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Introduction

# The Unconscious, Transference, Drives, Repetition and Other Things Tied to Geography

Paul Kingsbury and Steve Pile

## **Mapping the Psychoanalytic Psyche**

Gone are the days when it was controversial, or simply befuddling, to declare an interest in both psychoanalysis and geography. Perhaps this change has to do with geographers' enduring engagements with psychoanalytic thought: a conversation that can be traced back to the 1930s and even earlier (see Cameron and Forrester, this book; also Matless 1995). Exchanges between geography and psychoanalysis, moreover, have not been one-sided. For its part, psychoanalytic thought, in its inception, has consistently drawn on geographical ideas to explicate its own concepts and practices.

One of the earliest instances of “geography” in Sigmund Freud’s writings is in a love letter written to his fiancée Martha Bernays in 1885. Freud, then 29 years old and an ambitious neurologist specializing in nervous disorders, has traveled to Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris. Although he only has funds to visit for five months, Freud is excited at the prospect of boosting his career through his association with the most famous neurologist of the time, Jean-Martin Charcot. But, Freud laments, “There are things that are tied to geography, and because of the distance between Paris and Hamburg I cannot take you in my arms and kiss you as I would like to” (Freud 1885 [1960]: 182). Clearly, Freud is, as lovers do, complaining about the physical distance that separates them: their limbs and lips—their bodies—are divided by geography. Perhaps the most striking feature of this sentence is how Freud also suggests that more is “tied to geography” than the separation of lovers by the distance between cities. Covertly, Freud seems to propose that psyches are also tied to geography, that desires can be thwarted by geography and that geography intervenes in even the most intimate human

relationships. While the remainder of Freud's letter is silent about these "things," the following five decades of his writings are downright thunderous.

Freud's works are filled with spatial thinking, geographical imaginings and worldly descriptions about landmarks, cities, regions, nation-states, planet earth and even the "astronomical geography" (Freud 1883 [1960]: 77) of the human being. Early in his publishing career, Freud (1900 [1976]) called his first model of the psyche "topographical," in which he divided the mind into three systems: the unconscious (Ucs), preconscious (Pcs) and conscious (Cs). When Freud supplemented his topographical model of the psyche with a "structural" model—involving the "agencies" of the Id ("Es"), the Ego ("Ich") and the Superego ("Über-Ich")—he retained a spatial understanding of their relations (Freud 1933 [2003]: 72–9). Thus, for Freud, a personality was divided into "three realms, regions, provinces," yet importantly, he warned, these should not be "pictured [with] sharp frontiers like the artificial ones drawn in political geography," but rather as a "country with a landscape of varying configurations—hill country, plains, and chains of lakes—, and with a mixed population: it is inhabited by Germans, Magyars and Slovaks, who carry on different activities" (Freud 1933 [2003]: 73).

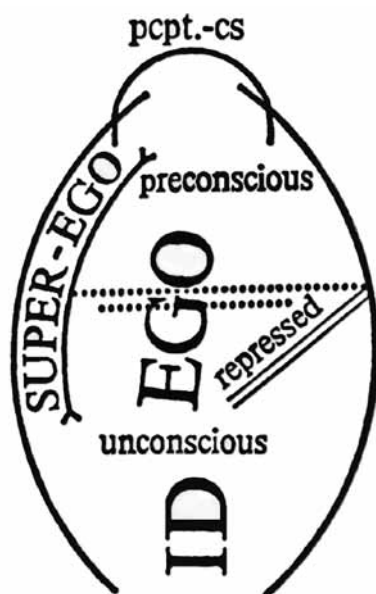


Figure I.1 Freud's 1933 map of the psyche

Here, the map of the psyche is less a political geography, with clearly marked territories, than a jumble of ill-defined terrains and inter-mingled peoples. His psyche is spatially patterned, yet also marked by the ultimately indeterminate nature of its landscape boundaries along with the internal mobility of its different “populations.” We can see this mapped out in Freud’s (1933 [2003]: 72) accompanying diagram (Figure I.1).

Freud’s map of the psyche is not characterized by the distinct and unaligned “nations” of the unconscious, preconscious and conscious. It is evidently differentiated and inexact, indeterminate and enigmatic. There are no clear borders between the “nations,” say, of the Ego and Id. A forest of dots traverses the Ego. Meanwhile, even his topographical and structural models seem oddly located: there is the Superego off to the left, while *pcpt.-cs* (perception-conscious) floats outside the psyche and the Id seems to be unbounded at its base. The psyche, in this view, is more of a topological landscape, in which some “things” are closer to others (or further away), yet somehow all capable of being in contact with one another. Is it fanciful to think of this landscape as a physical geography, with forests (that run through the Ego, making passage between its unconscious and preconscious elements difficult), mountain ranges (between Ego and Superego) and streams (such as the canalized river of the repressed)?

Ever the natural scientist, elsewhere Freud explicitly deploys an analogy drawn from the physical landscape to convey his understanding of the paths and flows of sexual drive-forces (or libido):

In neurotics the sexual constitution, which also contains the expression of heredity, works alongside the accidental influences of life, which disturb the development of normal sexuality. Water that encounters an obstacle in one river-bed is driven back into older courses previously destined to be abandoned (1905a [2006]: 40; see also p. 68).

If the body provides a rudimentary physical terrain—perhaps involving both the Id and inherited bodily predispositions (arguably explaining why the 1933 diagram is “open” at its base)—then through this landscape flows drive-forces, much like water running through a valley. Furthermore, the model is developmental. Freud understands that the landscape has changed over time and that the course of the river has been modified, probably by repression, but certainly by upbringing, mainly family life and social conventions. Alongside such geographical metaphors, Freud also develops a more abstract spatial language of “paths,” “networks,” “direction” and the like.

Spatial thinking thus informs Freud's writings on the "associative paths" and "networks" of dreams that localize and locate meanings (Freud 1900 [1976]), as in: the "symbolic sexual geography" of a dream, where a dense forest symbolizes (female) pubic hair (Freud 1905a [2006]: 87); unconscious thoughts "stretched out" over embodied hysterical symptoms "like garlands of flowers draped over metal wire" (Freud 1905a [2006]: 72); the "suffering in three directions" from the "decay" of the body, the "merciless forces" of "the external world," and from "our relations to other men [*sic*]" (Freud 1930 [2002]: 77); and the infantile "*fort/da*" (gone/here) struggle to master rather than mourn the loss of a mother (Freud 1920 [2003]). Freud (1909 [2002]) even sketched a map that depicted the itinerary of one of his patients to help guide readers through the impossible maze of obsessional neurosis. Sharon Kivland's sketch of the sketch map adorns the back of this book's cover.

Finally, one of Freud's (1933 [2003]: 80) most celebrated and contested aphorisms about the goal of psychoanalysis—"where Id was, shall Ego go" (our translation) [*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*—implies that the Ego should occupy the territory of the Id, yet it also draws upon a sense that the Id is mobile and fugitive, requiring the Ego to constantly follow it. Thus, the Ego must not only explore the landscape of the Id, it must also protect itself against the Id's drive-forces. Often ignored by commentators, Freud reinforces the spatial duality of psychoanalytic practice by way of an analogy to landscape engineering: "It is a work of culture—not unlike the draining of the Zuider Zee" (ibid.).

Beyond Freud's oeuvre, every psychoanalytic approach keenly engages, in one-way or another, with things that are tied to geography. Prominent psychoanalytic concepts include, for example, Jacques Lacan's (1986 [1992]) "topology of subjectivity" that explores how psychological life takes place; Melanie Klein's (1975 [1988]) "introjection" and "projection" locates the interactions between the "outer world" and "inner life" (see Stepney, this book); R.D. Laing's "worlding" of the unconscious (see McGeachan, this book); Julia Kristeva's (1982) "abjection" helps explain how phobias result from uncertain boundaries (Sibley 1995); Donald Winnicott's (1971 [1991]) "potential space" designates a therapeutically playful intermediary site between people and things; while Didier Anzieu (1985) theorizes the "psychic envelope" of skin and, evocatively, Christopher Bollas (1987) refers to the ways that objects cast "shadows" upon the psyche.

And there is more besides. In highlighting the spatial thinking that is so apparent in psychoanalytic writing, we suggest more than a reading of psychoanalysis that simply underlines words in psychoanalytic texts that

have a spatial undercurrent and more than psychoanalysis being a rich, and barely tapped, resource for geographers. We are, rather, hinting that psychoanalysts—even while their aims differ radically from those of (almost all) geographers—have necessarily had to become “good enough” geographers to make sense of their patients’ worlds. That is, they have had to recognize that their patients’ suffering has its origins fully in the external world, even while their patients’ suffering is expressed through the topological twisting of their worlds, both psychic and corporeal, both internal and external (Kingsbury 2007; Blum and Secor 2010; Pile forthcoming 2014; see also Blum and Secor, this book). In some ways, this makes psychoanalytic models of worlding more sophisticated than geographical models of space that rely on geometrical maps where space itself does not fold or stretch. Hence Lacan’s assertion that the “unconscious is outside” is best represented not by images of dark caves and shadowy archetypes but by *and in* the midst of the world’s bustling cityscapes such as “Baltimore in the early morning” with its “heavy traffic” and flashing “neon sign[s]” (Lacan 1970: 189). Psychoanalysis affirms a radical incorporation and openness toward the extraordinary diversity that is life and the world (see Davidson and Parr, this book; Rodriguez, this book).

Geographers have not been slow to recognize this. More than simply a model of the personal psyche, psychoanalysis has offered geographers a way to understand the unconscious on the outside; the worlds’ unconscious worlds. Following the foundational work of Jacquie Burgess and David Sibley in the late 1980s, an identifiable sub-field of psychoanalytic geography has emerged (Philo and Parr 2003) and we trust this book is evidence of the vibrancy, diversity and increasing maturity of this subfield. From a position of marginality, psychoanalysis is now amongst the many useful and illuminating theoretical and methodological resources in geography capable of exploring phenomena ranging, for example, from post-Apartheid landscapes (Hook 2005a, 2005b; or, see Gelder and Jacobs 1998) to the politics of the Anthropocene (Robbins and Moore 2012; see also Healy, this book).

Like historical materialism and Marxism, psychoanalysis both emphasizes how modes of living are inescapably historical and social, and also strives—through its practice—to ameliorate the conditions of people’s lives. Alongside feminist theories, psychoanalysis brings to the fore questions about people’s gendered/sexed relations, enactments, embodiments, conflicts and expectations (see Cavanagh, this book). Methodologically, psychoanalytic geographers have fostered critical research techniques by drawing comparison with the psychoanalytic method of “evenly-suspended attention” (Freud 1912

[1958]: 111). That is, an attendance to the emotions and affects contained in, or represented by, words and symptoms, the networks of meanings associated with words and actions, the partiality and situatedness of knowledge, and the dynamic blurring of the boundaries between the researcher and the researched, and, crucially, the analyst's critical reflexivity (see for example Rose 1997, Bondi 2003, forthcoming; see also Bondi, this book; Callard, this book). With poststructuralist theories, psychoanalysis posits that much of the world and people's lives take place through the dynamisms, fixations and uncertainties of language. With non-representational theories, psychoanalysis focuses on how non-conscious affect and embodied material forces are situated within complex sets of inter-subjective and non-human relations. With postcolonial geography, psychoanalysis recognizes the ways in which the psyche can be "colonized" by imagined geographies of superiority and of the racial and migrant body (see also Nast, this book; Naraghi, this book). This does not exhaust the list of approaches that have drawn inspiration from psychoanalytic ideas and methods, yet, it also has to be noted that psychoanalysis has been viewed with some ambivalence (even by those using psychoanalytic concepts), and oftentimes a degree of suspicion and hostility. Nonetheless, renewed interest in emotions and affect across the breadth of critical human geography—and the social sciences as a whole—has produced a stronger sense of fellow traveling amongst these diverse (and too often competing) traditions and approaches.

What we find remarkable is the sheer breadth, depth and maturity of psychoanalytically inspired approaches to geography. Over the last twenty or so years, to use psychoanalysis in geography, unlike psychoanalytic research in cultural studies, literary theory and the humanities more generally, required both an apology and a restatement of basic principles. Numerous geographers now feel confident enough to embrace psychoanalytic approaches in ways that are unfettered by a sense of marginality or a fear of crude caricatures or deliberately contrary interpretations (often based on widely held misunderstandings of the place and role of sexuality in Freud's thought). *Psychoanalytic Geographies* gathers this "confident moment" in psychoanalytic geographies, its enthusiasm and its promise, as well as its diversity and unfolding opportunities for further development. It assembles a wide range of authors who elaborate a variety of psychoanalytic approaches that affirm geographical imaginations and a commitment toward spatial thinking. The book's aim, then, is two-fold: first, to present to readers as wide a set of options for taking psychoanalysis forward in their own work as possible; and, second, to demonstrate the breadth, depth



and promise of cutting edge work in psychoanalytic geographies. Obviously, it is not only geographers that can think psychoanalytically and geographically. *Psychoanalytic Geographies* draws on inter-disciplinary approaches with many of its chapters written by scholars affiliated with departments other than geography.

Our goal in the remainder of the Introduction is not to survey the histories, axioms or limitations and controversies surrounding psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic geographies. Such a task has been done before (Pile 1996; Philo and Parr 2003; Kingsbury 2004, 2009a, 2009b; see also Davidson and Parr, this book). And we feel no compulsion to repeat. Rather, we wish to introduce a spatialized understanding of psychoanalysis through a discussion of four fundamental concepts (following Lacan 1973 [1981]) namely: the unconscious, transference, drives and repetition. In part, we find Lacan's identification of these particular concepts intriguing because he maps out the kind of double architecture with which psychoanalysis is littered: two agencies (the unconscious and the drives) and two actions (transference and repetition). In psychoanalytic thought, we find, "things" are never less than doubled, split, mirrored, paradoxical, contradictory and reversible into opposites. In addition, operating with Lacan's choice of concepts also reflects our (and the discipline's) orientation toward Freudian–Lacanian approaches. Thus, the concepts are useful because they not only already play important roles in the various psychoanalytic approaches in the chapters that follow, but they also provide the architecture for much existing psychoanalytic geography.

It is important to realize that psychoanalytic ideas, such as the unconscious and the drives, neither emerged out of psychoanalytic theorizing, nor as fully-fledged concepts. They are produced over a long time out of a protracted and often painful and unsuccessful interaction between Freud and his patients. For this reason, we will focus in our discussions of the unconscious and transference not on Freud's conceptual writing but on a particular case study: "Dora" (1905a [2006]). A gleeful Freud intended the case study to be a supplement, and therapeutic proof, of the validity of his interpretation of dreams (1900 [1976]). Yet, as the first truly psychoanalytic case history, Dora is troublesome. To be sure, not only is Freud's account itself troublesome, Dora herself makes trouble for Freud. Ultimately, what is of interest to us is that notions of the unconscious and transference emerge out of the thoroughly unsatisfactory relationship between a patient and her doctor. A far from gleeful Freud has to admit, ultimately, what he does not know.





**Figure I.2** *A Clinical Lesson by Doctor Charcot (1887)* by Pierre-André Brouillet. Photograph by Steve Pile

*Source:* Musée d'Histoire de la Médecine, Paris.

For us, psychoanalysis does not rest on fundamental concepts like a roof on the pillars of a temple. Instead, the pillars of psychoanalysis emerge out of the unstable ground of ordinary human suffering; like Rome, psychoanalysis lives in its ruins.

### **The Unconscious: The Case of Dora, Between Coughing and Talking**

We have argued that psychoanalysis has its origins, not in a pre-existing conceptual framework or a pre-determined model of human psychological development, but in the external world. This is as true of Freud's patients' symptoms as the psychoanalytic concepts and techniques that have emerged over the last 130 years or so. Let us be clear, psychoanalysis emerges as a therapy in response to some extremely puzzling medical problems that had already baffled medicine for well over 150 years before Freud. As we said, in 1885 Freud is in Paris with Charcot. What Freud witnesses is astonishing (see Figure I.2).

What we see in this painting is Professor Charcot proving, to a fascinated and baffled audience, that the origins of some nervous disorders, such as hysteria, do not lie in the body but solely in the mind. He is demonstrating that a patient's symptoms could be turned on and off, literally, by the gentle touch of a hand. Put another way, what clinicians were (and still are) faced with was a wide variety of physical symptoms that appeared to have no foundation in physical problems, despite a prolonged search for explanatory physical abnormalities in autopsies of dead patients (with particular emphasis on the search for lesions in the brain, which was Freud's own purpose as a budding neurologist). You will spot the instruments that lie on table by the standing central figure, Charcot. These consisted of probes and electrical stimulation devices. Using these, Charcot demonstrated that his patients' symptoms were not simply faked or simulated. Paralyzed limbs really were paralyzed, beyond the conscious control of the patients. Yet, using hypnosis, Charcot could make the paralysis completely disappear (and reappear). Here was proof of the power of the mind to dominate the body not consciously, but *unconsciously*. Returning to Vienna, brimming with enthusiasm and confidence, Freud sets about developing a cure for hysteria using hypnosis.

In collaboration with Joseph Breuer, Freud imposed therapeutic regimes consisting of daily massages, rest and relaxation, restricted diets and hypnotic sessions on their hysterics. Despite the mixed results, Breuer and Freud presented case studies that indicate a confidence in hypnosis as the cornerstone technique for a complete cure for hysteria (Breuer and Freud 1895 [2004]). Indeed, it is Breuer's patient, "Anna O." who coins the expression "talking cure" so often (yet misleadingly) associated with psychoanalysis. Freud, however, remains doubtful of the success of hypnosis. For example, the curative effects appear to wear off after, at best, a few months. Within a year, some of his patients were back in therapy, with different doctors (notably "Emmy von N."). Embarking on a radical and punishing period of self-analysis in the wake of the death of his father in 1896, Freud becomes increasingly confident of the benefits of approaching his patients' symptoms through an entirely different technique: dream analysis. Indeed, it is in 1896, some eleven years after his encounter with Charcot's hysterics, that Freud begins to call his therapy psychoanalysis. Two years later, in 1898, a father brings his 16-year-old daughter to Freud. She is suffering from a variety of symptoms, which appear not to have physical origins. In his case history (published years later in 1905), Freud will call her Dora, who we now know to be Ida Bauer (Mahony 1996).

In October 1900, Freud began treating Dora (who turned eighteen on 1 November 1899). As it happens, Dora lived on the same street (at Bergasse 32) as Freud, so he had already witnessed her coughing and hoarseness in the summer of 1897. Yet, she had also suffered from a feverish condition in the winter of that year, which was initially (wrongly) diagnosed as appendicitis. Dora, according to her parents, was suffering from mood swings and character changes. As Freud puts it:

she was clearly no longer happy either with herself or with her family, she was unfriendly towards her father and could no longer bear the company of her mother, who constantly tried to involve her in the housework. She tried to avoid contact with anyone; in so far as the fatigue and lack of concentration of which she complained allowed, she kept herself busy by attending public lectures, and devoted herself seriously to her studies (Freud 1905a [2006]: 17).

Freud presents Dora as an intelligent woman, who is curiously beset by contradictory motivations. Typical teenager, you might think. Except, what really shocks Dora's parents is the suicide note they discover. While they do not think that Dora is seriously intending to kill herself, they are nonetheless horrified. On top of this, she is suffering from fits of unconsciousness and also amnesia. For Freud, Dora is an "ordinary" case, exhibiting common hysterical symptoms, such as shortness of breath (*dyspnea*), a nervous cough (*tussis nervosa*), loss of voice (*aphonia*), along with migraines, mood swings, hysterical irascibility and a weariness of life (*tedium vitae*) that is "probably not to be taken seriously" (1905a [2006]: 18). We can almost hear Freud yawn, but what piques his interest is the possibility of using Dora as an addendum to his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900 [1976]). She is to be the proof of his dream pudding. Dora, however, is not going to play along.

Volumes have been written on the Dora case study (see, for example, Bernheimer and Kahane 1985, Decker 1991, Lakoff and Coyne 1991, Mahony 1996; or, for a creative intervention, see Kivland 1999), but our purpose here is to illuminate the emergence of Freud's concept of the unconscious in the course of his analysis of Dora. It will take a further fifteen years, after Dora, for Freud to formulate his concept of the unconscious (1915a [2005]), but in this case study we can already glimpse its key features—importantly, as a response to the experiences and symptoms that Dora suffers. Though Freud's own account turns upon the analysis of two dreams, we will use the incident by the lake as the focal point of our analysis. This incident gives us a stronger grip on the

“outsideness” or externality of the unconscious. More than this, it also shows that, while Freud is increasingly focused on what we might call the repressed unconscious (and it is mostly this form of the unconscious that is identified with psychoanalytic thought), there is more than one kind of unconscious in play (see Pile, this book).

So, what happened by the lake? And what might this have to do with Dora’s coughing and breathing problems? When Dora was sixteen years old, she went on holiday with her father. After a few days, Dora’s father intended to return to Vienna. The plan was for Dora to spend several weeks with Herr and Frau K. (pseudonyms for Hans and Peppina Zelenka).

But when her father prepared to set off, the girl suddenly announced very resolutely that she was going with him, and she had done just that. It was only some days later that she gave an explanation for her curious behaviour, asking her mother to inform her father that while they were walking to the lake to take a boat trip, Herr K. had been so bold as to make a declaration of love to her (Freud 1905a [2006]: 19).

Herr K. and Papa respond somewhat predictably. Herr K. denies that he had done anything that would even have permitted Dora such an interpretation of his behavior. For his part, Papa declares that he believes the whole incident to be a fantasy. Indeed, Frau K. is blamed for the fantasy: she had talked too deeply and intimately with Dora about “sexual matters,” and even allowed her to read Paolo Mantegazza’s *Physiology of Love* (published in 1896), which, according to Papa and Herr K., had clearly inflamed Dora’s erotic imagination. Consequently, when Dora demands that her Papa sever his links to both Herr and Frau K., he steadfastly refuses to do so. In particular, he defends his relationship to Frau K., which he says is “an honest friendship” which can do nothing to hurt Dora (1905a [2006]: 19). Frau K., he protests, is suffering very badly from her nerves and he is her sole support. Indeed, as he “gets nothing” from his wife (Dora’s mother), his friendship with Frau K. is also a comfort to him.

The picture presented to Freud, then, is of two entirely innocent men; Papa and Herr K. could have done no harm to Dora (they say). Dora, it seems, is a victim of an overly sexualized imagination, caused by the overly intense and intimate nature of her relationship with Frau K. Freud is instantly suspicious; there must be, he surmises, more to the story. Indeed, there is. Freud solicits from Dora an earlier experience with Herr K.

Dora told me of an earlier experience with Herr K., which was even more apt to act as a sexual trauma. She was fourteen years old at the time. Herr K. had arranged with Dora and his wife that the ladies should come to his shop in the main square of B. [Merano, northern Italy] to watch a religious ceremony from the building. But he persuaded his wife to stay at home, dismissed his assistant and was on his own when the girl entered the shop. As the time of the procession approached he asked the girl to wait for him by the door which opened on to the staircase leading to the upper floor, as he lowered the awning. He then came back, and instead of walking through the open door, he suddenly pulled the girl to him and pressed a kiss upon her lips ... But at that moment Dora felt a violent revulsion, pulled away and dashed past him to the stairs and from there to the front door. After this, contact with Herr K. none the less continued; neither of them ever mentioned this little scene, and Dora claims to have kept it secret even at confession at the spa. After that, incidentally, she avoided any opportunity to be alone with Herr K. (Freud 1905a [2006]: 21).

Freud's response is, at first sight, alarmingly sexist: instead of understanding Dora's reaction as a perfectly normal response to an unwanted and forced sexual advance, Freud wonders why she is repulsed and runs away. Later, in the case study, a far more complex picture of the erotic relationships in Dora's world comes into view. The problem, for Dora, is that she is secretly in love with Herr K. Part of her motivation, then, in wishing Papa to break off his affair with Frau K. is so that Herr K. and Frau K. can divorce. Yet, she is also "in love" with Frau K., and does not want to simply replace her in Herr K.'s life. Indeed, she actually wants Papa to return home, and wants nothing to do with Herr K.

It is not that Dora is confused by all of this; her problem is that she is too aware of it and this forces her to repress her feelings and thoughts and, to this end, she places one idea *in front of* another idea. Thus, her symptoms of coughing and difficulty in breathing, which started at the time of the lake incident, refer back to her repulsion of the kiss. Furthermore, the coughing is also connected to Dora's witnessing of how her Papa was treated when he was ill with a severe cough. This is no "innocent" illness, in Dora's mind, as she assumes that it is connected with her Papa's syphilis (which he contracted prior to his marriage to Dora's mother). Worse, Dora assumes that her Papa's syphilis has been passed on to her (1905a [2006]: 65). In the analysis, then, Freud is constantly trying to follow the twists and turns in Dora's sexual, erotic and emotional relationships, many of which are "hidden" by secrecy or "forgotten" through repression.

Alongside the twists and turns of Dora's sexual worlds (involving her own emerging sexuality, Papa, her mother, a governess, Herr K. and Frau K.), Freud (1905a [2006]: 30) notes various ways in which unconscious processes work to hide or repress the impossible demands of these worlds as Dora experiences them. One unconscious process concerns "contiguity" and "the temporal proximity of ideas." According to this, ideas are associated with one another through some kind of closeness. Thus, through her cough, Dora demonstrates not only her distress at her Papa's illness, but also her love of Herr K., as her attacks coincided with times when Herr K was absent on business (Freud 1905a: 30). Another feature of contiguity is the "closeness" between the repressed idea and the physical symptom; love for Papa and love for Herr K. manifests itself as a cough because there is a direct link between Papa and Herr K. And the symptom: syphilitic illness and the repulsive kiss. There are further contiguities between Papa and Herr K., not just through Frau K., but also through Dora herself. Dora refuses, angrily, to be "the gift" that Papa gives Herr K. to buy his acquiescence over the affair with Frau K. The cough is, as with all symptoms, *over-determined*, that is, determined by more than one idea. Freud writes: "a symptom has more than one meaning, and serves to represent several unconscious trains of thought" (Freud 1905a [2006]: 36). Indeed, it is this multiplicity of thoughts—and their movement along chains of association—that generates enough "force" to create a symptom. So, another key aspect of unconscious processes is the way that thoughts move and interact, dynamically, with one another.

Furthermore, it is this coexistence of contradictory ideas that creates the kind of intensity that requires repression. Thus, if two ideas coexist excessively intensely—*I want Papa to love me more than Frau K.* and *Papa's sexuality frightens and disgusts me*—this itself can cause repression, such that both ideas become unconscious. These contradictory unconscious thoughts, because of the intense affects associated with them, gain enough force to create symptoms and their dynamism. Thus, the symptom can readily take on new meanings, whilst at the same time jettisoning others. The same thoughts can, on the other hand, create new symptoms. To exemplify this, Freud reaches for a geographical metaphor: a dammed river. Like a river, an idea can be blocked, dammed up by repression, but it can always find new channels, albeit preferring ones already gouged out. Indeed, the unconscious is highly conservative, allowing not only for the preservation of thoughts from different times of life, but also for contradictory thoughts and ideas (*I love Herr K.; Herr K. disgusts me*) to exist side-by-side without conflict (Freud 1905a [2006]: 43). It is the conservative aspect of

unconscious processes that can manifest itself as a compulsion to repeat. This compulsion to repeat is, of course, one of therapy's greatest challenges, hence Lacan's identification of it as a fundamental concept (1973 [1981]), and why we will discuss repetition in depth below.

A significant feature of unconscious processes is the conversion of an idea into its opposite. Freud uses the metaphor of a pair of *astatic needles* (yet another spatial metaphor) to describe how conscious and unconscious thoughts can run in exactly the opposite direction yet be driven by the same force and point along the same line as one another (Freud 1905a [2006]: 43). The significance of unconscious processes, that can contain contradictory ideas and reverse ideas into their opposites, is difficult to underestimate. For, these can manifest themselves in very ordinary symptoms such as confusion, ambivalence, internal conflict and aggressiveness—as with Dora's mood swings and apparent changes in character. Let us be clear, these mood swings are consistent in Dora's internal world, the problems arise from their interaction with her external worlds. It is not just that her parents do not understand her, or that social conventions have forced her to hide or repress aspects of her sexuality (such as her masturbation and, allegedly, her lesbianism), it is that she is struggling to handle the all-too-real sexual experiences and desires that she encounters in the world. Her consistent response is, simply, to deny that she knows what is going on because knowing what is going on is too traumatic to acknowledge openly (Freud 1905a [2006]: 46).

The unconscious, then, is not a place, as if it were a tightly sealed container inside the mind where we “bottle-up” all the painful stuff; nor is it a set of contents, as if the bottle only held repressed sexual desires associated with the father. The unconscious is not a locked box where Oedipus wrecks. Significantly, the Oedipus myth is mentioned once in the Dora case study, in passing; indeed, Freud is clear that the myth most closely associated with this case study is that of Medea (Freud 1905a [2006]: 44 and 48). Rather, the unconscious is best associated with *processes* such as “the contiguity of ideas,” reversal into opposites, repression, over-determination, trains of thought, chains of association, timelessness, contradictoriness and conservatism. In this sense, the unconscious is how thoughts and ideas are placed at a distance from consciousness or blocked from becoming conscious; even as the dam prevents the Zuider Zee from being swamped, it does not stop the seas from moving, nor having its own forces and dynamics, nor does it seal the oceans in a bottle.

We have indicated that the unconscious is “outside,” like the seas that surround the Zuider Zee. We should not stretch the metaphor too far.



The unconscious is also communicative. Earlier, we suggested that the “talking cure” is a misleading metaphor for psychoanalysis. In the next section, we would like to explain why, this time by reading the unconscious communication between Dora and Freud *spatially*. Significantly, it is this that causes Dora to break off her analysis with Freud—and that causes Freud to fail to appreciate exactly what was going on in the analysis. Indeed, it is for this reason that transference takes an increasingly central role in psychoanalysis in contrast to a form of “cure” that relies upon the patient bringing unconscious material to light merely by talking.

### **Transference: A Part to Play**

Somewhat troublingly, throughout his case history, Freud seems very far from being gentle or deft in his handling of Dora’s sexual experiences and traumas (see also Kivland 1999). For example, Freud admits to playing tricks on Dora to solicit “hidden” material, as when he places matches on his desk (Freud 1905a [2006]: 62). Similarly, Freud jumps to seemingly unfounded or fanciful conclusions, as when he connects Dora’s intimacy with Frau K. to a repressed “lesbian” desire for Frau K. (ibid. 47). There appears to be a rush to judgment on Freud’s part, in his eagerness to prove both his theory that hysteria has its origins in sexual trauma and also the therapeutic importance of his dream analysis. Perhaps it is for this reason that Dora abruptly ends her analysis? Freud wonders:

Could I have kept the girl in treatment if I had found a part for myself to play, if I had exaggerated the importance of her presence for myself, and shown her a keen interest, which, in spite of the attention caused by my position as a doctor, would have resembled a substitute for the kindness she longed for? I don’t know (1905a [2006]: 95).

If Freud had found a part for himself to play? Later in the case history, Freud begins to suspect the exact opposite: that, in fact, he already had a part to play, that he had become, for Dora, a man much like other men, a man much like her Papa and Herr K. “But I ignored the first warning,” Freud bemoans,

telling myself that we had plenty of time, since no other signs of transference were apparent, and since the material for the analysis was not yet exhausted. So transference took me by surprise, and because of whatever unknown factor it was

that made me remind her of Herr K., she avenged herself on me, as she wanted to avenge herself on Herr K., and left me, just as she believed herself deceived and abandoned by him. In that way she was acting out a significant part of her memories instead of reproducing them in the cure (1905a [2006]: 106).

So far, the psychoanalysis of Dora has involved Freud, basically, conducting two kinds of investigation. On the one hand, he has examined Dora's sexual experiences and traumas, from her earliest childhood memories up to her relationships with Papa and her mother, with Herr and Frau K. with forensic detail and gynecological objectivity. On the other hand, Freud has utilized his theory of dreams to explore Dora's conscious and unconscious worlds of meaning and affect. Significantly, this does not involve a "talking cure," but rather acts of *translation* (Freud 1905a [2006]: 38). Freud has to translate unconscious meanings into conscious ones. As with any translation between any language and any other, this translation is fraught with difficulties. It is made no easier by the fact that the unconscious is only like a language in a few respects, and its contents are less like a dictionary of definitions, than a jumble of dynamically interacting memories, ideas, images, affects and so on.

Freud has deployed his understanding of unconscious processes to attempt to map what might be going on for Dora *unconsciously*. But this only describes Dora's *repressed unconscious*: a tempestuous sea of affects that she attempts to keep from swamping her. There is another unconscious in Freud's model: a *communicative unconscious*—and this is doing something else entirely. It is this communicative unconscious that forces Freud to think through the dynamics of transference, which, he admits, he not only missed or ignored, but he also did not fully appreciate its force nor its use therapeutically (if at all). Freud's failure is (at least) two-fold: not only did he not take account of the transference of affects between them, unconsciously communicated, he also let his own presumptions about Dora get in the way of the analysis.

As we have said, Freud's interpretations in this case study appear to side, very strongly, with the assumptions of a patriarchal culture and not with its discontents. A young teenage girl who is trapped by an older man, who then forces a kiss upon her, Freud says, *ought* to have responded as if this was "an occasion for sexual excitement" (1905a [2006]: 21). He asserts that women are prone to a more intense jealousy than men (*ibid.* 50) and he imagines Dora "felt not only the kiss on her lips but also the pushing of the erect member against her body" (*ibid.* 22), without giving any reason for thinking that this ought to have been the case. He imposes interpretations upon Dora, as when he tells her

there is “no doubt” that her coughing was designed “to turn her father away from Frau K.” (ibid. 32). He asserts that the coughing represents “a situation of sexual gratification *per se*” (ibid. 37), and so is directly associated with oral sex. Yet, when Dora says “no” or “I *knew* you’d say that” to his interpretation, Freud responds by taking this as proof that his interpretations are correct (ibid. 46 and 60). He shares knowledge of what Frau K. allowed Dora to read with Dora, so that she was clear that the adults were communicating about the most intimate aspects of her life behind her back (ibid. 49) and Freud even puts words in Dora’s mouth when he seeks to translate an unconscious thought into a conscious form, thus: “Since all men are so appalling, I would prefer not to marry. This is my revenge” (ibid. 107).

Indeed, the outcome of the analysis seems to have proved to Dora that “all men were like Papa” (Freud 1905a [2006]: 71), including Freud. Too late, Freud recognizes that, somehow, he has become embroiled in Dora’s internal worlds. For her, Freud is just another of the “so appalling” men. So Dora’s abrupt breaking off of analysis comes as a total surprise to Freud, yet he belatedly comes to realize that it makes perfect sense for Dora. She avenges herself upon him, just as she sought to avenge herself on Papa and Herr K. So, in this regard, transference refers to the way that Dora came to see Freud as if he were Papa, Herr K. and, indeed appallingly (for Dora and Freud), “all men.” This explains why Freud wonders how therapy would have proceeded if he had either resisted Dora’s transference, or indeed played into it—by becoming even more like Papa and Herr K. Either way, Dora has taught Freud that transference is an inescapable aspect of, and consequently fundamental to, psychoanalytic therapy:

If one goes into the theory of analytical technique, one comes to the understanding that the transference is something that it necessarily requires. In practical terms, at least, one becomes convinced that one cannot by any means avoid it (Freud 1905a [2006]: 104).

Sure, Freud says, it is easily possible to learn the method of dream analysis and to translate the dream’s unconscious thoughts and memories into conscious interpretations (Freud 1905a [2006]: 104). But transference makes the process of psychoanalytic interpretation fraught with uncertainty. It is not just that the patient begins to treat the doctor as if they were a pre-existing character in their psychodrama, as when Dora appears to treat Freud *as if* he were Papa or Herr K. (Freud 1905a [2006]: 105). The real problem is that the doctor himself is also

treating the patient “as if” they were a character in their own psychodrama. Perhaps this is why Freud imagines an erect member? Has he fallen in love with his “intelligent” patient with “agreeable facial features” (Freud 1905a [2006]: 17)? As Freud admits, transference effectively reduces the analyst’s work to guesswork (Freud 1905a [2006]: 104). This is, perhaps, psychoanalysis’s saving grace; it is necessarily humble and uncertain in the face not only of the patient’s symptoms, but also of the process of analysis itself. It is Freud’s failure to fully appreciate the dynamics of transference that causes the analysis to break down. Yet, alongside dream analysis, it is Freud’s deepening understanding of transference—of unconscious communication—that allows him to develop a new form of therapy: psychoanalysis.

Three facets of the puzzle of transference dog psychoanalysis. First, it is not clear what unconscious thoughts the patient is transferring onto the therapist. Second, the same is true of the therapist: no matter how critically reflexive they are, unconscious thoughts remain illusively unconscious. Third, the projection of unconscious ideas is not like a cinema with an opaque screen in the middle, with two different films, the patient’s and the analyst’s, being cast onto each side of the screen. The screen is translucent, such that the unconscious thoughts of the patient and analyst communicate, that is, people’s unconscious thoughts can be received unconsciously and those thoughts can be worked upon unconsciously—a model best demonstrated in Freud’s later discussions of telepathy (Freud 1921 [1953]; see also Campbell and Pile 2010). These processes are not, Freud insists, unique to the clinical setting, nor are they an insurmountable obstacle, but rather therapy’s greatest asset.

Psychoanalytic cure does not create the transference, it only reveals it, as it does other phenomena hidden in mental life [...] The transference, destined to be the greatest obstacle to psychoanalysis, becomes its most powerful aid if one succeeds in guessing it correctly on each occasion and translating it to the patient (1905a [2006]: 105).

If one succeeds in guessing it and can translate it. A big “if” and a bigger “and.”  
As Freud admits:

I did not succeed in mastering the transference in time; the readiness with which Dora put part of the pathogenic material at my disposal meant that I neglected to pay attention to the first signs of the transference, which she prepared with another part of the same material, a part that remained known to me (1905a [2006]: 106).

It is not that Freud misses either the way that Dora compares him to her Papa or the resemblance between how she warns herself about the bad intentions of Herr K and how she cautions herself against Freud (1905a [2006]: 105–106). It is, rather, that Freud neglects to use these intuitions in the course of the therapy. Dora is troublesome: she refuses Freud many times over and, ultimately, despite Freud’s claim that the therapy had partial success, the case history does not work as convincing proof either of dream analysis or of psychoanalysis. However, through the intensity of the transference, what Dora has given psychoanalysis cannot be underestimated, not because she is somehow a “special case,” but because she demonstrates what is *ordinarily* going on.

Both Dora and Freud must be careful when grasping at an understanding of unconscious thoughts, for it is never clear whose thoughts they are, nor why they take the form they do, nor even how forms and affects are entangled. Yet, this does not mean that they cannot be presented and re-presented. And it certainly does not mean that they cannot be interpreted and worked through. What psychoanalysis presents is a dynamic landscape of the psyche, which can be appreciated in various ways, but not fully known. Again, we might drain the Zuider Zee, but this does not mean that volatile seas do not press upon it. Psychoanalysis offers ways for patients to construct dams—new dams—against painful and traumatizing experiences and affects, but it does not do so without guesswork, supposition, intuition and the like, despite appearances to the contrary. The certainties of interpretation maybe a destination, but they are not the starting point, nor the journey. As Freud says, psychoanalysis is a bit like trying to describe the world from a moving railway carriage. This is no less true of psychoanalysis’ other two fundamental concepts: the drives and repetition.

### **The Drives: Between Biology and Culture**

Although Freud never settled on a definitive concept of the drive (*Trieb*), much of his drive theory, which includes several dozen related compound words (hence the common practice of using the plural form “drives”), explores the twists and turns of the following premise: “the initial cause of the libidinal economy resides in the erotic energy of the human body itself; but this energy is always-already channeled through non-natural mediums, namely vicissitudes organized by images and ideas” (Johnston 2005: 261; see also Sioh, this book). The drives, then, are what Freud frequently calls a “borderland” or “frontier”

concept insofar as it does not belong exclusively to the body or the mind. Rather, the drives are the result of the dynamic interrelations of these two terms: it “is a border, which is never fully crossed; something is left behind the lines [e.g. the kernel of the unconscious] and operates in an insistent way from behind these lines” (Verhaeghe 2001: 56).

Freud variously defined the drives as an organic “stimulus,” psychical “representative,” and more intriguingly something that “exerts pressure” across an “epistemo-somatic gap” (Verhaeghe 2001: 94). The drives, which are frequently mistaken for the waxing and waning of innate biological instincts that secure survival or fleeting psychological wishes that seek well-being, exert a menacing and constant pressure on the psychoanalytic subject. It is a fundamental concept because it is central to how psychoanalysis tackles age-old riddles concerning the dualisms of the mind and body, sex and gender, society and nature, as well as human sexuality, more generally. Below, we focus on the conceptual history of the drives in Freud’s writings and then turn to examine its reception in post-Freudian psychoanalytic approaches, social theories and contemporary human geography.

At the beginning of twentieth century, the German word *Trieb*, which in post-Enlightenment scholarship was regularly associated with the regeneration of organic substances via the two main drives of hunger and reproduction, was central to turbulent scientific debates in Austria and Germany about the differences between animal and human sexuality. These debates concerned the following questions: is there such a thing as a natural-born criminal? How many drives are there? What is the origin and location of the drives? What are the drives anyway? Freud contributed to these debates through professional and personal correspondences with psychiatrists, neurologists and historians.

Although “*Trieb*” first appeared in Freud’s earlier works including *The Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895 [1966]), *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900 [1976]) and other texts and lectures during this period, the drives do not become a fundamental psychoanalytic concept until the first edition (there were six in Freud’s lifetime) of the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905b [2006]). In this path-breaking and subversive work, which includes essays entitled “Sexual Aberrations,” “Infantile Sexuality” and “Transformations of Puberty,” Freud developed the concept of the drives to investigate human sexuality through a panoply of issues including the libido or sexual drives, bi-, homo-, and heterosexuality, perversions, fantasy, embodiment, self-eroticism, gender, sadism and masochism, scopophilia and exhibitionism and, quite controversially, the ability

of the “polymorphously perverse” human infant to derive sexual pleasure from their innate physical constitution.

In the *Three Essays*, Freud formally departed from his “seduction theory,” that is, the hypothesis that hysteria and neuroses were primarily caused by the failed repression of memories of sexual abuse in childhood. By contrast, Freud now asserted that human sexuality was central to the etiology of neuroses. According to Freud, sexuality is characterized not by distinct, unified and polar orientations such as heterosexuality versus homosexuality, perversion versus normality, child versus adult sexuality, but by profound continuity, variability and partiality across and within these domains. Specifically, Freud argued that sexuality was composed of “partial” drives (oral, anal, phallic and genital) that took place as a disjointed “montage” and therefore resisted a smooth mapping onto the genitals (another reason for using “drives” rather than “drive”). Tim Dean claims that Freud’s “partializing of the drive discredits not only the viability of sexual complementarity, but also the possibility of subjective harmony” (2003: 247).

From the outset, psychoanalysis suggests that human sexuality is a question of dis-orientation rather than orientation because it is characterized by a fraught relationship between procreation and pleasure, as well as the radical variability of “love-objects.” Freud not only believed that “the sexual drive is probably at first independent of its object, and in all likelihood its origins do not lie in its object’s attractions” (1905b [2006]: 126–7), but also that there was no such thing as a pre-determined “natural” love-object because “all human beings are capable of making a homosexual object-choice and have in fact made one in their unconscious” (1915c [2006]: 145). Thus, for Freud, human sexuality lacks a “natural” object and the ostensible perversions of masturbation, fetishism and same sex desire are not only normal, but also constitutive of the human subject.

A decade later, in the essay “Drives and their Fates” (usually translated as “Instincts and their Vicissitudes”), Freud famously located the drives, which had now become more central to his metapsychology,

on the borderline between the mental and the physical—the psychic representative of stimuli flowing into the psyche from inside the body, or the degree of work-load imposed on the psyche as a result of its relation to the body (1915b [2005]: 16).

In this essay, Freud elaborated further on the partiality of the drives. He defined a drive as a “delegate” that represents the constant physiological energy emanating from a part or “source” (*Quelle*) of the body which results in psychical labor that varies in its degree of tension or “pressure” (*Drang*). The “aim” (*Ziel*) of



the drives, in keeping with the pleasure principle, is satisfaction, that is, relief from tension or excessive somatic excitation that can be achieved through the drives' "object" (*Objekt*)—a highly mutable entity that is extraneous to the drive's action such as a bodily organ, another person, or an everyday object. Crucially, the drives always fail in their representative mission of translating the demands of the mind and the body because "a drive can never become an object of consciousness, only the idea representing it" (Freud 1905b [2006]: 59). This is no small matter because it means that the drive "in itself, independent of any externally determined trauma, has a potentially traumatizing effect, to which the psyche has to come up with an answer, that is, with a psychological elaboration" (Verhaeghe 2001: 56). Given the partial nature of the drives, Freud emphasizes the contingencies of these elaborations, that is, the unpredictable structural transformations and outcomes of various psychical translations that include repression, sublimation, "reversal into the opposite" and "turning back on the self" (Freud 1915b [2005]: 20).

While Freud hoped the essay would put to rest his questions about sadomasochism in the *Three Essays*, it elicited another round of questions: how to account for the prevalence in his clinical observations of masochism, hostility and negative transference? In order to solve these riddles, Freud made two important theoretical modifications. First, in the pivotal essay *On the Introduction of Narcissism* (1914a [2003]), Freud declared that the original opposition between the Ego drive and sexual drives was no longer tenable because the Ego drive is itself sexual and the sexual drives are in service of the Ego. Second, the psychoanalytic subject (through the homeostatic pleasure principle) was no longer concerned with the acquisition of pleasure, with the discharging of tension, but rather with the avoidance of unpleasure that paradoxically yielded an even more alluring pleasure: an uncanny painful pleasure that Lacan would call "jouissance" (Kingsbury 2008; see also Shaw, Powell and De La Ossa, this book; Proudfoot and Kingsbury, this book).

Dissatisfied by the monism of the drives, Freud embarked on another round of revisions in the 1920 essay, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Having also been shocked by the severity of the social implications and effects of the First World War, Freud returned to a dualistic theory of the drive in terms of the death drive and the life drives. The former is arguably Freud's most controversial concept, which he defined as "a powerful tendency inherent in every living organism to restore a prior state ... a kind of organic elasticity, or, if we prefer, as a manifestation of inertia in organic life" (1920 [2003]: 76). The latter referred to the tendency of the living entities to pursue unification, coupling and the merger into larger scale

entities. It is important to note that the death and life drives not only overlap, they are also relative: “the death drive is actually a life drive depending on how one looks at it, and vice versa, the life drive implies the death of something else” (Verhaeghe 2001: 93).

In *The Ego and the Id* (1923 [2003]), Freud made his final major revisions to the drives wherein he situated the life and death drives in the Id. In this “structural” model, the Ego is charged with defending against the incursions of the Id’s drives through “defenses” that include holding off, delay and altering. In this final model, the drives become subsumed by the mental structures of the Id, Ego and Superego.

Psychoanalysts’ subsequent interpretations of the drives in *The Ego and the Id* are numerous, contested and significant because they are frequently central to the attempts to define the goals of psychoanalysis. The development of “Ego Psychology” during the 1930s onwards through the works of Anna Freud, Heinz Hartmann, Ernst Kris, Erik Erikson and others, aims to strengthen the Ego’s defenses in order to better regulate the Id’s tumultuous libidinal forces so that people can adapt to their social realities. Lacan rallied against the normative ramifications of this paradigm, which soon dominated the International Psychoanalysis Association (IPA), by asserting the imaginary status of the Ego, as well as the centrality and radicality of Freud’s theories of the unconscious and the drives, especially the death drive. For Lacan, “every drive is virtually a death drive” (1966 [2006]: 719). Similarly, Melanie Klein, who influenced the works of Donald Winnicott and other psychoanalysts associated with the Object Relations school, rejected the conformity of Ego Psychology by asserting the Ego’s vulnerability and secondary status to the drives in terms of guilt, aggression and persecutory and depressive anxiety that comprised the Oedipal fantasy life of children younger than three years old (Klein 1975 [1988]).

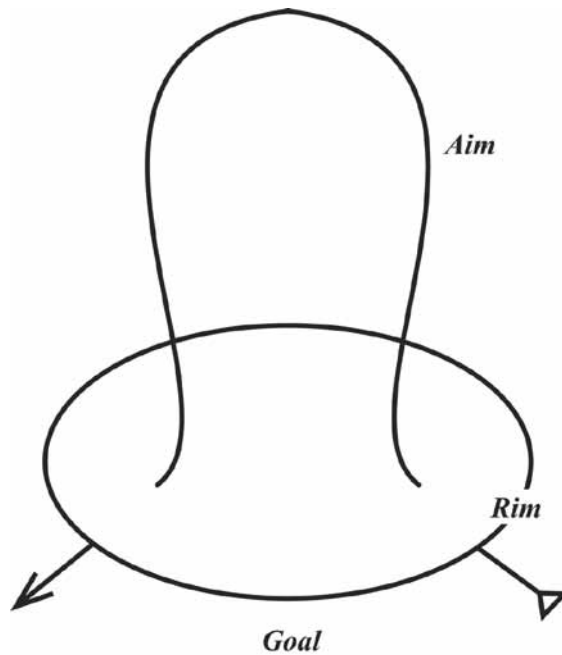
Earlier, we stated that the drives are central to how psychoanalysis answers the age-old dualistic mind and body problem. The answers are perplexing and troubling for two main reasons. First, the lived spaces of the drives—that is, their near endless capacity for plasticity, partiality and multiplicity—repeatedly agitate the Ego’s imaginary capacity for securing a sense of totality and coherence rendering “the human body so anarchic and fragmented that it makes surrealist anatomy appear positively classical” (Dean 2008: 132). Because psychoanalysis locates the drives in a space that separates rather than blurs biological imperatives and social demands, the psychoanalytic subject never quite feels at home in her own skin and is frequently buffeted by the

discontentment in civilization (Freud 1930 [2002]). Second, while objects such as food and water can satiate the instincts of hunger and thirst, the drives derive satisfaction by encircling or missing their object. Thus, the drives are associated with activities that are excessive, repetitive and potentially destructive because the drives have “no goal, but only an aim, this is because its object is no longer a means of attaining satisfaction, it is an end in itself; it is directly satisfying” (Copjec 2002: 38).

Like the unconscious, the drives have been the target of numerous trenchant critiques that allege Freud falls foul of deterministic and reductive biologism, materialism and pansexualism. Jung, for example, tartly asserted that the generalizing “nomenclature” of Freud’s drive theory would “lead us to classify the cathedral of Cologne as mineralogy because it is built of stones” (Freud 1916 [1991]: 130). Yet Freud averred that the drives are multifarious and dynamic entities, chiding Carl Jung (and Alfred Adler) for picking “out a few cultural overtones from the symphony of life” and failing “to hear the mighty and powerful melody of the [drives]” (1914b [1957]: 62).

Receptions of the drives in the humanities and social sciences usually fall into two camps: either siding with Jung’s accusation of Freud’s pansexualism or siding with Freud’s insistence on the plurality of the drives. In the former, many critics understandably throw out the concept entirely because they follow James Strachey—the general editor of the canonical yet “willfully turgid and often obfuscatory” *Standard Edition* (Reddick 2003: xxxiii)—in mistranslating the drives as “instincts,” a word with strong ahistorical, biological and deterministic overtones. Unfortunately, this maneuver is still common in geography (see for example Aitken and Hermann 1997: 71; Thrift 2004: 25). The latter camp consists of close readings of the drives and therefore more nuanced critiques that often result in productive theoretical conversations and innovations in psychoanalytic and critical social theory, more generally. Such critiques correctly assert that the drives endow humans with creative capacities, as well as a sexual life that is not and cannot be entirely determined by either biology or culture because the drives are inherently partial, plastic, conflicted and multiple.

Ever since Herbert Marcuse’s *Eros and Civilization* (1955 [1974]), the drives have played an important role in Freudian-Marxist social theories of the dogged persistence of socio-economic injustice. For Adrian Johnston, the drives mean “the human individual isn’t entirely enslaved to tyranny of the pragmatic utilitarian economy of well-being, to a happiness thrust forward by the twin authorities of the pleasure and reality principles” (2008: 185).



**Figure I.3** Lacan's map of the drive (1964)

In the past two decades, Lacanian theories of the drives have spawned numerous cultural and political studies across the humanities and social sciences. Notably, Slavoj Žižek has drawn on a Lacanian understanding of the drives to explore ideology (1989), political ontology (1999) and global capitalism (2011), amongst other things. For Lacan, the drives generate *jouissance*—an alluring painful pleasure—by following its “goal” of encircling and continually missing a non-empirical, that is, uncanny object: the *objet petit a*. For Lacan, much of the drives’ return journeys (the “aim”) take place around the “rims” or orifices of the body: see Figure I.3.

Also drawing on Lacan, Tim Dean and Christopher Lane (2001: 5) have asserted that “defining the drive as unnatural, as operating *contra naturam* [*sic*], Freud effectively ‘queers’ all sexuality” in ways that can provide useful, anti-normative insights into queer sexualities, sexual politics, AIDS and safe sex education (Dean 2000). In the field of aesthetics, Joan Copjec has drawn on the drives, especially in terms of the creative “solder[ing] together” of “construction and discovery, thinking and being, as well as drive and object” (Copjec 2002: 39)

to examine ethics and sublimation in a wide range of artistic works including Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills* (1977–1980) photographs, Kara Walker's paper cut-out artworks (1994–1997) and Pier Paolo Pasolini's film *Salò* (1975). Finally, Adrian Johnston's *Time Driven: Metapsychology and the Splitting of the Drive* is a useful conceptual exploration of the drives in terms of seven theses that include: "drives are internally differentiated mechanisms," "all drives, in their very structure, are split drives," "the constitutive antagonism within drives is temporal in nature" and "drives are inherently incapable of obtaining their own aims" (Johnston 2005: xxix–xxiii).

### **Repetition: Dying to Go Beyond Pleasure**

According to Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis (1973: 78), "[i]t is quite obvious that psycho-analysis was confronted from the very beginning by repetition *phenomena*." In the early writings of Freud, such phenomena took place in analysis as clinical transference—"the love [that] consists of new editions of old traits and that ... repeats infantile reactions" (Freud 1915d [1958]: 168)—as well as the everyday world of the repetition of memories, dreams, symptoms, hysterical attacks and acting out. Repetition is typically aligned with the "compulsion to repeat" or "repetition compulsion." This concept first gained prominence in Freud's essay "Remembering, Repeating and Working Through" (1914c [2003]) that addressed how a proper handling of transference was central to converting the patient's compulsion to repeat into an impulse to remember in terms of an "intermediate realm between sickness and a healthy life by means of which [through transference] the transition from one to the other is accomplished" (Freud 1914c [2003]: 40–41). Such a transition concerned the arduous overcoming or "working-through of the resistances" (Freud 1914c [2003]: 37) that enabled the patient to recall significant memories and discover the repressed drive impulses. Only through cooperation, Freud affirms, can the analyst and patient manage the intense drive impulses "that sustain the resistance; and it is only by directly experiencing it in this way that the patient becomes truly convinced of its existence and power" (1914c [2003]: 155).

Repetition eventually becomes a fundamental psychoanalytic concept in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920 [2003]). In this essay, repetition takes place according to the logic of the death drive, which Freud argues is "independent of" and "more elementary" than the pleasure principle (1920 [2003]: 23). In subsequent works, Freud sought to extend the repetition compulsion in terms of the "power

of the compulsion to repeat” qua “*the resistance of the unconscious*” (Freud 1926 [1954]: 159–60) and social “order” that “enables people to make the best use of space and time, while sparing their mental forces” (Freud 1930 [2002]: 30). Given the controversies surrounding Freud’s notion of the death drive, interpretations of repetition in post-Freudian approaches are numerous and contested. Laplanche and Pontalis note that the debates about repetition revolve around two interrelated questions: “First, what is the tendency towards repetition a function of? ... Secondly, does the compulsion to repeat really cast doubt on the dominance of the pleasure principle, as Freud contended?” (1973: 80). Answers to these questions either focus on the death drive or turn to Freud’s final structural model of the Id, Ego and Superego (see Introduction Figure 1) and its relation to trauma.

Notable responses include Klein’s, who argued that “in an early stage of development the Ego” is unable “to deal sufficiently with guilt and anxiety” which results in “the need ... to repeat certain actions obsessively” in order to overcome a “depressive position,” that is, a normal phase of development often coinciding with the distress of weaning (1940: 132). Edward Bibring (1943), meanwhile, highlighted the Id’s “repetitive” tendencies that created trauma and the Ego’s attempts to return to a pre-traumatic state through its “restorative” tendencies. Subsequently, Hans Loewald (1971) focused on the interplay between “passive, reproductive repetition” wherein a person unconsciously acts out painful childhood memories and “re-creative repetition” wherein a person consciously aims to master (rather than eliminate) the elements of a destructive past via dissolution and reconstruction.

In the remainder of this section, we focus on repetition and its relationship to pleasure and the death drive. This brings into sharp relief a theoretical kernel that distinguishes psychoanalysis from the other paradigmatic approaches to society, subjectivity and space that comprise much of human geography: that is, the “problem” of understanding the distance, or its lack, between “subjects” and their “objects.”

One of Freud’s most well-known concrete illustrations of the relationship between repetition and pleasure is his account of the *fort/da* (gone/here) game. Watching his 18-month-old grandson, Ernst, throwing small objects into the corners of a room and under a bed, including a wooden spool with some string tied around it, Freud wrote:

he beamed with an expression of interest and gratification, and uttered a loud, long-drawn out “o-o-o-” sound, which in unanimous opinion of both his mother and myself as observer was not simply an exclamation but stood for

*fort* (“gone”). I eventually realized this was a game, and that the child was using all his toys for the sole purpose of playing “gone” with them. Then one day I made an observation that confirmed my interpretation. The child had a wooden reel with some string tied around it ... keeping hold of the string, he skillfully threw the reel over the edge of his curtained cot so that it disappeared inside, all the while making his expressive “o-o-o” sound, then used the string to pull the reel out of the cot again, but this time greeting its reappearance with a joyful *Da!* (“Here!”). That, then, was the entire game—disappearing and coming back—only the first act of which one normally got to see; and this first act was tirelessly repeated on its own, even though the pleasure undoubtedly attached to the second (Freud 1920 [2003]: 53).

There is also a less celebrated vignette in a footnote to the above passage where Freud described his Grandson’s reinvention of the game, this time using a mirror:

One day when the child’s mother had been absent for many hours, she was greeted on her return with the announcement “Bebi o-o-o-o!,” which at first remained incomprehensible. It soon turned out, however, that while on his own for this long period of time the child had found a way of making himself disappear. He had discovered his reflection in the full-length mirror reaching almost to the floor, and had then crouched down so that his reflection was “gone” (Freud 1920 [2003]: 248).

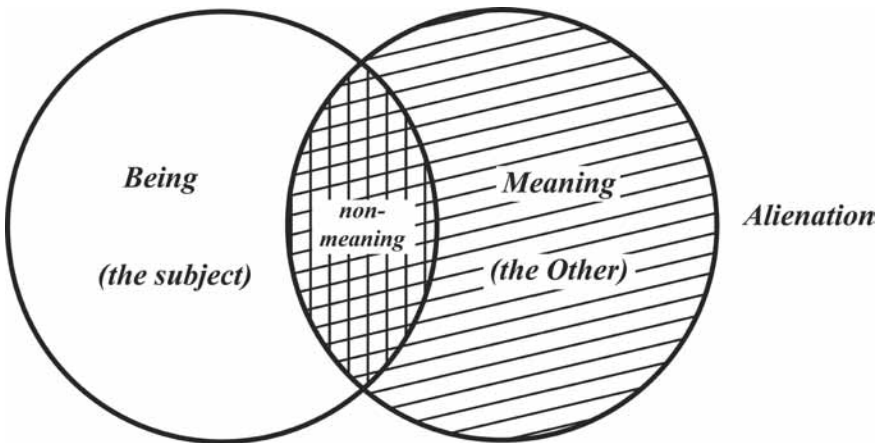


Figure I.4 Lacan’s map of alienation (1964)



According to Copjec (1994: 43), each game exemplifies how “the rediscovery of something already familiar, is pleasurable because it economizes energy.” From a Lacanian perspective, she notes that in the *fort/da* game, when the child “throws the cotton reel, he throws that part of himself that is lost with his entry into language. The child thus situates himself in the field of language; he chooses *sense* rather than the being that sense continually fails to secure. He thus becomes a subject of desire, lacking-in-being” (Copjec 1994: 182). In the mirror version of the game, the infant “takes up the position of the cotton reel, he situates himself in the field of being; he chooses being, *jouissance*, rather than sense” (ibid.). According to Lacan (1977), the human subject emerges through the process of “alienation” and is situated in a shadowy place of “non-meaning” that results from a forced choice between being and meaning (see Figure I.4).

The two games involve two different forms of repetition: the former repetition is propelled by desire and the latter is propelled by the drives. For Luce Irigaray (1985 [1993]), the *fort/da* game is a decidedly gendered account because it is authored by a male and describes a male infant’s development. Furthermore, Irigaray (1985 [1993]: 98) contends that a female’s game of repetition would eschew the male’s mastery of instrumentalization, distanciation and dichotomization that comprise the “gone”/“here” of throwing the reel in favor of a “dance” that repeatedly “reproduces around ... her an energetic circular movement that protects her from abandonment, attack, depression, loss of self”. For Jacques Laplanche (1999: 139), the *fort/da* game illustrates how the signifier of the absent mother or father becomes repeatedly “implanted,” that is, “fixed, as onto a surface, in the psychophysiological ‘skin’ of a subject in which the unconscious agency is not yet differentiated” (on skin, see Straughan, this book).

The *fort/da* game is not only useful because it demonstrates varying theorizations of repetition; it also elicited one of Freud’s most notable considerations of the dynamic mutuality of repetition and pain. Further in the text, Freud observes:

The going away of the mother cannot possibly have been pleasant for the child, nor even a matter of indifference. How then does this repetition of this painful experience fit in with the pleasure principle? It may perhaps be said in reply that her departure had to be enacted as a necessary preliminary to her joyful return, and that it was in the latter that lay the true purpose of the game (1920 [2003]: 53–4).

Significantly, Freud speculates that the game does not merely provide a way for the boy to cope with his absent mother; the reenactment of the mother’s departure actually increases the joy that will be obtained from her eventual

return. More radically, the game's painful reenactment of the separation from his mother yields an exquisite joy. For Freud (1920 [2003]: 16), this joy bore "witness to the operations of tendencies beyond the pleasure principle, that is to say, tendencies which might be of earlier origin and independent of this." Later on, Freud aligns these tendencies with the death drive. An enormous amount of time and effort has been devoted to interpreting and reinterpreting (over and over again!) the concept of the death drive. Rather than seeing repetition as the ineluctable fate of the death drive, however, Copjec emphasizes the relationship between the death drive, the biological body and symbolic life:

Freud, far from contrasting repetition with life, interprets repetition as the invariable characteristic of the drives that fuel life. The being of the drives, he claims *is* the compulsion to repeat. The aim of life is not evolution but regression, or in its most seemingly contradictory form, the aim of life is death ... Freud's text [*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*] is incomprehensible if one confounds instinct with drive, or—in a distinction made by Lacan, who finds it latent in Freud's work—if one confounds the first and second death. The first is the real death of the biological body, after which there is usually another, the second, exemplified by the various rituals of mourning that take place in the symbolic. It is with this second death that we are concerned with when we speak of the Freudian concept of the death drive (Copjec 1994: 46).

Far from opposing the pleasure principle as a "will to die" or "death wish," repetition compulsion and the death drive extend the pleasure principle because they are "inevitable corollaries of *symbolic* life" (Copjec 1994: 46) insofar as they are consequences of signifying networks that comprise language, rules, customs, codes and other textual entities through which human geography and history are repeatedly inscribed (see also Butler 1990: 145).

Crucially, the relation between repetition and symbolic life "is ruled by the death drive" (Copjec 1994: 39). More pointedly, Žižek (1997: 89) asserts that the death drive is "the symbolic order itself, the structure which, as a parasite, colonizes the living entity." The symbolic machinations of repetition and the death drive take place as the disruptive and potentially lethal adversary to what Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930 [2002]) dubbed "Eros": the tendency for human beings to join together into larger entities such as families, communities and nations. How so? Because our bodies, thoughts, imaginations and speech are not pre-given, they are inscribed through and cut

up by unstable, incomplete and often unkind social bonds of language that repeatedly produce

always something more, something indeterminate ... One cannot argue that the subject is constructed by language and then overlook the essential fact of language's duplicity, that is, the fact that whatever it says can be denied. This duplicity ensures that the subject will *not* come into being as language's determinate meaning. An incitement to discourse is not an incitement to being. What is aroused is the desire for nonbeing, for an *indeterminate* something that is perceived as *extra* discursive (Copjec 1994: 54–6).

The arousing pursuit of “something” beyond language helps us understand why Ernst gleefully lobs the cotton reel time and time again. From this perspective, the desire for “nonbeing” helps explain why so many people in different parts of the world repeatedly refuse to follow their individual and collective interests. That is to say, paradoxically, the paltry pleasure that can be garnered from securing material gains and a peaceful existence is hardly a match for the fiercely thrilling yet bitterly strained enjoyment or *jouissance* (as Lacan has it) that charges modes of life beyond the pleasure principle wherein they are justified by aggression, strife and conflict. Such a thesis has informed numerous psychoanalytic interpretations of the ubiquitous repetitions of racism (Lane 1998), violence (Žižek 2008) and murder (Bond 2009).

### **Towards *Psychoanalytic Geographies***

Psychoanalytic understandings of the unconscious, transference, the drives and repetition are not only enhancing traditional geographical concerns with space, place, landscape and the environment, they are also transforming key areas of geographical research itself (Philo and Parr 2003; Kingsbury 2009a, 2009b; Thomas 2010). The incorporation of psychoanalytic thought into an engagement with geography's core concerns is underway—as the collection of essays in this book amply demonstrates. As you will discover, this book clearly illustrates the sheer variety of ways that psychoanalytic concepts and styles of thought are used to open up new questions, new objects of study and new forms of understanding: an understanding that is both psychoanalytic and geographical. Such a catholic attitude has arguably emerged not only because of the relative openness toward new paradigms

that characterizes contemporary geographical research, but also because of geographers' willingness to tarry with psychoanalysis' seemingly tricky, perhaps off-putting, yet rewarding concepts such as the unconscious, transference, drives and repetition. Echoing Freud (1905a [2006]: 101), the psychoanalytic geographer can "work with unconscious ideas, trains of thought and impulses as though, as objects of psychological study, they were just as good and as certain as conscious phenomena," allowing them to move between worlds of thought, discourse, experience, imagination, affect and action, more fluidly than many other approaches to human geography.

During the last decade or so, by attending to the unconscious—"that interiorized place of embodied-spatialized desire and fear that is repressed and glossed over through imaginary-symbolic devices" (Nast 2000: 223)—geographers have explored how unspoken and forbidden desires inform racist and colonial landscapes (Nast 2000; Hook 2005a,b; Pile 2011), urban life (Pile 2005), the feelings of others (Bondi 2003) and the geographies of phobia (Davidson 2003). By considering transference—"[the] reenactment of intense infantile emotions, demands, experiences and identifications in the analytic session by projecting them onto the analyst" (Kingsbury 2009a: 482)—geographers have reappraised subjective experiences in fieldwork (Bondi 2003; Pile 2010; Thien 2005; Thomas 2007). By acknowledging the drive—"[which] tends toward dissolution and repetition as opposed to novelty and bonding" (Proudfoot 2010: 511)—geographers have questioned geography's dominant models of political subjectivity (Callard 2003). By recognizing repetition—"the iteration of activities that aim for something beyond mere pleasure" (Kingsbury 2010: 529)—geographers have investigated the recurring human and nonhuman fear of animals (Pile forthcoming 2014) and the commodity-form's enduring allures and injustices that conduct tourism activities in the Global South (Kingsbury 2011).

And yet, despite all of the above work, the possibilities of psychoanalytic geographies still eclipse its accomplishments. The assertion that psychoanalysis has transformed key terrains in human geographical research is arguably an overstatement because of the relatively small numbers of geographers who align themselves with psychoanalytic research. Furthermore, there are important thinkers in psychoanalysis such as Helene Deutsche, Erik Erikson, Anna Freud, Sandor Ferenczi, Carl Jung, Melanie Klein and Jacques Laplanche (though see Thomas, this book), whose works have been relatively neglected by geographers (Philo and Parr 2003). The list grows even longer when considering contemporary psychoanalytic writers such as Jessica Benjamin,

Christopher Bollas, Adam Phillips and Thomas Ogden. Consequently, up to now, psychoanalytic geographers have been spread somewhat thinly, such that even the works of central figures such as Freud and Lacan remain relatively untapped. Yet, in this book, we can begin to see the emergence of new styles of psychoanalytic geographies and new engagements with previously marginal figures, as we move towards broader and profounder *Psychoanalytic Geographies*. And, as these engagements unfold, we will see even more possibilities for future work that weaves together psychoanalysis and geography.

While the days of asking whether psychoanalysis and geography have anything in common are fading, today's psychoanalytic geographies beam with questions about its current ideas, about what it has to say and where it might be going. *Psychoanalytic Geographies*, not only provides some answers, it also keeps these questions in play.

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