

The fate of transference: infinite transformation of original fantasies

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Abstract

Understanding new forms of psychic suffering in our society, especially in the border-line states, is much more relevant if we are able to consider their conduct as being an occurrence of the primal fantasies pertaining to two orders : that of the ritual and that of the myth. Very often, the antisocial behaviour of this type of personality is misunderstood because it is not considered for what it is. It is an expression of primal fantasies, dreams and nightmares whom, when transferred in the social realm, are transfigured into rituals or into private myths. I will attempt to outline this constant transformational form, which operates in dreams, in groups, in myths but also in rituals. Since the publication of the groupal psychic apparatus according to R. Kaës, we can consider as a fact that primal fantasies organize the processes of representation and of figuration within groups. This hypothesis enables us to study groups, myths and dreams and even rituals in terms of figurability.

Key words: myth, group, dream, original fantasie, transference

Preliminary observation

The evidence of anamorphosis between groups and dreams was shown by D. Anzieu: the group and likewise the dream is a place for the fulfillment of desire which was not fulfilled in intersubjective relationships.

The group like the dream is a place for fulfillment of repressed childhood desire.

Desire in the group, like in dreams, can be a trapped desire within a pathological structure, but it can also be a place to metabolize unconscious misunderstood desires, a spring of initiatives and of new fulfillment.

Approaching myths as a group is also a source of fulfillment of desire or of events which transcend man's normal capacities. The mythic hero can be born again after his death, be at the same time man and woman, thus exceeding a subject's two radical limits. The mythic hero is he who magically fulfills these transformations.

Group structure, of dream and of myth

C. Lévi-Strauss showed that this transformation takes place by the fact that the hero takes on a double function. Through this observation, he proposes the following rule: every myth attempts to go beyond a contradiction by proposing three symbols for four functions.

Myths attempt to resolve two contradictions which cross through humanity:

1.A contradiction connected to the logical understanding of the alliance where a person must assume unity following the contradiction connected to the fact that his unity is born of his two parents, a man and a woman.

2.A contradiction connected to the logical understanding of the locality where a person must accept that death is born of life.

The Oedipal myth can be perfectly understood in these terms. Oedipus, who escaped death, enters into a tragic fate in order to not kill his parents. Yet, it's through death that Oedipus treats the contradictions of the alliance. The initial dysfunctioning of the alliance, linked to the double mistake committed by Laos and Jocose, send Oedipus toward a fate where the encounter with the other can only be treated in a relationship with death.

The structure of dream

We will find this relationship of 3 to 4 again with S. Freud among the four processes operating in dreams: displacement, condensation, turning around (to the opposite) 1900, diffraction (1901) plus three primary processes which give a structure to the psyche: displacement, condensation and transference (1921). The two propositions set forth by S Freud tie up to C. Lévi Strauss's hypothesis. We can see that transference assumes a double function in subjectivity or that dreams unfold the function of transference depending upon the mode of diffraction or turning around. The following scheme helps to understand its functioning like a transformational structure.

Dreams are separated into four fundamental processes whose terms are opposite each other :

Condensation \pm displacement

Turning around \pm diffraction

Function - aim of myth, of group and of dreams

The function - aim of dreams

Now about the construction of dreams. Sleeping is a consequence of the fact that a person temporarily withdraws his drive and investments from the outside environment and withdraws into himself. Consequently, the person finds himself alone, faced with his constant drive. The condensation of the weight of the drive can no longer be addressed, via motor activity, toward the environment and others. In order to maintain this narcissistic retreat during sleep, where the person belongs only to himself, he will have to dream. Dreaming makes it possible to transform the excess drive, which threatens the peaceful sleeper, into figuration. The excess drive is thus diffracted. Diffraction of the memory traces of others build the internal scene of dreams.

Function – aim of myths

A myth exists only if one believes in it. Its main function is to show the links that make one belong to a group. The myth provides a symbolic link between the person and his adhesion to a group, enabling him to stay himself enough and yet to be a part of an assembly which goes beyond himself. The myth is at the same time inside and outside a person, intimate and universal. Through the emblematic figure of a hero, the myth shows a going beyond of a persons structural limits which are the differences between sexes and the limits of life by death.

Function – aim of the therapeutic group

Like in dreams, the therapeutic group uses the function of imaginary fulfillment of desire as well as the function of psychic localization of the person by giving him the feeling of belonging to a group. The conflict between the transference that everybody constantly puts out toward others and the constraint of turning around and of inversion that others impose upon one's own transference makes sense. Interpreting the different forms of transference enables a person to reposition ; in relationship to himself and to others. It helps border – line subjects to re appropriate their dropped down, diffracted drives and to free them from their psychic exile.

What all these functions have in common is the mechanism which enables the person to go beyond a container /and the contents relationship toward a carrying capacity relationship.

- The function of dreams is to assist in an auto – representation of the inversion of the container / contents relationship associated with the withdrawal of the drive from the environment. The person's thoughts, felt as being the contents, contain him within the dream scene.

- The myth takes the role of the turning about of the psyche's position in its carrying capacity into basic contents of a symbolic group construction which transcends the subject, giving him the support of a societal psychic apparatus.

- The group takes on different forms of turning about the container/contents relationship between the subject and other, or several others. This is principally done through the primal fantasies.

The transformational function of the primary fantasies

I will begin with the three fantasies which S. Freud recognized with certitude.

Seduction, someone seduces a child: the scene where the person actualizes the origin of sexuality is also the scene where the person realizes the dimension of the other in the intrusion relationship: we can find a primal form of the other ; that of the intruder.

Castration, someone castrates a child: scene where the person actualizes the origin of sexes. It is also the scene where the other introduces differences: we find a primal form of the other ; that of the object (a).

The primal scene, we are spectators of our own creation. It's the scene where the subject invents his own origin ; that also where he creates others as other. We find a primal form of otherness, of the Other being the other of others.

Each of these three primal fantasies brings up an existing ambiguity between the subject and the other, defining a new container/content relationship: The intruder releases the subject from the inner intruder.

The object releases the subject from hate. The Other of others symbolically assigns the subject.

The limits of these three fantasies

These three fantasies are trimmed by two forms which S. Freud does not put on the same level : the intra - uterine fantasies on one hand and the family romance on the other. The intra – uterine fantasies seem to be an effort of auto – presentation of what J. Bleger calls a relationship of ambiguity. It is a state in which the Ego can not form itself because it is unable to set up a situation of conflict. This archaic Ego (syncretic) is composed of drive agglutinates. Drive agglutination, for me, is the primary form of condensation. In a situation of ambiguity, J. Bleger insists that in a situation of ambiguity it's the other who, up to a certain point, imports the conflict inside the person's psychic space. Isn't that exactly what the function of the intruder is ?

The family romance is an attempt in which the subject tries to appropriate this fate discourse. In the family romance, by giving himself a renowned origin, he only fits his discourse to his own fate. The excess in family romance means how the feeling of excess is related about the primal scene : that of a subject's feeling of being expelled from a relation of enjoyment.

These two forms about which S. Freud was unsure are articulator functions. They are articulator with dreams having to do with intra - uterine experiences and a return to the ambiguity which is characteristic of the ambiguous presence of the other in dreams.

They are articulator with myths and for the family romance where renowned personalities prefigure the emblematic figure of the hero.

They articulate the three nodal Primal Fantasies concerning dreams as well as myths. Referring to D. Anzieu's propositions concerning the analogy between groups and dreams, it can be noted that the relationship to the desire expressed within groups or in dreams owes its childish connotation, no doubt, to the formal importance of Primal Fantasies upon the figuration of these two regressive configurations.

Deployment of transference in groups

The group is the structure which makes it possible that the deployment of the Primal Fantasies be accomplished in their fullness. The feeling of intra – uterine life experiences, prompt to show up in the beginning of a group, up to heroic identifications of the ideal - ego are deposited on a person of the group or are articulated in a transitory (or not so) group illusion.

The group enables the deployment of Primal Fantasies if it has the capacity of enabling a total deployment of the process which, from the primal to the third processes, is constantly active in transference.

I define transference as actualization of a drive under a (re)presentative, a presentation or another figuration.

If we go back and compare with the three fundamental processes of 1921 (displacement, condensation, and transference). In the understanding that Freud does not come back on his first theory of interpretation of dreams, we can formulate the question in these terms:

When a person is in a waking state, is transference a substitute for diffraction as well as for turning around? When a person dreams, is transference maintained in a discreet manner, or is it suspended?

Take note that in the scheme we find three forms of transference:

*actualization by displacement of the drive toward another (seduction, transference, by displacement).

*actualization pertaining to turning around imposed by the other drives of fate (castration, transference, by turning around).

*actualization by diffraction toward other drives of fate (primal fantasies, transference by diffraction, referred to as lateral transference).

We find here S. Freud's constellation who says that transference contributes to figurability in dreams.

On the other hand however this reading would imply that transference is the consequence or the answer to a situation of drive condensation. Condensation, in this manner, would be first and would imply transference of drive movements and of desire movements elsewhere and toward others. While dreaming, the person can transfer what is felt only toward the internal image of others, only upon the memory traces of others. That is why transference splits out through turning around and through diffraction in order to protect the dreamer from excessive drive.

This induces us to the following assumption: transference is the constant process by which the psychic life grows from primal to primary and until secondary and tertiary processes. The Transference function enables the necessary transformations of the relation to the other's or more than one another image. That is why transference is the red line of every psychoanalytic setting. This process, considering its primal link between actualization of feelings and presence of the image of the other, if it is not addressed to another or more than one another generates positions or representative with a double function: dreamer is a double function, mythic heroes is a double function. For example, the dreamer contains the dream scene but is also an actor on this dream scene. The mythic heroes is the symbol of a destiny which transcends him and, in the myth, the substitute of the desire excesses of the subject.

Primal fantasies are the precipitate of the encounter of the image of the other or more than one another. This primal transference, generating pictograms, enables the transformation of the feeling contained as a containing form. As S. Freud says << *the form is the precipitate of an older content*>>.

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