273). The ancient Egyptians thought that by duplicating or multiplying a symbol such as the penis, they created a ‘insurance against the extinction of the self’ (PE, 2003: 142). Rank argues that the ‘immortal soul’ was probably thought of as the first double of the body and as ‘double’ an “assurance of immortality” (PE, 2003: 143). As I illustrated in Chapters One and Three, in the short essay, ‘The Medusa’s Head’ (SE 18), Freud suggests that ‘The terror of Medusa is thus a terror of castration that is linked to the sight of something’ (SE 18: 273). This something we are told is the ‘terrifying genitals of the Mother’ (SE 18: 274), the hair surrounding them symbolically connected to the hair/snakes upon Medusa’s head. ‘It is a remarkable fact,’ Freud says, ‘that, however frightening they may be in themselves, they nevertheless serve actually as a mitigation of the horror, for they replace the penis, the absence of which is the cause of horror’ (SE 18: 273). Even the Devil takes flight at the sight of a woman’s vulva (SE 18: 274), says Freud, but ‘To display the penis (or any of its surrogates) is to say: ‘I am not afraid of you. I defy you. I have a penis’ (SE 18: 274). The apotropaic effect of the penis ‘is another way of intimidating the Evil Spirit’ (SE 18: 274). Jones offers an interesting comparison to

this. Here Jones states that the one person the devil is frightened of is the 'Mother', and not just any mother, the Virgin Mary. Like Freud, Jones will make the Devil a father/devil (Rank makes the mother the *primal* devil) but this is a father/Devil that cannot win against the all-powerful Holy Mother, argues Jones and in the proverbial 'stand-off' it is the devil that runs away (Jones, 1931: 177). The devil runs away not because the Holy Mother shows him her vulva but because in the face of the mothers' willingness to do battle for her child, to sacrifice herself we could say, the devil is made 'powerless'.

The Clowning Mother

Of all the spirits which say yes / The clown is least burdensome to me.⁸⁶

Freud will argue that the dreamer shows several gaps in the dream...gaps 'filled in' with a mumble (SE 15: 138). In English, we say 'mum' for mother, which is akin to mumble and means to make a sound that is inarticulate with the lips slightly closed. 'Mummer' which means clown has an etymological link to 'mum' and 'mumble'. An interesting connection when one considers Christopher Bollas's contention that the mother might be our very first clown. Bollas puts it like this 'The clown may be our very first other. Look for yourself' (Bollas, 1995: 236). Mothers transform themselves in comedic routines to make baby laugh, "Well! Who does he think he is? Who does he think he is? (Bollas, 1995: 237). This brings chortles and laughter argues Bollas, but importantly it is implicitly to do with timing. A mother, like any good comedian, knows when her audience is receptive and knows when 'it' is not. The mother's manic routines for baby, which in any other setting might be considered quite mad, teach the baby to laugh at itself and the world. This is important argues Bollas because a 'mother who is amused by baby and who can get baby to laugh at himself before he consciously knows what the joke is all about helps to develop a sense of amusement in the human predicament well before the self comprehends his condition' (Bollas, 1995: 241). Bollas will argue that the 'sense of humour precedes the sense of self' (Bollas, 1995: 241). Perhaps it is the sense of humour that helps create the sense of self? Freud states that the 'humourist', (which in Freud's argument differs from the joking or comedic person, humour has a dignity that the joker or the comedic person lack argues Freud), plays the part of him/herself as a child, at the same time as they enact the role of the 'superior adult towards the child' (SE 21: 164). The parental super-ego, is in effect commanding the role of the comic.

In this paper on *Humour* Freud will state that the humourist acquires 'his superiority by assuming the role of the grown-up and identifying himself to some extent with his father...' (SE 21: 163). For Freud the super-ego, while he will first call parental, is paternal in origin. But as Bollas explains, it is the mother that is the child's first

⁸⁶ Freud's modified quote from Goethe's *Faust*, in a letter to Groddeck (in Groddeck, 1977: 72).

clown. It is the mother that “cracks baby up”. The mother is the superior person who dominates baby, but in such a way that they, mother and baby both take pleasure in this domination. As Bollas puts it, that there is a war going on with the basic issue, ‘Who is going to dominate who?’ (Bollas, 1995: 240). But if the super-ego is in play (which in women according to Freud is never as developed as it is in men), it will be the super-ego that dominates and the baby as yet does not have a super-ego or for that matter a very strong ego. The super-ego here though, ‘bows’ in effect to the ego. Lets the ego have some pleasure, outside the battle between the psychical agencies that the ego must mediate. What is provoking in Freud’s argument is that humour is the super-egos ‘handmaiden’ which would suggest, as Rank does that the super-ego is primarily maternal.

This is not unlike Groddeck’s contention that there is a battle of ‘wills’ between the Ego and the It, and here mother and baby take their respective parts. I have reiterated several times throughout this thesis Freud’s belief that the unconscious of one person can operate on another’s. For Burlingham, as we saw in Chapter Four, the child is particularly attune to the mothers unconscious, s/he has an ‘empathetic’ relationship to it. Lou Andreas-Salomé also remarked on this in a letter to Freud. Here she states, that the little girl she has in analysis has an excellent relationship with her mother to the point that “sometimes both of them dream the same dream” (Pfeiffer, 1972: 71-72). If the baby as the ‘bundle of id’ is to develop an ego then it does so in relation to the mother’s ego. The ego must be developed says Freud. To exist in the world we need to develop a coherent ego against a repressed and unconscious one. But this is never as stable or as separate as we would wish. Freud argues ‘In dreams and in neuroses what is thus excluded knocks for admission at the gates, guarded though they are by resistances’ (SE 18: 131). In waking life, in contrast we circumvent these resistances and receive what is repressed temporarily into our ego by artifice – that is, ‘Jokes and humour and to some extent the comic in general’ (SE 18: 131).

Lets, look at this ego for a moment. The ego serves as a kind of façade argues Freud, for the id, much like a rider to a horse. The ego maintains a clearly defined relation to the outside, disturbed only (or drawn incorrectly as Freud says) in certain pathological states and in love. In love the boundary between ego and love object falls away (SE 21: 68 n 1). In love then we fall into the world because in a metaphysical sense at

least the world falls away. A person in love acts much like the infant at the breast, the love object is 'All'. A primordial ego includes everything; everything belongs to a 'whole', fashioned it might seem to meet the infants needs/desires/wants. As a function of development and growth, whether we attribute this to the Oedipal theory, the Symbolic or something else, the child learns to differentiate between an inside and outside. Freud argues that the adult ego-feeling is a 'shrunk residue of a much more inclusive-indeed, and all embracing – feeling which corresponded to a more intimate bond between the ego and the world about it' (SE 21: 68). This 'shrunk residue' exists side by side with the ego-feeling of later maturity and the 'ideational contents' of the former could be termed 'oceanic'.

Freud continues by arguing there is nothing strange in attributing an originary component to something that was later derived from it. Here he cites the origin of the species: the dinosaur is extinct but the crocodile still exists as a 'true representative of it' (SE 21: 68). An interesting analogy when you consider Lacan's proposition of the mother as a crocodile, with her jaws wedged open by the phallus (Lacan, 2007: 112). For Lacan 'we' are in the 'huge mother crocodiles' mouth and it is only the phallus wedging her jaws open that keeps us from being swallowed!

Thus the mother, whether clowning or not has a lot to do to 'develop' her infant: to create a strong ego, through knowing the right time to clown; the right time to be calm and obviously the right time to love, mindful of the fact as Freud has argued that mothers do not love their infants all the time (Anna Freud argued that no child is wholly loved). Bollas states that through the act of humour the mother cracks both baby and herself up. She in effect saves them both. Freud pointed out in 'On Narcissism' that comedy sweeps away egoism leaving in its stead a kind of 'banal' pleasure, an indifference (Freud, 2006: 368). The mother must 'shore up' the infant's feeble ego boundaries, only to 'sweep' them away in an act of comedy. This is what Bollas means when he argues that this act of comedy creates a 'self' that can face the world. Bollas asks what would be lost 'if the great clown simply talked to her baby like an adult' (Bollas, 1995: 241). Winnicott, Lacan and Kohut all discuss the first other as a mirror states Bollas, but what would happen if we replaced the standard mirror with a 'fun-house mirror?' What if what was reflected back to the infant was so distorted it offered a tortured reflection to the infant? What sort of mirroring would

we have then? As Bollas points out, the mother who is in tune with her infant, Bollas calls it ‘uncanny’ will know when to ‘metamorphoses from her ordinary facial self into a clown: she breaks herself up in order to break up baby’ (Bollas, 1995: 242). What does it mean for the baby if his/her mother cannot clown for whatever reason? The mother transforms herself out of ‘ordinary hate’ argues Bollas, and here he means the mundane day to day care of her infant with the same endlessly repeating itself, into a comedic routine to relieve herself. That she brings baby along for the ride teaches baby about the world outside of him/herself. In doing so, she breaks up, cracks up, Ferenczi’s magical omnipotent baby. Humour ‘deflates the baby’s grandiosity’ but it also and quite tellingly ‘disarms the frustrated mum’ (Bollas, 1995: 243). Baby and its clowning mother then, laugh together.

Perhaps a sense of humour is vital to human survival argues Bollas. The mother who makes her baby laugh will assist him/her in looking at the world, when it is at its worst from a comic angle. Laughter crosses and breaks down boundaries, the id has momentarily been revived. Like Bakhtin’s analysis of Rabelais then, it is the id that ‘is uncrowned and transformed into a “funny monster”’ (Bakhtin, 1984: 49). Bakhtin’s engagement with the carnivalesque strangely evokes the Freudian uncanny, here comparing the familiar to the fairy-tale and the unfamiliar to the ‘grotesque’ or the alien, the one being the linguistic equivalent of the other. Unlike the later conception of laughter as individualised, and therefore given an importance which cannot be trivialised through the comical, Bakhtin prefers the ancients’ conception of laughter as a “truth” from where the world was continually “made anew”. In fact Bakhtin will state that the creation of the world, according to an ancient Egyptian alchemist’s papyrus of the third century, “is attributed to divine laughter”. God laughed and there was light, he laughed again and there was water and finally, with his seventh bout of laughter “the soul appeared” (Bakhtin, 1984: 71 n 19). Laughter defeats something more terrifying than the earth itself and all unearthly objects are transformed into earth, that is to say the mother: ‘There can be nothing terrifying on earth just as there can be nothing frightening in a mother’s body, with the nipples that are made to suckle, with the genital organ and the warm blood. The earthly element of terror is the womb, the bodily grave, but it flowers with delight and a new life’ (Bakhtin, 1984: 91-92). The “uncrowned funny man of the id” returns us to the “mothers womb” argues Bakhtin. Bakhtin’s argument with its Rabelaisian register will make of the

part a whole, arguing that “this whole speaks in all carnival images” but that the idea of the whole is “eternally unfinished” and compares it to Goethe’s “Nature”... “Its crown is love” (Bakhtin, 1984: 256). To survive we need to momentarily revive the “uncrowned funny man of the id” which will return us to the mother’s womb where we will be whole again, made anew, through it might be said, laughter and love.

If we accept Bollas’s argument that the mother is our first clown, and why not, this is my favourite image of the mother yet, then we acknowledge that this mother with her timed clowning helps develop the infant’s ego. In fact, we could suggest that the mother not only creates the baby’s ego, she is the baby’s ego to a certain extent. This is not about ‘oneness’ between baby and mother that is certainly not my point. But if an ego is not there at the start, if it must be developed then it is the mother’s ego as a maddening rendition of crazy clowning that would seem to be instrumental in creating the baby’s ‘I’. In order to ‘evade the compulsion to suffer’ argues Freud, we laugh (SE 21: 163). But this is where confusion might reign, at a metapsychological level at least, because Freud will write to Jung that the ‘ego is like the clown in the circus, who is always putting in his oar to make the audience think that whatever happens is his doing’ (McGuire, 1974: 400). And again, the ‘ego behaves as the ego always behaves, like the clown in the circus who keeps grimacing to assure the audience that he has planned everything that is going on (“The poor fool”)’ (in McGuire, 1974: 404). Thus the carnivalesque might well be the “uncrowned id” playing the “funny monster/man” but it is the ego that performs. And if the super-ego bows to the ego, then it raises once again the spectre of just what sort of super-ego do we have?

Because if the super-ego is to be thought of as our moral conscience, as having some representation as the Fates, then the super-ego is surely to be thought as maternal as Rank would have it. After all, the ego itself, as I argued above through Freud, issues from the id, is a kind of façade for the id, negotiating the desires of three masters, the external world, the super-ego and the id. But when offered comic relief the ego, and for that matter the super-ego fall away.

Is the mother then as first love object, retained as part of our id, undifferentiated, in laughter and in loving? And is it here then that Sprengnether’s haunting mother makes the most sense. The mother as a kind of mirror (as Winnicott and Lacan argue) as apart of ones self, is perhaps most evident when the boundaries between self and

other, between inside and outside, between the psyche and the body fall away. That these “falling aways” are never really unequivocal is echoed in the Freudian uncanny. Because here, at the point of recognition, the unknown (not necessarily the unrecognisable) takes its place. That Freud failed to recognise this, relies almost completely I would argue in his desire to make the Oedipus complex his “bulwark” (and biological to boot!). That he acknowledged, and I might say, unconsciously, that there was something greater, darker, stronger than the Oedipal structure finds its ‘echo’s’ in the abyss he feared to tread, the navel/hole/gap he would not explore; his unresolved issue with anxiety and for that matter repression (the cornerstone of psychoanalysis) and the uncanny to which he offered his own “unintentional return” towards “painted women” and that in fear, a feeling of helplessness, he turned away. To find the familiar in the unfamiliar is echoed Freud argues in the regression of the ego to a time *before* it had differentiated itself from the ‘world outside and from others’ (PE, 2002:143), which is often transformed ‘by means of grotesque exaggeration, into something irresistibly comic’ (PE, 2003: 144).

For a brief moment then the clown in her act of ‘humour’ moves us between life and death in what Bollas will call a ‘death-defying’ moment: ‘Is the journey to the far side and back a minor triumph of the self, a self that goes to the dark world where humanity is shredded by ruthless humiliations, to the forbidden which gives life but also takes it’ (Bollas, 1995: 253). Bollas suggests that this kind of ‘flipping the bird’, which has connotations with Freud’s ‘flipping the bird’ (*vögeln* – to fuck, from *Vogel*, bird (SE 5: 583 and SE 11: 125)) is directed at God we might say.⁸⁷ This is partly due to God’s attitude to the ‘creatures’ he made argues Bollas: His frustrations, his making the world, his ending the world and all the momentous events, quite often whimsical, with a touch of ‘you are all really “pissing” me off, in between (Bollas, 1995: 253-256). But then, in a rather revolutionary turn of phrase, Bollas suggests that this brings God to the mother:

A God who comes from elsewhere, who has harnessed a power that shakes us, who comes too close for comfort, who plays upon our own incapacity, who presents us a face that presumably exaggerates our own, a clown face, seems a jester who not only puts us into existence but puts us on. If this figure is partly

⁸⁷Freud in a footnote to the Schreber case-study states, ‘What a thing to have to say—that God lets himself be f—d!’ (SE 12: 27 n 2).

based on the function of the mother—a figure who comes from elsewhere, barely visible, yet audible, who provokes us with her clowning around and shakes us into life...’ (Bollas, 1995: 256).

As I said, this clowning God-mother is closer to my understanding of the mother as someone ‘so much’, that she is too much, so ‘we turn away’. She shows us, as Bollas makes explicit our own fallibility and therefore the fallibility of the world (does this suggest that the mother might have an ‘infallibility’ as I argued above?). When Freud said, ‘we don’t fall out of the world’ he was partly right, but only if we have a ‘good-enough mother’ to manage the ‘fall’ in such a way that we can laugh even while we are falling, endlessly it might be said, into the void:

At this point in the conversation, in which the artist, a sublime clown, was steadily enraged with Mr. Loyal, in the center of the audience cockatoos of whom Mr. Loyal was, so to speak, the designated representative, Mr Loyal tore his clothing: “He blasphemed!” And then, foaming at the mouth, he gave the Clown a kick in the behind. But this kick sent the Clown, like the one at Banville, “up into the stars.” The orchestra stopped playing. The lights came down. From the loges, from somewhere, there came a laugh, receding into the distance, and a deceptive voice saying, “Look for me.” (Lacan cited by Clement, 1983: 20).

A bit more on ‘The fall’

There is something more in the concept of ‘the fall’, something quite intangible. Jung’s son Franz, suggests that when Carl Jung had his ‘breakdown’, after the split from Freud, he wrote that he ‘chose’ to drop/fall, to embrace the ‘madness’ within. Franz states, that ‘My father writes that he chose. I do not believe that he chose. I believe *he* had no choice. Can you imagine what it must be to think that you might be going mad? That you might fall forever into the void?’ (in Donn, 1988: 172-173).⁸⁸ Here ‘the fall’ and ‘the void’ (echoing Freud’s “a hole is a hole”), suggest the ‘hole’ of the mother. ‘We do not Fall out of this world’ but our mother falls pregnant and we fall, are birthed from her. In the fall from our uncanny home Lacan’s *hommelette* might well attach itself to us and with it our soul: itself a ‘fallen object’ the object *a*.

⁸⁸ In Buddhism it is said, ‘If you search for the void, you can never reach it’. Or, alternatively, ‘If you run away from the void, you can never be free of it’ (Billington, 2002: 76). Freud argued that he felt a void form around him; Jung felt that he was falling forever towards it.

Lacan will argue that all forms of the object *a* are representatives of the lamella/hommelette, which is itself an organ “whose characteristic is not to exist”. Where might this leave love/Eros, hunger/desire and the immortal soul then if this object, the hommelette, through its very existence/presence suggests an absence? And if the hommelette has an intimate relationship with the afterbirth, with the baby and the contents of the womb, how might we understand the mothers’ body from which it escapes? If as Freud wrote in the uncanny, that one term can merge into the other, in the case, as we have seen, of *das unheimliche* and *heimliche*, as if to have the same meaning (the presence of one is marked by the absence of the other) then is the mothers body both the site of the uncanny with the linguistic pairing of familiar/unfamiliar, canny/uncanny but also if we are to take Lacan’s argument for the uncanny, the place/space of anxiety? We have been here before, in fact we constantly return here at this space/place where longing and belonging, perhaps even immeasurable loss are felt in this ‘*chora*’, between a man and *his* God. I called this place/space/womb feminine and maternal after Plato, Freud and Kristeva but I also wondered if it is here where the infinite and finite almost touch/meet that the mother as we knew her, as we know her, as we want her to be, appears. Eerily then, the mother seems to occupy both a space that can never be, but is also, paradoxically, always in the process of becoming. Bollas’s question, ‘What does thinking about mothers do to thinking’ is echoed here but perhaps the question needs to be reframed, taking into account that thinking about mothers takes us both to a place beyond thinking (and what might this place look like?), and to a depth (Faust’s unhallowed place of ‘The Mothers’), that only those brave enough to speak this name ‘Mother’, and aided through the magic of a devil/father might attain. There is an impossibility here as I argued in Chapter One, because to think of a before/beyond language is to realise an unknown, or in Bollas’s expression an ‘unthought unknown’. But perhaps the uncanniness of this is that we know the figure that occupies this unknown: we have known her all along. We know ‘her’ because we have been a part of her, retain a part of her, in the mark of the navel, the point through which the unknown is made manifest while remaining latent. It is here then that Irigaray will argue the debt to the mother is concealed and Schneider states ‘negation appears at the limit of the inconceivable in Freud’s dream’ (in Prokhoris, 199 :162). I have argued throughout this thesis that Freud’s turning away from the tangle of dream thoughts situated near the mark/scar of the naval is mirrored in his turning away from the mother. But I will

also argue that Freud cannot really be blamed for this, because if this space/relationship is as old as time, is perhaps before the concept of time itself, then how does one approach it? How does one dare approach it even?

Weber argues that Freud's word, *Abfallsbewegung*, 'falling away', also, 'fall back' is not only a deviation from the right path of psychoanalysis as Freud accuses Adler and Jung of doing but also a 'falling away' of waste products (Weber, 1991: 9). Weber suggests that this 'falling away' with its processes of absorption and elimination leads Freud to conclude many years later that Adler's psychology lived 'a kind of parasitic existence' on the host body of psychoanalysis (SE 22: 140). Interesting terminology, one that Weber argues ignores the complicity the host has in the survival of 'its' parasite. The feminisation of this terminology is lost on Freud. We do not fall out of this world but we do fall out of our mother at birth. I would not be so cruel to call a baby 'waste product' but in Freud's own line of reasoning a baby is both *lumf* (faeces) and a 'penis'. And a foetus does after all have a parasitical existence in the body of its host, its mother. In fact, Freud's analogy of the Alderian parasite on the host body psychoanalysis, invokes the pregnant body (the mother) and the foetus. It could be said then, as Freud had said, albeit in a different context but with the same intent, he makes of psychoanalysis a mother!

A devil of my own

Freud stands accused of turning away from the mother, and although I find myself somewhat playing the devils advocate here isn't that a necessary part of growth? The great cultural renunciation. I turn from my mother as she turns from me – *fort/gone*. What Freud does not seem to do is turn back: and my mother is returned to me, *da/there*. But perhaps rather than haunting as spectre or as counter-thesis existing on some kind of underside, she walks with him, like God is said to walk with the weary traveller. And God as Bollas has argued has a direct lineage to the mother.

But isn't that partly the point? Children turn away from the knowledge offered to them argues Freud; the childhood researches end in a kind of knowing. Leonardo sublimated the knowledge of the sexual researches so he was always searching, for what one might ask? If the kite/vulture tail was offered as an example of the nipple

(penis) pressing against his mouth/lips, if his initial relationship was reflected in the paintings of the virgin and the mother, in the famous Mona Lisa smile, then he was searching for the original lost object, his mother. All his searching goes back to this because his recollection is of the vulture as his mother argues Freud: 'To denote a mother . . . they delineate a vulture' (SE 11: 88 n 1). The vulture who is impregnated as it were by the wind, because there was only the dyad of mother and son for Leonardo, no father to intervene and this led him to the study of the kite and of flight: 'It seems I was always destined to be so deeply concerned with vultures; for I recall as one of my very earliest memories that while I was in my cradle a vulture came down to me, and opened my mouth with its tail, and struck me many times with its tail against my lips' (Leonardo da Vinci cited by Freud, SE 11: 82). Here then, Freud's conception of the most perfect, conflict free relationship of mother and son is illustrated. But also as Jones makes explicit, the three men that Freud took the most interest in and whom he in fact identified with, were Leonardo da Vinci, Moses and Shakespeare (in Jones, 1957: 459 (and I would add Goethe to this list)). Freud tells us that 'The Egyptians' worshipped a Mother Goddess, who was represented as having a vulture's head... This goddess's name was *Mut*. Can the similarity to the sound of our word *Mutter* ['mother'] be merely a coincidence? There is, then, some real connection between vulture and mother—but what help is that to us?' (SE 11: 88). Here then, Freud will find a phonetic similarity between the Egyptian Goddess *Mut* with the German expression for the term mother, *Mutter*, yet when offered a similar comparison between 'matter, *Mater* and motion' Freud failed to recognise it ("what help is that to us?"). Freud will also, to aid the development of this vulture mother and thereafter the vulture child, Leonardo, state, 'this story of the vulture was eagerly taken up by the Fathers of the Church, in order to refute, by means of a proof drawn from the natural order, those who denied the Virgin Birth' (SE 11: 90 n 1). Leonardo can then identify as Christ, as the blessed, the sufferer and the redeemer. In fact Leonardo wrote in the *Codex Atlanticus* of himself, 'Why do you suffer so?' And, 'I thought I was learning to live; I was only learning to die' (in Whiting, 1992: 40).

But there is more to this because what does Freud tell us about anxiety – realistic anxiety which is later to be incorporated into danger anxiety, as a form of helplessness, the mechanism of fright/*flight* is the basic precursor of anxiety. We could say that Leonardo studied flight then because of his *longing* for his mother. But

he was not frightened of the *longing* that instigated the feelings of 'helplessness' he wanted to know, the first 'riddle' as all children do, where did 'he' come from? And if Leonardo experienced anxiety it would most likely have been when he was taken from his mother and given a new mother. Where had his mama (*fort*) gone? To reclaim his mother, he turned back (*da/there*) and thereafter represented her in his painting, in his research, in a smile. Kofman will say of Leonardo's fascination with 'La Gioconda's smile, 'it is explained by the same originary fantasy of the mother's smile. ...The smile is always already lost, known only later through the very existence of its lack and through the satisfaction brought by the hallucination, the dream, the fantasy or the work of art' (Kofman, 1985: 80). Prokhoris extends Kofman's discussion in what she calls, 'A fragment of Freud's self-analysis' here reflected in Freud's 'A Childhood Memory of Leonardo da Vinci' as 'an expression of a resistance operating within Freud' (Prokhoris, 1995: 75). Thus, the myth that Freud offers us of a "return to the lost paradise" reflected in the mother/son relationship, the most perfect and conflict free of all relationships is alas found in a gap, "a ceaseless struggle" between the idealisation of the Mona Lisa/Mother smile and our Witch argues Prokhoris. Observing Freud's resistance, Prokhoris states that characteristically when Freud comes face to face with the Medusa of his own making (the Mother) he turns away: 'in the dream of the three Fates – these lines from *Faust*: "Day by day you'll take greater pleasure at wisdom's breast". Immediately preceding these verses are the following lines, also spoken by Mephistopheles. Freud forgets them: "Thus the infant takes its mother's breast/At first only reluctantly. ..."' (Prokhoris, 1995: 75).

Freud does his own turning back in the conclusion of his Leonardo essay. Here he says, 'We all still show too little respect for Nature which (in the obscure words of Leonardo which recall Hamlet's lines) 'is full of countless causes [*'ragioni'*] that never enter experience' (SE 11: 137). "We show little respect for Mother Nature", and yet her omnipresence, so rich, so full, the bountiful breast that Faust wanted to drink from, rarely enters our experience. Freud offers a doubling image of the beneficent mother here, in her guise as Mother Nature and also as the mother of our infancy: 'it is no longer possible to doubt the importance precisely of the first years of childhood' (SE 11: 137). But this is a Mother Nature that Freud turns away from argues Gay. The Nature that Freud responds to, and that the essay (by Goethe/Tobler)

describes is one of beneficence, describing a ‘nourishing, never exhausted, and never denying mother—a sensual and maternal deity wholly different from the cruel, heedless, destructive Nature he would delineate in his late writings’ (Gay, 1987: 59). What can be seen throughout Freud’s work is this ‘struggle’ between depictions of a Mother Nature as beneficent and a Mother Nature as destructive. That this battle ‘catches’ him is evident in his descriptions of navels with depths to the unknown covered up with tangles of dream-thoughts/hair. It seems as if Freud in an effort to keep his Oedipal theory intact and therefore away from the troubling pre-Oedipal mother at its margins (which attacks its very core/*kern*/nucleus) divides her in such a way so that he can ‘deal’ with her. In this way he will keep the mother as Madonna, looking down on her ‘male’ Christ child with love and away from the other mother (dare I say ‘real’) who the little girl (and the rest of us) turn away from in hate.

Turning back to Harry

What do we see in the poignant scene of the eleven-year old Harry Potter standing in front of a mirror, where little Ernst extends his game of *fort/da*, absence/presence of his mother? We see the boy who lived because of his mothers love. And there in the mirror are his parents reflected back to him, a superimposed super-ego – and really what other type is there. And the inadvertent command, spoken through a ‘symbolic’ father, Dumbledore, the prophet, the oracle, ‘Know yourself’. Which can only be achieved by turning away from the mirror, from the mother. Perhaps the ‘key’ was always already separation, a form of the castration complex and maybe the reason Freud overlooked this ‘key’ was he turned away from the mother too soon (or he did not turn away at all). Freud says himself that the English word ‘lock’ can be compared phonetically with the German Lücke, Loch (hole) ‘in both there exists the exactly contrary sense without modification of sound’ (CP 4: 189). If the mother haunts she may do so, perhaps must do so as a *revenant* in the present. Freud turned away from the ‘key to The Mothers’ as Breuer did because in Mephistopheles words, it is too much, to horrible a word – Mother – so we turn away. Freud’s turning away involved a displacement from the mothers face as Winnicott would have it, and the breast as Klein understood it, in its good and bad divisions, to the genitals as Freud saw it or as the little boy saw it who turns away in horror says Freud at the sight of the mother’s/Medusa’s castrated genitals. Perhaps the turning away involved Freud’s own castration anxiety of being a circumcised Jew. Perhaps it was a reflection of a

number of things. Maybe Jones (1953) is correct and Freud's turning away has something to do with the realisation of a wish? He wished that this intrusive annoying baby brother would be gone and he would have his mother to himself. But here guilt and grief become his childhood companions instead of his brother because a mother does not lose her baby and not turn away in grief herself. Yes she turns back, and she probably clung to her surviving child but Freud's world would have shuddered – like a camera with a too slow shutter speed, the picture is still there, but it blurs for a moment before it clicks back into place. An entirely appropriate metaphor if we consider that it was the photograph in the case study of Laub's little boy that kept both the anxiety at bay and through which the terror of the nightmare began. Yet Freud depicts another scene, a happy scene, of a childhood nurse, a youthful mother, a half brother who could easily be the father, an aged father who could be the grandfather, and a nephew and niece who could be siblings. A happy scene says Freud and maybe it was but the infant who wished to get rid of his eleven month younger brother because he felt dethroned, despoiled, prejudiced had a tragic ending. His brother really went away and his mother grieved and as in Chapter Four with the expression of Winnicott's boy and his depressed mother how could Freud not have been affected?

We have only had one Freud and he had only one mother. The separation between nanny and *Mater* allowed him to sexualize one and make of the other a paragon that in turn would create of them and in his theory, a perfect conflict free relationship. But this could also be the result of a mother's guilt. Her baby dies, but she still has another one and to him she holds tight, fearful that she might lose him too. His mother's 'Golden Sigi' ('*mein goldener Sigi*' (in Jones, 1957: 3)), and his old nurse who made him believe that he was a sexually clumsy boy (SE 1: 262). At her request he gives her his coins, and wraps the infantile sexual researches and the anal stage (faeces is the first gift says Freud) and hands them over to her. But she gets locked up – *Kasten*, as I explained in Chapter Two and Freud turns away, as he will continue to do for his lifetime when offered the 'key' to The Mothers. At the spot that reaches down into the unknown Freud fears to tread. He can go no further.

Freud said that the story of Moses tormented him like an 'unlaid ghost' (SE 23: 103). Similarly, in his case-study of little Han's Freud argues that in an analysis 'a thing

which has not been understood inevitably reappears; like an unladen ghost, it cannot rest until the mystery has been solved and the spell broken' (SE 10: 122). Sprengnether may be right then. The mother is a kind of unladen ghost for Freud, haunting him, tracing his steps. Perhaps it is unladen precisely because Freud refused to acknowledge it, turning away whenever 'it' makes its presence felt. Groddeck argues that the turning away of the head, the eyes, the body from the object in order to avoid visual impressions is the work of the 'It' (Groddeck, 1977: 113). Here is Freud's unconscious then, at the site of the infantile sexual researches, called up, mediated no less by the Witch/Mother of the metapsychology.

I said in the Prologue that Freud did not mourn his mother when she died. But I amended this because Freud suggests both in his own response to his mother's death and in his letter to Eitingon on the death of his mother, that the loss of a mother is something so strange, 'unlike anything else' as to be ungraspable (E. Freud, 1960: 392 and 400). In the conclusion to the engagement with the '*My son, the Myops*' dream above, I suggested that 'what makes the Jew' for Freud, a difficult and miraculous thing although inexpressible, might also 'make the Mother'. In fact, there is a sense that 'my/the mother' and 'Freud the Jew' has become increasingly intertwined throughout this thesis that one begins and ends with the other. Of course just when I thought I had made some sense of the mother in Freud, another path, and actually quite often the path was a pit/a hole, opened up in front of me and I was left with the feeling that Freud expressed on his own thesis in *Moses and Monotheism*, 'To my critical sense this book ... appears like a dancer balancing on the tip of one toe' (in Yerushalmi, 1991: 25).

Jonte-Pace argues that Freud's inability to grieve or mourn his mother's death is perhaps an inability that we all might share. Describing the process of mourning as 'a great riddle' Freud argues that mourning is one of those 'phenomena which cannot themselves be explained but to which other obscurities can be traced back' (SE 14: 306). Here we are on familiar ground, mourning, the mother, the 'essence' of Jewishness, all obscure, having something unknowable, and unexplainable about them. Freud questions why the 'detachment of libido from its objects should be such a painful process' and contends that it is a 'mystery' and '(w)e can only see that libido clings to its objects and will not renounce those that are lost even when a substitute

lies ready to hand. Such then is mourning' (SE 14: 306-307). Perhaps it is the question of the substitute that needs to be addressed. With Freud's 'attachment' to his Oedipal paradigm he 'weaves' (a feminine accomplishment no less) as Jonte-Pace suggests, the 'act' of mourning into the 'first and most important identification, [the] identification with the father' (in Jonte-Pace, 2001: 136 and SE 19: 31). Freud suggests here, or at least attempts to explain the first loss and the first identification as paternal. But as I have shown repeatedly throughout this thesis, and which takes on a mysterious element of its own, Freud replaces the mother with the father, building a rather shaky Oedipal edifice over a primarily maternal one. Jonte-Pace will state, '(i)n my view, however, none of us can fully mourn the mother. To mourn the mother would be to identify with or become the mother...' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 137). Freud's inability to mourn the mother, as first love object, as the 'most important identification' seems to be aligned with his own 'fears' of what being and living as a Jew might really mean. Geller and Gilman suggest that this might have something to do with the feminisation of the male Jew, seen in the covenant to God, circumcision and enacted in Freudian castration anxiety of which the mother's genitals seem to arouse the greatest 'angst'. That historically the male Jew was viewed as 'womanly' is espoused in Jung's diatribe against Freud and Freudian psychoanalysis, given in his 1934 paper 'The State of Psychotherapy Today' (in Yerushalmi, 1991: 48-49). But Jung both misunderstood Freud and for that matter Goethe argues Prokhoris. Prokhoris states that Freud took the 'impure, muddy-path that alone leads to the discovery of psychoanalysis' (Prokhoris, 1995: 104), which Jung saw as a 'perverse' and 'scandalous' act. After the break with Freud, Jung will write that 'his' psychotherapy is an "Aryan science" proper to the "Germanic peoples", whose "profound soul" does not wallow in the "insipid mudhole fit for children" he sees "Jewish" psychoanalysis as being' (Prokhoris, 1995: 104). Jung's (mis)interpretation of Goethe's "call for regeneration" is at complete odds with Goethe's or for that matter Freud's intent argues Prokhoris. Goethe's Faust after all takes its inspiration from the "muck" that Jung is so scathing of. It emerges from 'popular tradition, the tradition of the puppet theatre': 'It comes out of a "mudhole fit for children", the mudhole of folklore, where one is not afraid to roll around in the dirt, the impurity, the filth, in which the pure gold of truth lies buried' (Prokhoris, 1995: 105). Freud makes explicit that psychoanalysis is attentive to the dregs, to fairy-tales and folklore, to myth and even to religion. Jung's "profound soul" and even his conception of the

mother are cleansed of any dirt. We saw in Chapter Three that when Jung declared Freud 'neurotic' he did so in reference to his own belief that the neurotic found it difficult to 'climb up out of the mud of the commonplace' (Jung, 1963: 161). This mud, that the neurotic wallows in, is itself comparable to what Jung will call the "earlier repressed" an archaic, maternal "unconscious" ("treasure-house"). For Freud 'the soul of the people is a treasure-house, but in a completely different sense: that of Bakhtin's "carnavalesque", carnival understood as hodge-podge, vulgarity, truth in the raw. "The muddy fountain, in other words, which Goethe draws on for Faust, and Freud for analysis' (Prokhoris, 1995: 106).

Jung's paper is of no interest here, apart from the date (and the acknowledgment that it caused an international uproar because of the anti-Semitic content), because in 1934 Freud was quietly completing the first essay of his *Moses and Monotheism* (SE 23). The doubling here, once again between the Gentile and the Jew, repeats the duplication that with rigorous monotony occurs throughout Freud's work. Here though, in this important one, between the gentile and the Jew is also, as I argued above, that between Christianity and Judaism, the Son and the Father. Although as I argued in my engagement with the 'My son the Myops' dream, the son and the father become one and the other and finally the only question that remains is where might the mother be in all of this? Again, to repeat, the juncture between that of Christianity and Judaism is the mother according to Yerushalmi (1991: 92). The problem being that no one seems to know how to resolve the mothers place here, in the middle, caught between the father and the son: prostrate we might say (again that repetition) at the foot of the cross, *geseres*. Jonte-Pace's response to this was to offer a 'counterthesis', a compelling and convincing 'uncovering' that borrows from Freud's paper *The Theme of the Three Caskets* to 'guess at what lies beneath' (Jonte-Pace, 2001: 149 (regardless of my feelings regarding the term 'counter-thesis)).

Where Rank and to a lesser degree Freud, stumble, is their insistence on the womb as a 'blissful paradise' one that through a 'return' we enter a Nirvana, a 'pleasurable Nothing' (in Kramer ed., 1996: 9). Nothing then, before the scientific explanation for the creation of the universal, the 'Big Bang' there was nothing. No concept of time or space. A difficult theory to accept and yet Kristeva will tell us that we commonly accept the premise of Father Time and Mother Space (Kristeva, 2005: 204). This

poses a problem if we consider that both time and space belong to the nothing and that this nothing belongs too a 'pleasurable return' the mother's womb. We desire this return argues Freud. This nothing in fact *is* something the Big Bang theory goes, it is a *kern* to use Rank's word for the nucleus of something: a miniscule infinite and condensed particle that through the expansion of the universe matter/*mater* is produced. Perceptively Kristeva argues 'The reality of castration is as real as the supposed "big bang" at the origin of the universe, yet we are less shocked when this sort of intellectual process concerns inanimate matter than when it is applied to our own subjectivity and to the fundamental mechanism of our epistemic thoughts' (Kristeva, 1995: 211). This point, this singularity from which all life/matter is created is similar to the idea of the 'foundation stone' the original primal matter/*mater* that God built the world around. This is a Jewish concept, perhaps a fitting comparison at the end of a thesis on a 'Godless Jew' and his neglect of the/his mother. If Jerusalem is the centre of the universe, and in The Bible *She is* then *She is* also *Umbilicus Mundi*, the Navel of the World. Freud said that behind Greece – and as I illustrated in Chapter Three, Freud emphasises his commitment to the 'Greeks' their myths – stood the ancient and shadow civilisation of the Minoan-Mycenean era. It might be said that the foundation of Greece is built on her very 'bones'. Freud then invokes the Greek but silences the Jew. What is caught in this statement is the inexorable repression of the mother behind the father because, it might be said, that to really acknowledge her then Freud must acknowledge the castration/circumcision that marks him as a Jew. Something, according to Geller at least, he was unable to do.

Kristeva will argue that 'If "the Mother" is not someone, there is no one'. And, 'The Mother' is an abstraction—the "the" being a party to a "defensive system"' (Kristeva, 1995: 11). For Freud, both senses of 'the mother' are used throughout his work. *She is* some one, but by being a 'some one' with Madonna like qualities, the Virgin Mary and her Christ-like child, she effectively becomes no one. Particularly when one considers that the person positioning the mother in this way is himself a Jew and a Godless one at that. But if, as Yerushalmi argues that for Freud the question of 'how the Jews have come to be what they are' is central to his personal and 'general' understandings, then I would 'guess that what lies beneath' this, or these, question(s), is one framed as 'how the Jews (and others) have come to be what they are, and how the mother might play an important role in this?' If the infantile sexual researches are

bought about in part by a belief in the mother's penis before castration anxiety, then I wonder whether Freud's mother of the 'perfect' ambivalent free relationship ever had a penis in the first place? Or alternatively, whether the penis/phallus of this '*Mut*' like Goddess is in fact, never realised as castrated? Perhaps Leonardo da Vinci could hold on to this 'whole', that is 'complete', without a 'piece missing' mother because she was 'lost' to him before his sexual researches could be satisfied. And yes, we might suppose his step-mother was kind and loving but this somewhat belies the step-mothers of fairy-tales/tails that Freud espouses throughout his work. These are step-mothers though that have as their adversary the step-daughter not usually the step-son, although Hansel and Gretel is one fairy-tale at least that illustrates a step-mother that does not like him: 'loses him in the forest' with his sister Gretel and leaves him to fend off the/our 'Witch'.

This thesis is echoed in its title, 'Fragment of an Analysis of the Mother in Freud' echoed because it is haunted by the paper for which it is named, Freud's first incomplete analysis on Dora/Ida Bauer. Here Freud's Oedipal complex makes an appearance to be rejected by his female analysand. Freud and Dora/Ida embark on a conversational engagement although as other theorists point out Dora/Ida loses her voice – literally in aphonia. A sense of loss perforates this case-study (as it does this thesis): Loss, and riddles and keys and locks and ambivalent relationships to mothers. Freud gives Ida the pseudonym Dora, after a servant who has to give up her name Rosa, because this is the name of Freud's sister ('Poor people...they cannot even keep their own names!'). It is not my intention to engage with the case-study of Dora/Ida here, at the end of this work, but rather to suggest that just as Freud understood that the psycho-analysis of Dora/Ida was fragmentary, incomplete so too is this engagement with the mother in Freud. How could it not be? Unceremoniously pushed to the margins of any analysis, the mother yet features for all her ostracism. Even Dora/Ida in her explanation of the attraction she felt for Raphael's Madonna can say finally to Freud, it is the Madonna that interests her. What she fails to say, and which Freud fails to analyse is that here in Raphael's painting of the Virgin Mary holding her son, the Jew and the Gentile once more collide.

Freud will say that we are often blind to the symbolism looking at us, squarely we might say, in the face. I have argued this throughout this thesis both in relation to the

mother but also to Freud's own complicated relationship to his Jewishness. In fact, I have shown that these two seemingly different things are more often than not conflated. Freud will say in his *Fragment of an Analysis of Hysteria* (Dora): 'Anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear will be convinced that mortals cannot hide a secret. If one's lips are silent, one will be voluble with one's finger-tips; betrayal seeps through every pore. And for that reason the task of bringing the most hidden parts of the soul to consciousness is very easy to accomplish' (in Phillips ed., 2006: 498). As a final remark, it is illuminating that Freud makes this comment after telling us that the jewelled purse/box is after all a symbol for the female genitals. Here then, the Medusa's head makes way for a decorated 'box', illuminating because the either/or principle, which does not exist in dream states Freud, is here evident in the conundrum that frames female sexuality, femininity and the mother. Perhaps Freud's desire to bring the "hidden parts of the soul to consciousness" is not so easy as he wrote. Particularly if we consider that these hidden parts, so often rendered as female may be so heavily censored by the 'watchman' that they have no – are allowed no – threshold to cross. Trapped then, in a 'box' of whose making, I do not know. But that the mother remains a liminal figure, here at the end of this thesis as she did so throughout, may not be so surprising. If our relationship to the mother suffers an exorable repression, then the key to *The Mothers*, which Freud turns from, may yet not exist. But as Freud states, quoting Charcot, 'That doesn't mean it doesn't exist' (in Phillips ed., 2006: 533).

But I am going to conclude this thesis with the words of Freud's favourite poet, writer and scientist all. The 'great Goethe' who in the final words of his 'immortal' work, *Faust* evokes both the mother with her 'uncanny home' and the place of the mother—the home of the uncanny:

'The eternally feminine
Pulls us up to Heaven' (Goethe, Act V. Sc. 7).

Appendix 1.

MOTHER, (muther), *n.* [Sax. *moder*; D. *moeder*, mother, and *modder*, mud; *baar-moeder*, the womb; *moer*, mother, dam, womb, lees; *moerspul*, hysterics; (*moer* seems to be a contraction of *moeder*;) *moeder-naakt*, stark naked; G. *mutter*, mother, and the thick, slimy concretion in vinegar; *bürmutter*, the womb or matrix; *mutter-fieber*, a hysteric fit; *mutter-lamm* and *mutter-schaf*, a ewe or female sheep; *mutter-flecken* and *mutter-mahl*, a mole; *mutter-pferd*, a mare, the female of the horse...; *mutter-schiede*, the vagina; *mutter-nackt*, stark naked; *moder*, mud, mold.

Sw. *moder*, mother; *vin-moder*, mother of wine; *moderfall*, prolapsus uteri; *moderlif*, the womb or matrix.

Dan. *moder*, mother; *moderskeede*, the vagina; *moderen i quinder*, the matrix; *modder* or *mudder*, mud.

Ir. *mathair*, a mother, and *matter*, pus.

Gr. *ματηρ*, mother, and *μητρα*, matrix.

L. *mater*, mother; *matrix*, the womb; *materia*, matter, stuff, materials of which any thing is made.

It. *madre*, mother, cause, origin, root, spring, a mold or form for castings; *matrix* or *materia*, matter, subject, cause; *matrice*, the matrix.

Sp. *madre*, mother, matrix, womb, the bed of a river, a sink or sewer; *madriz*, matrix; *materia*, matter, purulent, running.

Port. *madre*, a mother, the matrix, the channel of a river; *materia*, matter, pus.

...

Russ. *mat*, *mater*, mother; *matka*, a female, a matrix.

Fr. *mere*, mother, contracted from the latin.

W. *madrez*, matter, purulent discharge.

We observe that in some other languages, as well as in English, the same word signifies a female parent, and the thick slime formed in vinegar; and in all the languages of Europe here cited, the orthography is nearly the same as that of *mud* and *matter*. The question then occurs, whether the name of a female parent originated in a word expressing *matter*, mold; either the soil of the earth, as the producer, or the like substance, when shaped and fitted as a mold for castings; or whether the name is connected with the opinion that the earth is the *mother* of all productions; whence the word *mother-earth*. We are informed by a fragment of Sanchoniathon, that the ancient Phenicians considered *mud*, *μωρ*, to be the substance from which all things were formed. (See MUD). The word *matter* is evidently from the Ar. ... *madda*, to secrete, eject, or discharge a purulent substance; and I think can not have any direct connection with *mud*. But in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, the same word *madre* signifies mother, and a mold for castings; and the northern languages, particularly the German and Danish, seem to establish the fact that the proper sense of *mother* is matrix. Hence *mother of pearl*, the matrix of pearl. If this word had its origin in the name of the earth used for the forms of castings, it would not be a singular fact; for our word *mold*, in this sense, I suppose to be so named from *mold*, fine earth. The question remains *sub judice*.

1. A female parent; *especially*, one of the human race; a woman who has borne a child; correlative to SON or DAUGHTER.
2. That which has produced any thing.

Alas! poor country! it can not

Be called our *mother*, but our grave.

Shakespeare

So our native land is called *mother* country, and a plant from which a slip or coin is taken is called the *mother* plant. In this use, *mother* may be considered as an adjective.

3. That which has preceded in time; the oldest or chief of any thing; as, a *mother*-church.
4. Hysterical passion. [*Not used*]
5. A familiar term of address or appellation of an old woman or matron.
6. An application given to a woman who exercises care and tenderness toward another, or gives parental advice; as when one says, a “woman has been a *mother* to me.”
7. A thick, slimy substance concentered in liquors, particularly in vinegar, very different from scum or common lees.

MOTHER OF PEARL, (-perl,) *n.* The hard, silvery, brilliant, internal layer of several kinds of shells, particularly oysters, which is often variegated with changing purple and azure colors. ...

MOTHER, (muth'er,) *a.* Native; natural; received by birth; as *mother* wit.

1. Native; vernacular; received from parents or ancestors; as, *mother* tongue.

MOTHER, (muth'er,) *v. i.* To concrete, as the thick matter of liquors.

MOTHER, *v. t.* To adopt as a son or daughter.

...

MOTHER-HOOD, *n.* The state of being a mother.

...

MOTHER-LAND, *n.* The land of one's mother or parents.

MOTHER-LESS, *a.* Destitute of a mother; having lost a mother; as *motherless* children.

MOTHER-LY, (muth'er-le,) *a.* Pertaining to a mother; as *motherly* power or authority.

2. Becoming a mother; tender; parental; as, *motherly* love or care.

MOTHER-LY, *adv.* In the manner of a mother.

MUD, *n.* ... This Phenician word *mod*, *μωρ*, ...is precisely the English *mud*, the matter, material, or substance of which, according to the ancients, all things were formed. ...Plutarch, de Iside, says the Egyptians called Isis *muth*, that is, *mother*. This is a remarkable fact, and proves beyond controversy the common origin of the Phenician, Celtic, and Teutonic nations. *Mud* may perhaps be named from wetness, and be connected with L. *madeo*, ...

Moist and soft earth of any kind, such as is found in marshes and swamps, at the bottom of rivers and ponds, or in highways after rain.

...

MUDDY, *a.* [from *mud*.] Foul with dirt or fine earthy particles; turbid, as water or other fluids; as a *muddy* stream. ...

2. Containing mud; as, a *muddy* ditch; a *muddy* road.
3. Dirty, dashed, soiled, or besmeared with mud...
4. Consisting of mud or earth; gross; impure; as, this *muddy* vesture of decay.
5. Dark; of the color of mud; as, *muddy* cheeks.
6. Cloudy in mind; dull; heavy; stupid.

Dost think I am so *muddy*? *Shak.*

...
 MATRICE, } *n.* [L. *matrix*, from *mater*, mother].
 MATRIX, }

The womb; the cavity in which the fetus of an animal is formed, and nourished till its birth.

MATRICE, (*matris*) *n.* A mold; the cavity in which anything is formed and which gives its shape; as, the *matrix* of a type.

2. The place or substance in which any thing is formed or produced; as, the *matrix* of metals;...

3. In *dyeing*, the five simple colours, black, white, blue, red, and yellow, of which all the rest are composed.

...
 MATER, *n.* [L. *mother*.] ...

MATTER, *n.* [L. Sp. and It. *materia*; Fr. *matière*; Arm. *Matery*; W. *mater*, what is produced, occasion, affair, *matter*; *madrez*, pus, matter; *madru*, to putrefy or dissolve. Owen deduces *mater* from *mâd*, what proceeds or advances, a good; *madu*, to cause to proceed, to render productive; *mâd*, good, beneficial, that is, advancing, progressive. Here we have a clear idea of the radical sense of *good*, which is, proceeding, advancing. A *good* is that which advances or promotes; and hence we see the connection between this word *mâd* and matter, pus, both from *progressiveness*. The original verb is in the Ar. ... *madda*, to extend, to reach or stretch, to be tall, to thrust out, to excrete, to produce pus, to yawn; derivatives, pus, sanies, *matter*. This verb, in Heb. and Ch. signifies, to measure,

- ...
 1. Substance excreted from living animal bodies; that which is thrown out or discharged in a tumor, boil, or abscess; pus; purulent substance collected in an abscess, the effect of suppuration more or less perfect; as digested *matter*; sanious *matter*.
 2. Body; substance extended; that which is visible or tangible; as, earth, wood, stone, air, vapor, water.

...
 MATTER, *mater, n.* [O.Fr. *matere*, F. *matière*, from L. *materia*, matter, from root of mother.] That which occupies space and which becomes known to us by our senses; that of which the whole sensible universe is composed; body; substance; not mind; the substance of any speech or writing; the ideas or facts as distinct from the words; the meaning; *logic* and *metaph*. That which forms the subject of any mental operation, as distinguished from the *form*;

...
 Freud argued that psychoanalysis was often concerned with what one might call, ‘the dregs... of the world of phenomena’ : ‘It is true that psycho-analysis cannot boast that it has never concerned itself with trivialities. On the contrary, the material for its observations is usually provided by the inconsiderable events which have been put aside by the other sciences as being too unimportant—the dregs, one might say, of the world of phenomena’ (SE 15: 26-27).

DREGS, *n. pl.* ... That which is drained or thrown off, or that which subsides. ...

1. The sediment of liquors; lees; grounds; feculence; any foreign matter of liquors that subsides to the bottom of a vessel.

2. Waste or worthless matter; dross; sweepings; refuse. Hence, the most vile and despicable part of men; as, the *dregs* of society. ...

Mother, as we note has connections with 'mud' and 'dregs', thus what I want to do is take this statement of Freud's and use it to both define the mother and make sense of her. As we have seen, Freud marginalises the mother, whether as 'ghost' or something more 'concrete', like 'the dregs', she is still, uniformly, *mater* to be overlooked.

REMNANT, *n.*: 1. Residue; that which is left after the separation, removal, or destruction of a part. ...

2. That which remains after a part is done, performed, told, or passed.

REMNANT, *a.* Remaining; yet left.

REMAIN, ... 2. To be left after others have withdrawn; to rest or abide in the same place when others remove, or are lost, destroyed, taken away.

3. To be left after a part or others have passed. ...

REMAIN/REMAINS. That which is left; a corpse; also abode ... That which is left after a part is separated, taken away, or destroyed...

But a remnant is also a small piece of fabric, a leftover from a w/hole – the mother/child analogy... by being a fabric it suggests several fabrications; it can be cut, torn, stitched together, pulled apart, draped, made into something, printed on, distressed and/or acid washed. The material or the fabric is not inert then, merely waiting for its purpose/construction...

Remnant also suggests relic(s) in that a relic is a remain, usually aged, but often a part of something older which has been destroyed or lost. The relic in an archaic sense meant corpse.

Again, remnant also suggests leftover, which is understood to mean that which remains after the rest of something has been used or eaten; something that remains or was not used. If it is pluralised then leftovers are something that can be made into something else. (*So the 'mother' is what is leftover after she has been used, or her breast has been emptied*).

Also, residue, that which remains after a process involving the removal of part of the original has been completed. Again, the leftover...either the not wanted or the too much. Perhaps even the not liked.

Again, trace, which suggests a something there – a remainder- that shows the former presence of a person or thing no longer there. One can also trace this 'remainder' by attempting to follow the signs of its former presence, notably by following its absence.

Appendix 2.

A Brief Synopsis of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter.

When the first novel of the series *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (published in some countries as *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*) opens, it is clear some remarkable event has taken place in the wizarding world, an event so very remarkable, even the Muggles notice signs of it. The full background to this event and to the person of Harry Potter is only revealed gradually, through the series. After the introductory chapter, the book leaps forward to a time shortly before Harry Potter's eleventh birthday, and it is at this point that his background begins to be revealed.

Harry's first contact with the wizarding world is through a half-giant, Rubeus Hagrid, keeper of grounds and keys at Hogwarts. Hagrid reveals some of Harry's history. Harry learns that as a baby he witnessed his parents' murder by the power-obsessed dark wizard, Lord Voldemort, who then attempted to kill him also. For reasons not immediately revealed, the spell with which Voldemort tried to kill Harry rebounded. Harry survived with only a lightning-shaped scar on his forehead as a memento of the attack, and Voldemort disappeared. As its inadvertent saviour from Voldemort's reign of terror, Harry has become a living legend in the wizarding world. However, at the orders of the venerable and well-known wizard Albus Dumbledore, the orphaned Harry had been placed in the home of his unpleasant Muggle (non-wizard) relatives, the Dursleys, who had him safe but hid his true heritage from him in hopes that he would grow up 'normal'.

With Hagrid's help, Harry prepares for and undertakes his first year of study at Hogwarts. As Harry begins to explore the magical world, the reader is introduced to many of the primary locations used throughout the series. Harry meets most of the main characters and gains his two closest friends: Ron Weasley, a fun-loving member of an ancient, large, happy, but hard-up wizarding family, and Hermione Granger, a gifted and hardworking witch of non-magical parentage. Harry also encounters the school's potions master, Severus Snape, who displays a deep and abiding dislike for him. The plot concludes with Harry's second confrontation with Lord Voldemort, who in his quest for immortality, yearns to gain the power of the Philosopher's Stone, a substance that gives everlasting life.

The series continues with *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* describing Harry's second year at Hogwarts. He and his friends investigate a 50-year-old mystery that appears tied to recent sinister events at the school. Ron's younger sister, Ginny Weasley, enrolls in her first year at Hogwarts, and finds a notebook which turns out to be Voldemort's diary from his school days. Ginny becomes possessed by Voldemort through the diary and opens the 'Chamber of Secrets', unleashing an ancient monster which begins attacking students at Hogwarts. The novel delves into the history of Hogwarts and a legend revolving around the Chamber. For the first time, Harry realises that racial prejudice exists in the wizarding world, and he learns that Voldemort's reign of terror was often directed at wizards who were descended from Muggles. Harry also learns that his ability to speak Parseltongue, the language of snakes, is rare and often associated with the Dark Arts. The novel ends after Harry saves Ginny's life by destroying a basilisk and the enchanted diary which has been the source of the problems.

The third novel, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, follows Harry in his third year of magical education. It is the only book in the series which does not feature Voldemort. Instead, Harry must deal with the knowledge that he has been targeted by Sirius Black, an escaped murderer believed to have assisted in the deaths of Harry's parents. As Harry struggles with his reaction to the dementors—dark creatures with the power to devour a human soul—which are ostensibly protecting the school, he reaches out to Remus Lupin, a Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher who is eventually revealed to be a werewolf. Lupin teaches Harry defensive measures which are well above the level of magic generally shown by people his age. Harry learns that both Lupin and Black were close friends of his father and that Black was framed by their fourth friend, Peter Pettigrew. In this book, another recurring theme throughout the series is emphasised—in every book there is a new Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher, none of whom lasts more than one school year.

During Harry's fourth year of school (detailed in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*) Harry is unwillingly entered as a participant in the Triwizard Tournament, a dangerous contest where Harry must compete against a witch and a wizard 'champion' from visiting schools as well as another Hogwarts student. Harry is guided through the tournament by Professor Alastor "Mad-Eye" Moody, who turns out to be an impostor – one of Voldemort's supporters named Barty Crouch, Jr in disguise. The point at which the mystery is unravelled marks the series' shift from foreboding and uncertainty into open conflict. Voldemort's plan to have Crouch use the tournament to bring Harry to Voldemort succeeds. Although Harry manages to escape from him, Cedric Diggory, the other Hogwarts champion in the tournament, is killed and Voldemort resurges.

In the fifth book, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry must confront the newly resurfaced Voldemort. In response to Voldemort's reappearance, Dumbledore re-activates the Order of the Phoenix, a secret society which works from Sirius Black's dark family home to defeat Voldemort's minions and protect Voldemort's targets, especially Harry. Despite Harry's description of Voldemort's recent activities, the Ministry of Magic and many others in the magical world refuse to believe that Voldemort has returned.

In an attempt to counter and eventually discredit Dumbledore, who along with Harry is the most prominent voice in the wizarding world attempting to warn of Voldemort's return, the Ministry appoints Dolores Umbridge as the High Inquisitor of Hogwarts. She transforms the school into a dictatorial regime and refuses to allow the students to learn ways to defend themselves against dark magic.

Harry forms 'Dumbledore's Army', a secret study group to teach his classmates the higher-level skills of Defence Against the Dark Arts that he has learned. An important prophecy concerning Harry and Voldemort is revealed, and Harry discovers that he and Voldemort have a painful connection, allowing Harry to view some of Voldemort's actions telepathically. In the novel's climax, Harry and his friends face off against Voldemort's Death Eaters. Although the timely arrival of members of the Order of the Phoenix saves the children's lives, Sirius Black is killed in the conflict.

In the sixth book, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Voldemort begins waging open warfare. Harry and friends are relatively protected from that danger at Hogwarts.

They are subject to all the difficulties of adolescence; Harry eventually begins dating Ginny Weasley. Near the beginning of the novel, Harry is given an old potions textbook filled with annotations and recommendations signed by a mysterious writer, "the Half-Blood Prince". This book is a source of scholastic success, but because of the potency of the spells that are written in it, becomes a source of concern. Harry takes private lessons with Dumbledore, who shows him various memories concerning the early life of Voldemort. These reveal that Voldemort, to preserve his life, has split his soul into pieces, creating a series of horcruxes, evil enchanted items hidden in various locations, one of which was the diary destroyed in the second book.

Harry's snobbish adversary, Draco Malfoy, attempts to attack Dumbledore, and the book culminates in the killing of Dumbledore by Professor Snape, the titular Half-Blood Prince.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, the last book in the series, begins directly after the events of the sixth book. Voldemort has completed his ascension to power and gains control of the Ministry of Magic. Harry, Ron, and Hermione drop out of school so that they can find and destroy Voldemort's remaining horcruxes. To ensure their own safety as well as that of their family and friends, they are forced to isolate themselves. As they search for the horcruxes, the trio learns details about Dumbledore's past, as well as Snape's true motives—he had worked on Dumbledore's behalf since the murder of Harry's mother.

The book culminates in the Battle of Hogwarts. Harry, Ron, and Hermione, in conjunction with members of the Order of the Phoenix and many of the teachers and students, defend Hogwarts from Voldemort, his Death Eaters, and various magical creatures. Several major characters are killed in the first wave of the battle. After learning that he himself is a horcrux, Harry surrenders himself to Voldemort, who casts a killing curse at him. However, the defenders of Hogwarts do not surrender after learning this, but continue to fight on. Having managed to return from the dead, Harry finally faces Voldemort, whose horcruxes have all been destroyed. In the subsequent battle, Voldemort's curse rebounds off of Harry's spell and kills Voldemort. An epilogue describes the lives of the surviving characters and the effects on the wizarding world.

(Courtesy of the 'magic' of Wikipedia).

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