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GROUP PSYCHOLOGY
AND
THE ANALYSIS OF THE EGO

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determine the relations of its members to one another.

The fifth is that the group should have a definite structure, expressed in the specialisation and differentiation of the functions of its constituents.

According to McDougall, if these conditions are fulfilled, the psychological disadvantages of the group formation are removed. The collective lowering of intellectual ability is avoided by withdrawing the performance of intellectual tasks from the group and reserving them for individual members of it.

It seems to us that the condition which McDougall designates as the 'organisation' of a group can with more justification be described in another way. The problem consists in how to procure for the group precisely those features which were characteristic of the individual and which are extinguished in him by the formation of the group. For the individual, outside the primitive group, possessed his own continuity, his self-consciousness, his traditions and customs, his own particular functions and position, and kept apart from his rivals. Owing to his entry into an 'unorganised' group he had lost this distinctiveness for a time. If we thus recognise that the aim is to equip the group with the attributes of the individual, we shall be reminded of a valuable remark of Trotter's[20] to the effect that the tendency towards the formation of groups is biologically a continuation of the multicellular character of all the higher organisms.

IV

SUGGESTION AND LIBIDO

We started from the fundamental fact that an individual in a group is subjected through its influence to what is often a profound alteration in his mental activity. His emotions become extraordinarily intensified, while his intellectual ability becomes markedly reduced, both processes being evidently in the direction of an approximation to the other individuals in the group; and this result can only be reached by the removal of those inhibitions upon his instincts which are peculiar to each individual, and by his resigning those expressions of his inclinations which are especially his own. We have heard that these often unwelcome consequences are to some extent at least prevented by a higher 'organisation' of the group; but this does not contradict the fundamental fact of Group Psychology—the two theses as to the intensification of the emotions and the inhibition of the intellect in primitive groups. Our interest is now directed to discovering the psychological explanation of this mental change which is experienced by the individual in a group.

It is clear that rational factors (such as the intimidation of the individual which has already been mentioned, that is, the action of his instinct of self-preservation) do not cover the observable phenomena. Beyond this what we are offered as an explanation by authorities upon Sociology and Group Psychology is always the same, even though it is given various names, and that is—the magic word 'suggestion'. Tarde calls it 'imitation'; but we cannot help agreeing with a writer who protests that imitation comes under the concept of suggestion, and is in fact one of its results.[21] Le Bon traces back all the puzzling features of social phenomena to two factors: the mutual suggestion of individuals and the prestige of leaders. But prestige, again, is only recognizable by its capacity for evoking suggestion. McDougall for a moment gives us an impression that his principle of 'primitive induction of emotion' might enable us to do without the assumption of suggestion. But on further consideration we are forced to perceive that this principle says no more than the familiar assertions about 'imitation' or 'contagion', except for a decided stress upon the emotional factor. There is no doubt that something exists in us which, when we become aware of signs of an emotion in someone else, tends to make us fall into the same emotion; but how often do we not successfully oppose it, resist the emotion, and react in quite an
opposite way? Why, therefore, do we invariably give way to this contagion when we are in a group? Once more we should have to say that what compels us to obey this tendency is imitation, and what induces the emotion in us is the group's suggestive influence. Moreover, quite apart from this, McDougall does not enable us to evade suggestion; we hear from him as well as from other writers that groups are distinguished by their special suggestibility.

We shall therefore be prepared for the statement that suggestion (or more correctly suggestibility) is actually an irreducible, primitive phenomenon, a fundamental fact in the mental life of man. Such, too, was the opinion of Bernheim, of whose astonishing arts I was a witness in the year 1889. But I can remember even then feeling a muffled hostility to this tyranny of suggestion. When a patient who showed himself unamenable was met with the shout: 'What are you doing? Vous vous contresuggestionnez!', I said to myself that this was an evident injustice and an act of violence. For the man certainly had a right to counter-suggestions if they were trying to subdue him with suggestions. Later on my resistance took the direction of protesting against the view that suggestion, which explained everything, was itself to be preserved from explanation. Thinking of it, I repeated the old conundrum:

Christoph trug Christum,
Christus trug die ganze Welt,
Sag' wo hat Christoph
Damals hin den Fuss gestellt?[22]

Christophorus Christum, sed Christus sustulit orbem:
Constiterit pedibus dic ubi Christophorus?[23]

Now that I once more approach the riddle of suggestion after having kept away from it for some thirty years, I find there is no change in the situation. To this statement I can discover only a single exception, which I need not mention, since it is one which bears witness to the influence of psycho-analysis. I notice that particular efforts are being made to formulate the concept of suggestion correctly, that is, to fix the conventional use of the name.[24] And this is by no means superfluous, for the word is acquiring a more and more extended use and a looser and looser meaning, and will soon come to designate any sort of influence whatever, just as in English, where 'to suggest' and 'suggestion' correspond to our nahelegen and Anregung. But there has been no explanation of the nature of suggestion, that is, of the conditions under which influence without adequate logical foundation takes place. I should not avoid the task of supporting this statement by an analysis of the literature of the last thirty years, if I were not aware that an exhaustive inquiry is being undertaken close at hand which has in view the fulfilment of this very task.

Instead of this I shall make an attempt at using the concept of libido for the purpose of throwing light upon Group Psychology, a concept which has done us such good service in the study of psycho-neuroses.

Libido is an expression taken from the theory of the emotions. We call by that name the energy (regarded as a quantitative magnitude, though not at present actually mensurable) of those instincts which have to do with all that may be comprised under the word 'love'. The nucleus of what we mean by love naturally consists (and this is what is commonly called love, and what the poets sing of) in sexual love with sexual union as its aim. But we do not separate from this—what in any case has a share in the name 'love'—on the one hand, self-love, and on the other, love for parents and children, friendship and love for humanity in general, and also devotion to concrete objects and to abstract ideas. Our justification lies in the fact that psycho-analytic research has taught us that all these tendencies are an expression of the same instinctive activities; in relations between the sexes these instincts force their way towards sexual union, but in other circumstances they are diverted from this aim or are prevented from reaching it, though always preserving enough of their original nature to keep their identity recognizable (as in such features as the longing for proximity, and self-sacrifice).

We are of opinion, then, that language has carried out an entirely justifiable piece of unification in
creating the word 'love' with its numerous uses, and that we cannot do better than take it as the basis of our scientific discussions and expositions as well. By coming to this decision, psycho-analysis has let loose a storm of indignation, as though it had been guilty of an act of outrageous innovation. Yet psycho-analysis has done nothing original in taking love in this 'wider' sense. In its origin, function, and relation to sexual love, the 'Eros' of the philosopher Plato coincides exactly with the love force, the libido, of psycho-analysis, as has been shown in detail by Nachmansohn and Pfister; and when the apostle Paul, in his famous epistle to the Corinthians, prizes love above all else, he certainly understands it in the same 'wider' sense. But this only shows that men do not always take their great thinkers seriously, even when they profess most to admire them.

Psycho-analysis, then, gives these love instincts the name of sexual instincts, a potiori and by reason of their origin. The majority of 'educated' people have taken their revenge by retorting upon psycho-analysis with the reproach of 'pan-sexualism'. Anyone who considers sex as something mortifying and humiliating to human nature is at liberty to make use of the more genteel expressions 'Eros' and 'erotic'. I might have done so myself from the first and thus have spared myself much opposition. But I did not want to, for I like to avoid concessions to faint-heartedness. One can never tell where that road may lead one; one gives way first in words, and then little by little in substance too. I cannot see any merit in being ashamed of sex; the Greek word 'Eros', which is to soften the affront, is in the end nothing more than a translation of our German word Liebe [love]; and finally, he who knows how to wait need make no concessions.

We will try our fortune, then, with the supposition that love relationships (or, to use a more neutral expression, emotional ties) also constitute the essence of the group mind. Let us remember that the authorities make no mention of any such relations. What would correspond to them is evidently concealed behind the shelter, the screen, of suggestion. Our hypothesis finds support in the first instance from two passing thoughts. First, that a group is clearly held together by a power of some kind: and to what power could this feat be better ascribed than to Eros, who holds together everything in the world? Secondly, that if an individual gives up his distinctiveness in a group and lets its other members influence him by suggestion, it gives one the impression that he does it because he feels the need of being in harmony with them rather than in opposition to them—so that perhaps after all he does it 'ihnen zu Liebe'.

V

TWO ARTIFICIAL GROUPS: THE CHURCH AND THE ARMY

We may recall from what we know of the morphology of groups that it is possible to distinguish very different kinds of groups and opposing lines in their development. There are very fleeting groups and extremely lasting ones; homogeneous ones, made up of the same sorts of individuals, and unhomogeneous ones; natural groups, and artificial ones, requiring an external force to keep them together; primitive groups, and highly organised ones with a definite structure. But for reasons which have yet to be explained we should like to lay particular stress upon a distinction to which the authorities have rather given too little attention; I refer to that between leaderless groups and those with leaders. And, in complete opposition to the usual practice, we shall not choose a relatively simple group formation as our point of departure, but shall begin with highly organised, lasting and artificial groups. The most interesting example of such structures are churches—communities of believers—and armies.

A church and an army are artificial groups, that is, a certain external force is employed to prevent them from disintegrating and to check alterations in their structure. As a rule a person is not consulted or
is given no choice, as to whether he wants to enter such a group; any attempt at leaving it is usually met
with persecution or with severe punishment, or has quite definite conditions attached to it. It is quite
outside our present interest to enquire why these associations need such special safeguards. We are only
attracted by one circumstance, namely that certain facts, which are far more concealed in other cases,
can be observed very clearly in those highly organised groups which are protected from dissolution in
the manner that has been mentioned. In a church (and we may with advantage take the Catholic Church
as a type) as well as in an army, however different the two may be in other respects, the same illusion
holds good of there being a head—in the Catholic Church Christ, in an army its Commander-in-Chief—
who loves all the individuals in the group with an equal love. Everything depends upon this illusion; if it
were to be dropped, then both Church and army would dissolve, so far as the external force permitted
them to. This equal love was expressly enunciated by Christ: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of
the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' He stands to the individual members of the
group of believers in the relation of a kind elder brother; he is their father surrogate. All the demands
that are made upon the individual are derived from this love of Christ's. A democratic character runs
through the Church, for the very reason that before Christ everyone is equal, and that everyone has an
equal share in his love. It is not without a deep reason that the similarity between the Christian
community and a family is invoked, and that believers call themselves brothers in Christ, that is,
brothers through the love which Christ has for them. There is no doubt that the tie which unites each
individual with Christ is also the cause of the tie which unites them with one another. The like holds
good of an army. The Commander-in-Chief is a father who loves all his soldiers equally, and for that
reason they are comrades among themselves. The army differs structurally from the Church in being
built up of a series of such groups. Every captain is, as it were, the Commander-in-Chief and the father
of his company, and so is every non-commissioned officer of his section. It is true that a similar
hierarchy has been constructed in the Church, but it does not play the same part in it economically; for
more knowledge and care about individuals may be attributed to Christ than to a human Commander-in-
Chief.

It is to be noticed that in these two artificial groups each individual is bound by libidinal[29] ties on the
one hand to the leader (Christ, the Commander-in-Chief) and on the other hand to the other members of
the group. How these two ties are related to each other, whether they are of the same kind and the same
value, and how they are to be described psychologically—these questions must be reserved for
subsequent enquiry. But we shall venture even now upon a mild reproach against the authorities for not
having sufficiently appreciated the importance of the leader in the psychology of the group, while our
own choice of a first object for investigation has brought us into a more favourable position. It would
appear as though we were on the right road towards an explanation of the principal phenomenon of
Group Psychology—the individual's lack of freedom in a group. If each individual is bound in two
directions by such an intense emotional tie, we shall find no difficulty in attributing to that circumstance
the alteration and limitation which have been observed in his personality.

A hint to the same effect, that the essence of a group lies in the libidinal ties existing in it, is also to be
found in the phenomenon of panic, which is best studied in military groups. A panic arises if a group of
that kind becomes disintegrated. Its characteristics are that none of the orders given by superiors are any
longer listened to, and that each individual is only solicitous on his own account, and without any
consideration for the rest. The mutual ties have ceased to exist, and a gigantic and senseless dread
[Angst] is set free. At this point, again, the objection will naturally be made that it is rather the other way
round; and that the dread has grown so great as to be able to disregard all ties and all feelings of
consideration for others. McDougall has even (p. 24) made use of the case of panic (though not of
military panic) as a typical instance of that intensification of emotion by contagion ('primary induction')
upon which he lays so much emphasis. But nevertheless this rational method of explanation is here quite
inadequate. The very question that needs explanation is why the dread has become so gigantic. The
greatness of the danger cannot be responsible, for the same army which now falls a victim to panic may
previously have faced equally great or greater danger with complete success; it is of the very essence of
panic that it bears no relation to the danger that threatens, and often breaks out upon the most trivial
occasions. If an individual in panic dread begins to be solicitous only on his own account, he bears
witness in so doing to the fact that the emotional ties, which have hitherto made the danger seem small to him, have ceased to exist. Now that he is by himself in facing the danger, he may surely think it greater. The fact is, therefore, that panic dread presupposes a relaxation in the libidinal structure of the group and reacts to it in a justifiable manner, and the contrary view—that the libidinal ties of the group are destroyed owing to dread in the face of the danger—can be refuted.

The contention that dread in a group is increased to enormous proportions by means of induction (contagion) is not in the least contradicted by these remarks. McDougall's view meets the case entirely when the danger is a really great one and when the group has no strong emotional ties—conditions which are fulfilled, for instance, when a fire breaks out in a theatre or a place of amusement. But the really instructive case and the one which can be best employed for our purposes is that mentioned above, in which a body of troops breaks into a panic although the danger has not increased beyond a degree that is usual and has often been previously faced. It is not to be expected that the usage of the word 'panic' should be clearly and unambiguously determined. Sometimes it is used to describe any collective dread, sometimes even dread in an individual when it exceeds all bounds, and often the name seems to be reserved for cases in which the outbreak of dread is not warranted by the occasion. If we take the word 'panic' in the sense of collective dread, we can establish a far-reaching analogy. Dread in an individual is provoked either by the greatness of a danger or by the cessation of emotional ties (libidinal cathexes[30] [Libidobesetzungen]); the latter is the case of neurotic dread.[31] In just the same way panic arises either owing to an increase of the common danger or owing to the disappearance of the emotional ties which hold the group together; and the latter case is analogous to that of neurotic dread.[32]

Anyone who, like McDougall (l.c.), describes a panic as one of the plainest functions of the 'group mind', arrives at the paradoxical position that this group mind does away with itself in one of its most striking manifestations. It is impossible to doubt that panic means the disintegration of a group; it involves the cessation of all the feelings of consideration which the members of the group otherwise show one another.

The typical occasion of the outbreak of a panic is very much as it is represented in Nestroy's parody of Hebbel's play about Judith and Holofernes. A soldier cries out: "The general has lost his head!" and thereupon all the Assyrians take to flight. The loss of the leader in some sense or other, the birth, of misgivings about him, brings on the outbreak of panic, though the danger remains the same; the mutual ties between the members of the group disappear, as a rule, at the same time as the tie with their leader. The group vanishes in dust, like a Bologna flask when its top is broken off.

The dissolution of a religious group is not so easy to observe. A short time ago there came into my hands an English novel of Catholic origin, recommended by the Bishop of London, with the title When It Was Dark. It gave a clever and, as it seems to me, a convincing picture of such a possibility and its consequences. The novel, which is supposed to relate to the present day, tells how a conspiracy of enemies of the figure of Christ and of the Christian faith succeed in arranging for a sepulchre to be discovered in Jerusalem. In this sepulchre is an inscription, in which Joseph of Arimathaea confesses that for reasons of piety he secretly removed the body of Christ from its grave on the third day after its entombment and buried it in this spot. The resurrection of Christ and his divine nature are by this means disposed of, and the result of this archaeological discovery is a convulsion in European civilisation and an extraordinary increase in all crimes and acts of violence, which only ceases when the forgers' plot has been revealed.

The phenomenon which accompanies the dissolution that is here supposed to overtake a religious group is not dread, for which the occasion is wanting. Instead of it ruthless and hostile impulses towards other people make their appearance, which, owing to the equal love of Christ, they had previously been unable to do.[33] But even during the kingdom of Christ those people who do not belong to the community of believers, who do not love him, and whom he does not love, stand outside this tie. Therefore a religion, even if it calls itself the religion of love, must be hard and unloving to those who do not belong to it. Fundamentally indeed every religion is in this same way a religion of love for all
those whom it embraces; while cruelty and intolerance towards those who do not belong to it are natural
to every religion. However difficult we may find it personally, we ought not to reproach believers too
severely on this account; people who are unbelieving or indifferent are so much better off
psychologically in this respect. If to-day that intolerance no longer shows itself so violent and cruel as in
former centuries, we can scarcely conclude that there has been a softening in human manners. The cause
is rather to be found in the undeniable weakening of religious feelings and the libidinal ties which
depend upon them. If another group tie takes the place of the religious one—and the socialistic tie seems
to be succeeding in doing so—, then there will be the same intolerance towards outsiders as in the age of
the Wars of Religion; and if differences between scientific opinions could ever attain a similar
significance for groups, the same result would again be repeated with this new motivation.

VI

FURTHER PROBLEMS AND LINES OF WORK

We have hitherto considered two artificial groups and have found that they are dominated by two
emotional ties. One of these, the tie with the leader, seems (at all events for these cases) to be more of a
ruling factor than the other, which holds between the members of the group.

Now much else remains to be examined and described in the morphology of groups. We should have
to start from the ascertained fact that a mere collection of people is not a group, so long as these ties
have not been established in it; but we should have to admit that in any collection of people the
tendency to form a psychological group may very easily become prominent. We should have to give our
attention to the different kinds of groups, more or less stable, that arise spontaneously, and to study the
conditions of their origin and of their dissolution. We should above all be concerned with the distinction
between groups which have a leader and leaderless groups. We should consider whether groups with
leaders may not be the more primitive and complete, whether in the others an idea, an abstraction, may
not be substituted for the leader (a state of things to which religious groups, with their invisible head,
form a transition stage), and whether a common tendency, a wish in which a number of people can have
a share, may not in the same way serve as a substitute. This abstraction, again, might be more or less
completely embodied in the figure of what we might call a secondary leader, and interesting varieties
would arise from the relation between the idea and the leader. The leader or the leading idea might also,
so to speak, be negative; hatred against a particular person or institution might operate in just the same
unifying way, and might call up the same kind of emotional ties as positive attachment. Then the
question would also arise whether a leader is really indispensable to the essence of a group—and other
questions besides.

But all these questions, which may, moreover, have been dealt with in part in the literature of Group
Psychology, will not succeed in diverting our interest from the fundamental psychological problems that
confront us in the structure of a group. And our attention will first be attracted by a consideration which
promises to bring us in the most direct way to a proof that libidinal ties are what characterize a group.

Let us keep before our eyes the nature of the emotional relations which hold between men in general.
According to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupines no one can tolerate a too
intimate approach to his neighbour.[34]

The evidence of psycho-analysis shows that almost every intimate emotional relation between two
people which lasts for some time—marriage, friendship, the relations between parents and children[35]
—leaves a sediment of feelings of aversion and hostility, which have first to be eliminated by
repression. This is less disguised in the common wrangles between business partners or in the grumbles
exist in groups. But we should also like to know whether this kind of object-cathexis, as we know it in sexual life, represents the only manner of emotional tie with other people, or whether we must take other mechanisms of the sort into account. As a matter of fact we learn from psycho-analysis that there do exist other mechanisms for emotional ties, the so-called identifications, insufficiently-known processes and hard to describe, the investigation of which will for some time keep us away from the subject of Group Psychology.

VII

IDENTIFICATION

Identification is known to psycho-analysis as the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person. It plays a part in the early history of the Oedipus complex. A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to grow like him and be like him, and take his place everywhere. We may say simply that he takes his father as his ideal. This behaviour has nothing to do with a passive or feminine attitude towards his father (and towards males in general); it is on the contrary typically masculine. It fits in very well with the Oedipus complex, for which it helps to prepare the way.

At the same time as this identification with his father, or a little later, the boy has begun to develop a true object-cathexis towards his mother according to the anaclitic type [Anlehnungstypus]. He then exhibits, therefore, two psychologically distinct ties: a straightforward sexual object-cathexis towards his mother and a typical identification towards his father. The two subsist side by side for a time without any mutual influence or interference. In consequence of the irresistible advance towards a unification of mental life they come together at last; and the normal Oedipus complex originates from their confluence. The little boy notices that his father stands in his way with his mother. His identification with his father then takes on a hostile colouring and becomes identical with the wish to replace his father in regard to his mother as well. Identification, in fact, is ambivalent from the very first; it can turn into an expression of tenderness as easily as into a wish for someone's removal. It behaves like a derivative of the first oral phase of the organisation of the libido, in which the object that we long for and prize is assimilated by eating and is in that way annihilated as such. The cannibal, as we know, has remained at this standpoint; he has a devouring affection for his enemies and only devours people of whom he is fond.

The subsequent history of this identification with the father may easily be lost sight of. It may happen that the Oedipus complex becomes inverted, and that the father is taken as the object of a feminine attitude, an object from which the directly sexual instincts look for satisfaction; in that event the identification with the father has become the precursor of an object tie with the father. The same holds good, with the necessary substitutions, of the baby daughter as well.

It is easy to state in a formula the distinction between an identification with the father and the choice of the father as an object. In the first case one's father is what one would like to be, and in the second he is what one would like to have. The distinction, that is, depends upon whether the tie attaches to the subject or to the object of the ego. The former is therefore already possible before any sexual object-choice has been made. It is much more difficult to give a clear metapsychological representation of the distinction. We can only see that identification endeavours to mould a person's own ego after the fashion of the one that has been taken as a 'model'.

Let us disentangle identification as it occurs in the structure of a neurotic symptom from its rather complicated connections. Supposing that a little girl (and we will keep to her for the present) develops the same painful symptom as her mother—for instance, the same tormenting cough. Now this may come
about in various ways. The identification may come from the Oedipus complex; in that case it signifies a hostile desire on the girl's part to take her mother's place, and the symptom expresses her object love towards her father, and brings about a realisation, under the influence of a sense of guilt, of her desire to take her mother's place: 'You wanted to be your mother, and now you are—anyhow as far as the pain goes'. This is the complete mechanism of the structure of a hysterical symptom. Or, on the other hand, the symptom may be the same as that of the person who is loved—(so, for instance, Dora in the 'Bruchstück einer Hysterieanalyse' imitated her father's cough); in that case we can only describe the state of things by saying that identification has appeared instead of object-choice, and that object-choice has regressed to identification. We have heard that identification is the earliest and original form of emotional tie; it often happens that under the conditions in which symptoms are constructed, that is, where there is repression and where the mechanisms of the unconscious are dominant, object-choice is turned back into identification—the ego, that is, assumes the characteristics of the object. It is noticeable that in these identifications the ego sometimes copies the person who is not loved and sometimes the one who is loved. It must also strike us that in both cases the identification is a partial and extremely limited one and only borrows a single trait from the person who is its object.

There is a third particularly frequent and important case of symptom formation, in which the identification leaves any object relation to the person who is being copied entirely out of account. Supposing, for instance, that one of the girls in a boarding school has had a letter from someone with whom she is secretly in love which arouses her jealousy, and that she reacts to it with a fit of hysterics; then some of her friends who know about it will contract the fit, as we say, by means of mental infection. The mechanism is that of identification based upon the possibility or desire of putting oneself in the same situation. The other girls would like to have a secret love affair too, and under the influence of a sense of guilt they also accept the pain involved in it. It would be wrong to suppose that they take on the symptom out of sympathy. On the contrary, the sympathy only arises out of the identification, and this is proved by the fact that infection or imitation of this kind takes place in circumstances where even less pre-existing sympathy is to be assumed than usually exists between friends in a girls' school. One ego has perceived a significant analogy with another upon one point—in our example upon a similar readiness for emotion; an identification is thereupon constructed on this point, and, under the influence of the pathogenic situation, is displaced on to the symptom which the one ego has produced. The identification by means of the symptom has thus become the mark of a point of coincidence between the two egos which has to be kept repressed.

What we have learned from these three sources may be summarised as follows. First, identification is the original form of emotional tie with an object; secondly, in a regressive way it becomes a substitute for a libidinal object tie, as it were by means of the introjection of the object into the ego; and thirdly, it may arise with every new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of the sexual instinct. The more important this common quality is, the more successful may this partial identification become, and it may thus represent the beginning of a new tie.

We already begin to divine that the mutual tie between members of a group is in the nature of an identification of this kind, based upon an important emotional common quality; and we may suspect that this common quality lies in the nature of the tie with the leader. Another suspicion may tell us that we are far from having exhausted the problem of identification, and that we are faced by the process which psychology calls 'empathy [Einfühlung]' and which plays the largest part in our understanding of what is inherently foreign to our ego in other people. But we shall here limit ourselves to the immediate emotional effects of identification, and shall leave on one side its significance for our intellectual life.

Psycho-analytic research, which has already occasionally attacked the more difficult problems of the psychoses, has also been able to exhibit identification to us in some other cases which are not immediately comprehensible. I shall treat two of these cases in detail as material for our further consideration.

The genesis of male homosexuality in a large class of cases is as follows. A young man has been unusually long and intensely fixated upon his mother in the sense of the Oedipus complex. But at last,
after the end of his puberty, the time comes for exchanging his mother for some other sexual object. Things take a sudden turn: the young man does not abandon his mother, but identifies himself with her; he transforms himself into her, and now looks about for objects which can replace his ego for him, and on which he can bestow such love and care as he has experienced from his mother. This is a frequent process, which can be confirmed as often as one likes, and which is naturally quite independent of any hypothesis that may be made as to the organic driving force and the motives of the sudden transformation. A striking thing about this identification is its ample scale; it remoulds the ego in one of its important features—in its sexual character—upon the model of what has hitherto been the object. In this process the object itself is renounced—whether entirely or in the sense of being preserved only in the unconscious is a question outside the present discussion. Identification with an object that is renounced or lost as a substitute for it, introjection of this object into the ego, is indeed no longer a novelty to us. A process of the kind may sometimes be directly observed in small children. A short time ago an observation of this sort was published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*. A child who was unhappy over the loss of a kitten declared straight out that now he himself was the kitten, and accordingly crawled about on all fours, would not eat at table, etc.[41]

Another such instance of introjection of the object has been provided by the analysis of melancholia, an affection which counts among the most remarkable of its exciting causes the real or emotional loss of a loved object. A leading characteristic of these cases is a cruel self-depreciation of the ego combined with relentless self-criticism and bitter self-reproaches. Analyses have shown that this disparagement and these reproaches apply at bottom to the object and represent the ego's revenge upon it. The shadow of the object has fallen upon the ego, as I have said elsewhere.[42] The introjection of the object is here unmistakably clear.

But these melancholias also show us something else, which may be of importance for our later discussions. They show us the ego divided, fallen into two pieces, one of which rages against the second. This second piece is the one which has been altered by introjection and which contains the lost object. But the piece which behaves so cruelly is not unknown to us either. It comprises the conscience, a critical faculty [*Instanz*][43] within the ego, which even in normal times takes up a critical attitude towards the ego, though never so relentlessly and so unjustifiably. On previous occasions we have been driven to the hypothesis[44] that some such faculty develops in our ego which may cut itself off from the rest of the ego and come into conflict with it. We have called it the 'ego ideal', and by way of functions we have ascribed to it self-observation, the moral conscience, the censorship of dreams, and the chief influence in repression. We have said that it is the heir to the original narcissism in which the childish ego found its self-sufficiency; it gradually gathers up from the influences of the environment the demands which that environment makes upon the ego and which the ego cannot always rise to; so that a man, when he cannot be satisfied with his ego itself, may nevertheless be able to find satisfaction in the ego ideal which has been differentiated out of the ego. In delusions of observation, as we have further shown, the disintegration of this faculty has become patent, and has thus revealed its origin in the influence of superior powers, and above all of parents.[45] But we have not forgotten to add that the amount of distance between this ego ideal and the real ego is very variable from one individual to another, and that with many people this differentiation within the ego does not go further than with children.

But before we can employ this material for understanding the libidinal organisation of groups, we must take into account some other examples of the mutual relations between the object and the ego.[46]

VIII
Even in its caprices the usage of language remains true to some kind of reality. Thus it gives the name of 'love' to a great many kinds of emotional relationship which we too group together theoretically as love; but then again it feels a doubt whether this love is real, true, actual love, and so hints at a whole scale of possibilities within the range of the phenomena of love. We shall have no difficulty in making the same discovery empirically.

In one class of cases being in love is nothing more than object-cathexis on the part of the sexual instincts with a view to directly sexual satisfaction, a cathexis which expires, moreover, when this aim has been reached; this is what is called common, sensual love. But, as we know, the libidinal situation rarely remains so simple. It was possible to calculate with certainty upon the revival of the need which had just expired; and this must no doubt have been the first motive for directing a lasting cathexis upon the sexual object and for 'loving' it in the passionless intervals as well.

To this must be added another factor derived from the astonishing course of development which is pursued by the erotic life of man. In his first phase, which has usually come to an end by the time he is five years old, a child has found the first object for his love in one or other of his parents, and all of his sexual instincts with their demand for satisfaction have been united upon this object. The repression which then sets in compels him to renounce the greater number of these infantile sexual aims, and leaves behind a profound modification in his relation to his parents. The child still remains tied to his parents, but by instincts which must be described as being 'inhibited in their aim [zielgehemmte]'. The emotions which he feels henceforward towards these objects of his love are characterized as 'tender'. It is well known that the earlier 'sensual' tendencies remain more or less strongly preserved in the unconscious, so that in a certain sense the whole of the original current continues to exist.

At puberty, as we know, there set in new and very strong tendencies with directly sexual aims. In unfavourable cases they remain separate, in the form of a sensual current, from the 'tender' emotional trends which persist. We are then faced by a picture the two aspects of which certain movements in literature take such delight in idealising. A man of this kind will show a sentimental enthusiasm for women whom he deeply respects but who do not excite him to sexual activities, and he will only be potent with other women whom he does not 'love' but thinks little of or even despises. More often, however, the adolescent succeeds in bringing about a certain degree of synthesis between the unsensual, heavenly love and the sensual, earthly love, and his relation to his sexual object is characterised by the interaction of uninhibited instincts and of instincts inhibited in their aim. The depth to which anyone is in love, as contrasted with his purely sensual desire, may be measured by the size of the share taken by the inhibited instincts of tenderness.

In connection with this question of being in love we have always been struck by the phenomenon of sexual over-estimation—the fact that the loved object enjoys a certain amount of freedom from criticism, and that all its characteristics are valued more highly than those of people who are not loved, or than its own were at a time when it itself was not loved. If the sensual tendencies are somewhat more effectively repressed or set aside, the illusion is produced that the object has come to be sensually loved on account of its spiritual merits, whereas on the contrary these merits may really only have been lent to it by its sensual charm.

The tendency which falsifies judgement in this respect is that of idealisation. But this makes it easier for us to find our way about. We see that the object is being treated in the same way as our own ego, so that when we are in love a considerable amount of narcissistic libido overflows on to the object. It is even obvious, in many forms of love choice, that the object serves as a substitute for some unattained ego ideal of our own. We love it on account of the perfections which we have striven to reach for our own ego, and which we should now like to procure in this roundabout way as a means of satisfying our narcissism.

If the sexual over-estimation and the being in love increase even further, then the interpretation of the
picture becomes still more unmistakable. The tendencies whose trend is towards directly sexual satisfaction may now be pushed back entirely, as regularly happens, for instance, with the young man's sentimental passion; the ego becomes more and more unassuming and modest, and the object more and more sublime and precious, until at last it gets possession of the entire self-love of the ego, whose self-sacrifice thus follows as a natural consequence. The object has, so to speak, consumed the ego. Traits of humility, of the limitation of narcissism, and of self-injury occur in every case of being in love; in the extreme case they are only intensified, and as a result of the withdrawal of the sensual claims they remain in solitary supremacy.

This happens especially easily with love that is unhappy and cannot be satisfied; for in spite of everything each sexual satisfaction always involves a reduction in sexual over-estimation. Contemporaneously with this 'devotion' of the ego to the object, which is no longer to be distinguished from a sublimated devotion to an abstract idea, the functions allotted to the ego ideal entirely cease to operate. The criticism exercised by that faculty is silent; everything that the object does and asks for is right and blameless. Conscience has no application to anything that is done for the sake of the object; in the blindness of love remorselessness is carried to the pitch of crime. The whole situation can be completely summarised in a formula: The object has taken the place of the ego ideal.

It is now easy to define the distinction between identification and such extreme developments of being in love as may be described as fascination or infatuation. In the former case the ego has enriched itself with the properties of the object, it has 'introjected' the object into itself, as Ferenczi expresses it. In the second case it is impoverished, it has surrendered itself to the object, it has substituted the object for its most important constituent. Closer consideration soon makes it plain, however, that this kind of account creates an illusion of contradistinctions that have no real existence. Economically there is no question of impoverishment or enrichment; it is even possible to describe an extreme case of being in love as a state in which the ego has introjected the object into itself. Another distinction is perhaps better calculated to meet the essence of the matter. In the case of identification the object has been lost or given up; it is then set up again inside the ego, and the ego makes a partial alteration in itself after the model of the lost object. In the other case the object is retained, and there is a hyper-cathexis of it by the ego and at the ego's expense. But here again a difficulty presents itself. Is it quite certain that identification presupposes that object-cathexis has been given up? Can there be no identification with the object retained? And before we embark upon a discussion of this delicate question, the perception may already be beginning to dawn on us that yet another alternative embraces the real essence of the matter, namely, whether the object is put in the place of the ego or of the ego ideal.

From being in love to hypnosis is evidently only a short step. The respects in which the two agree are obvious. There is the same humble subjection, the same compliance, the same absence of criticism, towards the hypnotist just as towards the loved object. There is the same absorption of one's own initiative; no one can doubt that the hypnotist has stepped into the place of the ego ideal. It is only that everything is even clearer and more intense in hypnosis, so that it would be more to the point to explain being in love by means of hypnosis than the other way round. The hypnotist is the sole object, and no attention is paid to any but him. The fact that the ego experiences in a dream-like way whatever he may request or assert reminds us that we omitted to mention among the functions of the ego ideal the business of testing the reality of things. No wonder that the ego takes a perception for real if its reality is vouched for by the mental faculty which ordinarily discharges the duty of testing the reality of things. The complete absence of tendencies which are uninhibited in their sexual aims contributes further towards the extreme purity of the phenomena. The hypnotic relation is the devotion of someone in love to an unlimited degree but with sexual satisfaction excluded; whereas in the case of being in love this kind of satisfaction is only temporarily kept back, and remains in the background as a possible aim at some later time.

But on the other hand we may also say that the hypnotic relation is (if the expression is permissible) a group formation with two members. Hypnosis is not a good object for comparison with a group formation, because it is truer to say that it is identical with it. Out of the complicated fabric of the group it isolates one element for us—the behaviour of the individual to the leader. Hypnosis is distinguished
from a group formation by this limitation of number, just as it is distinguished from being in love by the absence of directly sexual tendencies. In this respect it occupies a middle position between the two.

It is interesting to see that it is precisely those sexual tendencies that are inhibited in their aims which achieve such lasting ties between men. But this can easily be understood from the fact that they are not capable of complete satisfaction, while sexual tendencies which are uninhibited in their aims suffer an extraordinary reduction through the discharge of energy every time the sexual aim is attained. It is the fate of sensual love to become extinguished when it is satisfied; for it to be able to last, it must from the first be mixed with purely tender components—with such, that is, as are inhibited in their aims—or it must itself undergo a transformation of this kind.

Hypnosis would solve the riddle of the libidinal constitution of groups for us straight away, if it were not that it itself exhibits some features which are not met by the rational explanation we have hitherto given of it as a state of being in love with the directly sexual tendencies excluded. There is still a great deal in it which we must recognise as unexplained and mystical. It contains an additional element of paralysis derived from the relation between someone with superior power and someone who is without power and helpless—which may afford a transition to the hypnosis of terror which occurs in animals. The manner in which it is produced and its relationship to sleep are not clear; and the puzzling way in which some people are subject to it, while others resist it completely, points to some factor still unknown which is realised in it and which perhaps alone makes possible the purity of the attitudes of the libido which it exhibits. It is noticeable that, even when there is complete suggestive compliance in other respects, the moral conscience of the person hypnotized may show resistance. But this may be due to the fact that in hypnosis as it is usually practised some knowledge may be retained that what is happening is only a game, an untrue reproduction of another situation of far more importance to life.

But after the preceding discussions we are quite in a position to give the formula for the libidinal constitution of groups: or at least of such groups as we have hitherto considered, namely, those that have a leader and have not been able by means of too much 'organisation' to acquire secondarily the characteristics of an individual. A primary group of this kind is a number of individuals who have substituted one and the same object for their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego. This condition admits of graphic representation:

![Diagram of a primary group showing the substitution of one and the same object for the ego ideal]

IX

THE HERD INSTINCT

We cannot for long enjoy the illusion that we have solved the riddle of the group with this formula. It is impossible to escape the immediate and disturbing recollection that all we have really done has been to shift the question on to the riddle of hypnosis, about which so many points have yet to be cleared up.