

أخبار علم النفس في مصر والخارج

جوائز لعلماء النفس في باريس

اجتمعت في شهر ديسمبر سنة ١٩٤٦ في باريس لجنة بول بيليو Paul-Pelliot برئاسة جان لاران لتوزيع جوائزها تقديراً للمؤلفات التي تمتاز بقيمتها العلمية وبجمال أسلوبها فمنحت الجائزة الكبرى الدكتور هنري فالون الأستاذ بالكوليج دي فرنس تقديراً لبحوثه في علم نفس الطفل ومنحت الجائزة الصغرى الآنسة جوليت بوتونيه تقديراً لكتابها في الحصر النفسي L'Angoisse حيث انتهى بها البحث إلى تأييد نظريات كيركجارد Kierkegaard في الفلسفة الوجودية .

والدكتور هنري فالون يعتبر بحق زعيم علم نفس الطفل في فرنسا . وقد لخصت على صفحات هذه المجلة في أعدادها السابقة كتب الدكتور هنري فالون الثلاثة التي ظهرت ابتداء من ١٩٤٠ . ونشرت المجلة في عدد يونيو ١٩٤٦ الخاص بعلم نفس الطفل مقالا كتبه الدكتور فالون خصيصاً لقراء مجلة علم النفس وقد ترجم هذا المقال في عدد أكتوبر ١٩٤٦ .

وفي شهر يناير ١٩٤٧ اجتمعت في باريس لجنة فرنسا - مصر لتوزيع الجائزتين المعروفتين باسم جائرتي واصف غالى باشا، وقيمة الواحدة منهما خمسون جنيهاً . وقد منح إحدى الجائزتين الدكتور يوسف مراد تقديراً لمؤلفه الفرنسى في « بزوغ الذكاء » L'Eveil de l'Intelligence . وقد نشر هذا الكتاب سنة ١٩٣٩ في المجموعة الشهيرة التي يصدرها الناشر فليكس ألكان في باريس وهي معروفة باسم مكتبة الفلسفة المعاصرة . وقد جاء في تقرير أحد أعضاء اللجنة المشرفة على هذه المجموعة وهو بول جيوم ، أستاذ علم النفس بجامعة باريس وأحد أساطين علم النفس التجريبي في فرنسا ما يأتي :

« يمتاز كتاب الدكتور يوسف مراد بغزارة المعلومات ومناحتها . وما يحويه من مناقشة للنظريات المختلفة بعيد كل البعد عن الجدل المجرد والاعتبارات اللفظية ، بل تستند المناقشة دائماً إلى معلومات واقعية ، كما تعتمد اعتماداً رصيناً على البحوث التجريبية التي قام بها علماء النفس المعاصرون في أمريكا مما يدل على سعة اطلاع المؤلف

ومتانة معلوماته في ميدان علم النفس التجريبي . وعلى هذا أرى أن كتاب الدكتور يوسف مراد جزيل الفائدة إذ سيتيح لعلماء النفس الفرنسيين فرصة الاطلاع على مناهج ونتائج لا تزال مجهولة إلى حد كبير في فرنسا .

ويقع الكتاب في ٤٢١ صفحة من القطع الكبير وقد نفذت الطبعة الأولى ويقوم الناشر الآن باعادة طبعه ، كما أنه يقوم الأستاذ محمد خير حسن بنقله إلى اللغة العربية تحت إشراف المؤلف . وستنشر الترجمة العربية في منشورات جماعة علم النفس التكاملي . وبمناسبة ذكر هذا الكتاب وذكر تقدير الأستاذ بول جييوم له يسرنا أن نشير إلى الحملة الحرقاء التي أراد الدكتور فؤاد الإهوانى شنها على أعضاء جماعة علم النفس التكاملي في نقده المزعوم لكتاب علم النفس الفردي للأستاذ استحق رمزي على صفحات مجلة الكتاب في عدد نوفمبر سنة ١٩٤٦ . ولكن قبل أن يعرض للكتاب رأى نفسه مدفوعاً إلى أن يدخل في روع القارئ أن الدكتور يوسف مراد لا يحسن غير الجدل المجرد والمناقشة اللفظية وإنه بعيد كل البعد عن علم النفس في حين أن الدكتور الإهوانى في كتابه خلاصة علم النفس جاء وقرر أن علم النفس أصبح علماً وانفصل عن الفلسفة وأراد أن يدعم رأيه بترجمة جملة وردت في كتاب الأستاذ بول جييوم « المدخل إلى علم النفس » غير أنه تعمد بترجمة الجملة وتشويه معناها فقال عن لسان بول جييوم إن عالم النفس لا يعنى إلا بمواصلة بحوثه والدفاع عنها أمام النقد ، في حين أن بول جييوم يقول إن عالم النفس أصبح أكثر اهتماماً بمواصلة بحوثه منه من تسويق مبادئها والدفاع عنها أمام النقد ، أى أن عالم النفس لا يزال بجانب بحوثه التجريبية يبحث في الأسس الفلسفية لعلمه كما يصنع تماماً علماء الفيزياء الحديثة . ومن يكلف نفسه عناء قراءة الكتاب كله — لا اقتناص جملة من هنا أو هناك — يرى أن بول جييوم يذهب إلى أن علم النفس الحديث قد يحل محل الميتافيزيقا التقليدية ويصبح بدوره فلسفة توحد جميع المعلومات وتنظمها .

وقد رد الدكتور يوسف مراد على « مناورة » الدكتور الإهوانى في مجلة الكتاب عدد ديسمبر ١٩٤٦ مدافعاً عن الأمانة في نقل النصوص وترجمتها وخاصة النصوص الفلسفية إذ أن كتاب بول جييوم هو كتاب في فلسفة العلوم . ولا تزال تتساءل عن الدوافع اللاشعورية التي دفعت بناقد مجلة الكتاب إلى بتر نص الأستاذ بول جييوم وتشويه معناه

علم النفس في كلية أركان الحرب الملكية

كان للمقالة التي نشرتها مجلة علم النفس في عدد أكتوبر ١٩٤٦ عن اختيار ضباط الجيش أحسن الأثر في الأوساط العسكرية العليا . وقد نظمت كلية أركان الحرب الملكية سلسلة من المحاضرات في علم النفس بدأها الدكتور أحمد وجدى ، الاختصاصى في الأمراض العصبية والعقلية ، بمحاضرتين في شهر ديسمبر ١٩٤٦ الأولى في أهم أعراض الأمراض النفسية والعقلية والثانية في تصنع المرض العقلى وكيفية كشفه ومعالجة الصدمات النفسية التي تعترى الجنود في الميدان الحربى . ثم ألقى الدكتور يوسف مراد محاضرة عن موضوع علم النفس وأهميته من الوجهة العملية كمقدمة عامة لسلسلة المحاضرات التي سيلقيها في علم النفس العسكرى . ومن الموضوعات التي سيعالجها تذكر تطبيق اختبارات الذكاء والشخصية في اختيار ضباط الجيش - وسائل اختيار الطيارين في الجيوش الحديثة - الإدراك ووسائل التموه الحربى - الدعاية وأهمية الروح المعنوية - علم النفس والقوانين الدولية .

وقد حضر المحاضرات الأولى لفيف من كبار ضباط الجيش وعلى رأسهم اللواء عثمان باشا المهدي والأميرلاى أحمد بك فهم كومنندان كلية أركان الحرب الملكية والأميرلاى مصطفى بك شعراوى كومنندان الكلية الحربية والدكتور عازر بك دميان من كبار أطباء الجيش وقد أبدى عزته ورغبته في إدخال نظام الاختبارات في الجيش وإنشاء العيادات السيكولوجية بجانب العيادات الطبية .

وقد استهل الدكتور يوسف مراد محاضرتة الأولى بالكلمة الآتية :

« إننى عاجز عن إخفاء عظيم اغتباطى لهذه الفرصة المباركة التي أتيت لي بأن أتحدث عن علم النفس في هذا المعهد العظيم الذى يعتبر بحق إحدى مفاخر الوطن العزيز والركن المتين للجيش المصرى الذى يتقدم بخطى واسعة تحت لواء قائده الأعظم صاحب الجلالة الملك المفدى فاروق الأول .

ومما يزيد من اغتباطى أننى اعتبر رغبتكم الصادقة في الاستماع إلى محاضرات في علم النفس تقديراً كبيراً للجهود التي تبذلها كلية الآداب في سبيل النهوض بالدراسات والبحوث النفسية ونشرها في الأوساط التعليمية العليا .

ثم هناك سبب آخر دفعنى إلى تلبية دعوتكم الكريمة شاكراً وهو أنها ستسمح لي بأن أسدد بعض ما على من دين نحو حضرات ضباط الجيش المصرى الذين استمعت

إلى محاضراتهم القيمة في الفنون الحربية أيام كنت ألتقي التدريب العسكري في معسكر الجامعة في صيف سنة ١٩٤٠ . وما استرعى نظري في المحاضرات التي تناولت شئون تنظيم الجيش ودراسة بعض المواقع الحربية التاريخية أهمية العامل الإنساني على الرغم من قوة العناد وتوفره والأثر البالغ الذي يرجع إلى الروح المعنوية في كسب المواقع . فأننا نلمس دائماً وراء الخطط والحركات العسكرية شخصية القائد من جهة وقدرته على التدبير والمبادأة ، ومن جهة أخرى أهمية تضافر جميع الجهود وتنسيقها وأثر إيمان الجنود بقدسية القضية التي يحاربون في سبيلها .

ودراسة علم النفس تساعدنا على كشف الخصائص والصفات التي يجب أن يتسم بها كل من القواد والجنود ، والوسائل التي بها يمكن تقوية الروح المعنوية وتذكيها . والواقع أننا عند ما نكون بصدد نشاط إنساني ، سواء كان فردياً أو جمعياً . فإن علم النفس يساعدنا على تحليل هذا النشاط وتبيان شروطه وكشف طرق تعديله وتوجيهه . ثم فضلاً عن ذلك يجب أن نذكر أن الثقافة السيكولوجية أصبحت في عصرنا هذا جانباً هاماً من الثقافة العامة ، بل ربما يمكننا القول بأنها ، بجانب تخصص كل شخص في مهنته ، أهم ناحية يجب الاهتمام بها للوصول إلى تحقيق التوازن بين نشاط المهنة الخاص وسائر نواحي النشاط الإنساني . »

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حصل الدكتور صبرى جرجس من كلية الطب بجامعة فؤاد الأول درجة D. P. M. & N. أى دبلوم التخصص في الطب النفسى والأمراض العصبية .

بقية المنشور في ص ٥٥٦

سبينوزا ، حياته وفلسفته ، عرض وتحليل . تأليف هنرى سرويا وترجمة الأستاذ سليم سعدة (طبع بمطبعة المقتطف والمقطم - القاهرة ١٩٤٦ - ٤٧ ص) .
مفاه غليظة وقصص أضرى : تأليف محمود تيمور - القاهرة ١٩٤٦ . ١٢٦ ص) .
المعرفة : مجلة شهرية ثقافية تربوية تصدر ابتداء من ديسمبر ١٩٤٦ بإشراف هيئة التعليم الابتدائى بسوريا - رئيس التحرير الدكتور عادل عوا - دمشق -
مدرسة الملك الظاهر - ٩٦ ص .

mechanism of displacement, where there is displacement from one stream of thought to another.

To approach the genetic side, jokes are divided into those that are undirected and those that are purposeful. In the latter someone becomes a target, either of sexual or aggressive feelings. The obscene joke fundamentally is equivalent to an imaginary exposure of a woman and is a substitute for seduction; it arises when seduction is interrupted by a third party. Its function is to provide a substitute-gratification. The aggressive joke has a similar function. Thus the purposeful joke is a means of overcoming an inhibited or unsatisfied feeling. The concept of substitute-gratification may be seen to be inductive and not a hypothesis or a mere speculation.

Freud holds that formation of a purposeful joke, whether through condensation or displacement, involves an *economy of psychological expenditure*, which again may be seen to be an inductive concept. Likewise the undirected joke, whether manifested through condensation or displacement, involves this concept.

The mechanisms and the law of economy are not on the same level : the law operates through the mechanisms. The purposeful joke draws on an additional source of pleasure, which is set free only by the undirected element it contains. Jokes are distinguished from dreams by being expressed in words, not images; from slips by the conscious character of their meaning; and from other cryptic utterances by their unity of meaning. The joke is distinguished from the humorous and comic by the essential reference to a hearer and by the field in which economy is applied.

The narrator, unlike the listener, does not laugh. Laughter is a discharge of tension, but the narrator discharges tension by forming and imparting the joke. This requires energy, which, while it must be a minimum, is at least as great as the energy dammed up in the tension of the situation stimulating the joke.

Eidelson's views are to be found included in Freud's though in themselves they have a narrower field of application. His fundamental concept is not necessarily incompatible with Freud's because the two constitute explanations on different levels.

The study of the joke suggests a general pleasure-principle and reality-principle. Interesting points of resemblance to dreams emerge.

A law of joke-formation may be expressed as follows :—

The necessary and perhaps sufficient condition for the formation of a joke is that a state of tension should be reduced with a minimum of psychological expenditure through a mechanism of condensation or displacement in a verbal medium with unity of meaning present to consciousness.

be sacrificed in the course of mastering realities. Whus have hints of a pleasure-principle governing at least a part of mental life, and of a reality-principle that in some way supersedes the pleasure-principle.

Further hypotheses might be formed, but could not be substantiated without a knowledge of other mental processes. Freud discusses the relation between the joke and the dream,¹ and in fact it was his study of dreams that led him to an understanding of the joke; but from the methodological point of view it is desirable to go as far as possible without recourse to more general and more difficult investigations. Mention may be made, however, of some resemblances and differences, provided it is borne in mind that no further development will be based upon them, for a knowledge of the nature of dreams is not here being assumed.

Dreams, like jokes, utilise condensation and displacement, not to mention numerous varieties of these, such as representation through the opposite. The joke does not usually involve displacement, whereas it is a regular occurrence in dreams. A joke requires a third person to be its recipient, but this is not needed by a dream. Current material is usually rewoven and appears in a new guise either in a joke or in a dream. In neither is the channel of pleasure deliberately chosen. Generally speaking, the joke is social and intelligible, while the dream is not; yet the dream is more connected with reality in that the joke is a play but the dream is concerned with the great interests of life.² Freud remarks :

The dream serves preponderately to guard from pain while wit serves to acquire pleasure; in these two aims all our psychic activities meet.³

This is not an exact comparison, however, because we have met forms of wit that, like dreams, serve to avoid pain rather than to acquire pleasure. Still, this occurs only with a small proportion of instances, and in general Freud's remark holds.

§ 22. Summary.

The task is to study the joke without utilising general psycho-analytical results. In Freud's collection of jokes of many varieties, the mechanisms involved reduce first to word-condensation, thought-condensation, double meaning, double application of the same material, and displacement. It is easy to see that all but the last reduce to condensation in general. The test for this class is to see if on fuller restatement the amusing element is dissipated. This defines the witticism. Jokes other than witticisms use the

(1) Bergson remarks upon the resemblance between comic absurdity and dreams (Bergson, *Op. cit.*, p. 186), but he did not realise the significance of his insight and did not follow up the point.

(2) Freud, *op. cit.*, Ch. VI.

(3) *Id.*, p. 287.

§ 20. Relation between Views of Freud and Eidelberg.

Eidelberg has expressed doubt whether the concept of economy is fundamental and prefers an alternative explanation of the joke, which is briefly as follows :—¹ The listener accepts the position of a child and has a feeling of omnipotence characteristic of childhood; he is thus in a position to express the feeling that appears in the joke but that could not be manifested otherwise and also to master the hindrance or resistance to this feeling; moreover the infantile position is one of desiring to look at something sexual and to be looked at; and, by this process, he is able to overcome a wound to his infantile *amour propre*—in short, infantile omnipotence masters mortification.

With the important exception of the reference to the infantile, this account finds a place within in the present treatment; it seems, however, not to apply to the undirected joke. The reference to the infantile, which also occurs in Freud to a small extent, is not dealt with here, not because of disagreement, but because methodologically it is better treated as a superstructure than as a substructure.

But one important point should be made : there is nothing *prima facie* incompatible about the two investigations, for they are on different levels. When an engine pushes a truck, we may say either that a hard surface repels another hard surface or that one set of atoms repels another set of atoms; when a truck in motion collides with a stationary one, we may say either that the acquired motion of the stationary truck is caused by the other or that it moves in accordance with the law of conservation of momentum. Similarly, Freud has been dealing with a fundamental economic law of the mind, but we may at the same time agree with Eidelberg that Freud has not been dealing with causal factors in the ordinary sense; the full catalogue of causal factors inducing a joke would operate in accordance with the law of economy.

§ 21. Further Implications

Does this empirical study of the joke teach us anything more general about the mind? We are often surprised by the emergence of a joke; it would seem that there is a need for pleasure of which we are not aware striving to realise itself. The whole story of joke-economy implies that the joke is generated by a need to increase pleasure or to decrease unpleasure. The suggestion occurs, too, both with Freud and Eidelberg, that the joke serves to reinstate a childhood outlook as a retreat from realities; the relapse from reality to childish pleasure implies that primitive pleasure has had to

(1) Ludwig Eidelberg, "A Contribution to the Study of Wit", *The Psychoanalytic Review*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, New York, 1945.

be included in the discussion) requires an economy of expenditure; yet we have also seen that in the laughter of the joke there is a discharge of energy. This appears to be contradictory. To deal with this we must observe that energy is used in more than one way. The situation giving rise to a joke, which discharges in laughter for the third party and in the generation of the joke for the first party, may be best described as one of "tension", and we may say that in a state of tension there is "potential energy" "dammed up" — for the inhibition present is a state of tension and inhibition energy is a form of potential energy. When we seek release for this, we seek the easiest channel of discharge for potential energy, *i.e.* through the joke. Now what is meant by saying that one channel is *easier* than another? It means that *effort* is needed to effect the discharge and that different amounts of effort are needed according to the channel of discharge adopted. Potential energy becomes used up at varying rates according to the channel and if we assume that the joke-channel gives the most rapid discharge, some effort will be required to canalise the discharge through some other channel. Consider a stone on the top of a cliff; the easiest way of exhausting its potential energy is to tip it over and let it fall; but if we carry it down to the bottom much more effort will be needed. We can therefore give a meaning to Freud's concept by distinguishing from the potential energy of tension the psychical expenditure of initiating the discharge of that energy; and it is this that is to be a minimum. This disposes of the appearance of contradiction.

Now Freud seems to say that the two energies are equal.¹ This may be so, but he adduces no evidence in favour of it. The fact, noted in the preceding section, that tension in the joke-maker relaxes, without the aid of laughter, simply by means of generating and imparting the joke, shows that the potential energy is exhausted in this process, which suggests that the tension energy is what is drawn upon to make the joke. All we can conclude, however, is that the tension energy *is not greater than* the energy of making the joke; additional energy from some extraneous source may well be needed to initiate the liberation of the tension energy into the production of the joke; the minimum psychical expenditure required for making a joke may therefore be greater than, and contain as a part only, the potential energy dammed up by the circumstances giving rise to the joke.

I do not regard either of these energy concepts as hypotheses; it seems to me that by introspection we can tell that we seek to discharge tension, and that we seek the easiest way of doing it.

(1) *Id.*, p. 229.

large extent, in making of the comic a comparison between what is observed, which is exaggerated in one way or another, and the unexaggerated way we should behave in similar circumstances. The man that slips on a banana is comic; the man that remarks on his way to the gallows, "This day is beginning well", is humorous.

Humour and the comic are interfered with in general by painful emotion, while a joke is often made from it. They do not depend on overcoming the painful or overcoming hindrance or resistance; they do not, therefore, draw on opposition of tendencies. If we introduce the word "preconscious" for ideas or feelings that are not actually present to consciousness but readily come to consciousness, then we may say that humour and the comic draw solely upon the preconscious. But, according to Freud, the joke utilises a need for pleasure that we do not recognise; we discover it only after considerable investigation; the need for pleasure, which manifests itself through the joke, may therefore be said to be "unconscious". The methodological criterion for this, however, cannot be presented independently of the general results of psycho-analysis.

§ 18. Contrast of Role; Laughter as Discharge.

The third person laughs but the first does not, or not much. It would seem that the third party is presented with pleasure, as it were, ready made, and energy can be immediately discharged through laughter. With the first, who aims at reducing energy, the formation of the joke would seem to take the place of laughter; he gets pleasure but not a laughter. Laughter may be considered as a discharge, because there is introspectably a reduction of tension, though one may not be aware of tension till the discharge. Moreover, patients under analysis often gain relief from tension by laughing even when the situation is not amusing.

Why do we not laugh and why are we urged to impart wit to another person? We evidently impart it as a means of gaining pleasure from it; we do not laugh because the pleasure is gained from the imparting—the imparting is psychically equivalent to a discharge. But why can the third party effect an immediate discharge through laughter, while the first cannot? Evidently the energy that would otherwise go into laughter, or most of it, is used up in generating and imparting the wit; for ensuing satisfaction bears witness to diminution of tension.

§ 19. The Concept of Economy.

The concept of minimum psychical expenditure needs clarification. We have seen on the one hand that the joke (humour and the comic will not

(2) Freud, *Op. cit.*, pp. 280-5.

of a different kind in the two spheres—with the slip it is not conscious, at least at the moment when the slip is made, whereas the meaning of a joke is present to consciousness. Here lies a differentiating characteristic. No doubt there is a psychogenetic difference also, seeing that the author of a joke retains contact with the setting of the joke, while the person that makes a slip, momentarily at least, loses touch with this; but to pursue the matter further would take us beyond the scope of the present investigation.

Can we now say that the sufficient condition for the production of a joke is economy operating through the mechanism of condensation or displacement in a verbal medium and thus producing a meaning that is present to consciousness? Though it is a necessary condition it is not sufficient, for it is satisfied by large numbers of utterances that are not jokes as, for example,

Lord Cecil strove for international disarmament, but he was running his head against a stone wall.

Compare this with the joke already cited that the torch of truth will singe somebody's beard. The essential part of the meaning of the one is this:—The attempt to modify warlike tendencies is to their intractable nature as the attempt to penetrate a wall with the head is to its impenetrable nature. And of the other:—Just as a torch if held close will singe a beard, so truth if brought before the attention will hurt the feelings. We notice that in the joke certain analogies are asserted: truth is something like a torch, because mental hurting is something like physical hurting (singeing) and pride of feelings is something like preservation of a beard as an adornment. On the other hand, the metaphor or the comparison in the other utterance contains no such analogies. One may perhaps express the difference by saying that the elements of meaning in a joke form a *unity*. With this addition we are close to having attained the sufficient condition of a joke, but it would be rash without a good deal more investigation to assert that we had reached it.

§ 17. *Differentiation from the Humorous and Comic.* With the humorous and comic we laugh directly without the intermediacy of a third party. The essential presence of the third party is what marks off the joke from these spheres. It is not intended to go further into their nature; let it suffice to mention Freud's finding that the genetic difference lies in the field of application of minimum psychical expenditure:

the pleasure of wit originates from an *economy of expenditure in inhibition*, of the comic from an *economy of expenditure in thought*, and of humor an *economy of expenditure in feeling*.¹

It should be remarked that the comic and the humorous are *situations*; Freud is not dealing with the *sense* of humour. He follows Bergson² to a

(1) *Id.*, p. 384.

(2) Henri Bergson, *Laughter*, London, 1935.

external hindrances or by internal resistance, and that the degree of pleasure is usually greater with this class of joke. Thus the pleasure comes from two genetic sources: one getting simple pleasure from economy in expressing undirected feelings, the other getting it from economy in expressing sexual or aggressive feelings, the latter pleasure being the greater. Where the two sources are fused, the element of undirectedness in the joke forms a means for releasing the purposeful element, so that a smaller amount of joke-pleasure releases a larger amount—a kind of chain reaction. For this reason the undirected joke functions as a form of fore-pleasure: the purposeful joke cannot exist in isolation from the undirected joke; hence the undirected joke serves either to give pleasure unconnected with specific sexual or aggressive aims or to function as fore-pleasure.

Are there other factors? Brevity is the soul of wit, is it not? Certainly, there must be an element of shock or surprise or brevity, but it must be a witty brevity. This is already contained, however, in the mechanisms described; we could not conceive of condensation or displacement in slow motion.

§ 16. *Differential Characteristics.* It might seem hardly worth mentioning that the medium of the joke is words, but this is not wholly unimportant when it comes to distinguishing the joke from other psychical products. The factors mentioned are severally necessary to the production of the joke, but they are not sufficient either separately or together; even jointly they characterise much mental activity. Thus, if the mind is expressing pleasure in an economical way, briefly, and through a medium where condensation or displacement can occur, the result would not necessarily be a joke, for the medium would have to be words, not for instance images; the verbal form of the medium therefore distinguishes jokes from dreams.

The verbal nature of the medium may lead us to think there may be some difficulty in differentiating between a joke and a slip of the tongue and the like, apart from slips of non-verbal behaviour. In this sphere, we might realise, it would not be difficult to show that the economy and condensation or displacement played an essential part, so that the difference sought for must lie elsewhere. We begin by noticing that the joke, even of the nonsense variety, has a meaning that is public, accessible to the hearer; with the slip this is not always so, but it is sometimes. Again we should look elsewhere. Now it might seem that the meaning of a joke is not merely public but objective, in the sense that it contains no essential reference to its author; whereas the meaning of a slip, of course, is subjective, in the sense that it contains an essential reference to the person that makes it. This is better, but not all displacement-jokes are objective in the sense required. Still, the proposal yields a clue: the meaning is

§ 14. *Of the Undirected Joke.* In the other example of a displacement-joke, the Jew not merely accepts a reproach for taking a bath but makes this reproach against himself. Self-reproach is not an essential element, however, for the joke could equally well take the form :

The first Jew asks the second what he has been doing. The second replies, "I've taken a bath." "Oh !" exclaims the first, "I didn't realise one was missing".

Here the accusation is not self-directed. Nonetheless both forms have accusation in common; moreover it is unprovoked. It would therefore seem that the note of accusation manifests imaginative satisfaction at the idea of stealing. This satisfaction would be difficult to attain in other ways—the joke allows the minimum psychical expenditure in giving vent to it.

Thus not only the purposeful joke but also the undirected joke take the forms of condensation and displacement and are unified under the inductive concept of *economy*; the tendency towards economy aims either at avoiding pain or at gaining pleasure.¹ These two aims would seem to correspond to the division of displacement-jokes into the purposeful and the undirected.

§ 15. Relations between Factors.

The two factors essentially concerned with the joke that have now been isolated are either condensation or displacement on the one hand and economy of psychical expenditure on the other. Now this is not to say that the two are on the same level, both present as causal factors; rather is condensation or displacement a characteristic and economy a cause or principle—the psychogenetic cause lies in the economy or acts in accordance with it, and operates through condensation or displacement as alternative mechanisms.

With regard to the purposeful joke, we have noticed that it allows pleasure to come through that would otherwise be prevented either by

(1) Freud summarises thus : "Alleviation of the already existing 'psychic expenditure' and economy in the yet to be offered psychic expenditure, are two principles from which all techniques of wit and with them all pleasure in these techniques can be deduced" (*Id.*, pp. 194-5). He can hardly have meant that all the detailed mechanisms, "automatic errors", "word-divisions", and so on, can be deduced in this way. He probably meant to refer to a general type of mechanism described as follows : "The two firmly established points in the determination of wit—its tendency to carry through the pleasurable play, and its effort to guard it against the criticism of reason—make it perfectly clear why the individual witticism, even though it appear nonsensical from one point of view, must appear full of meaning or at least acceptable from another." (*Id.*, p. 200). To say, however, that from the concept of economy this type of mechanism can be *deduced* is to go beyond our knowledge : we may pass inductively from the mechanism to the concept, but to return deductively would be possible only with a great deal of additional psychological knowledge.

cumstances of the Dreyfus case.¹ Further, as every philosopher knows. It is quite obvious that it is easier and more convenient to turn away from a definite trend of thought than to stick to it; it is easier to mix up different things than to distinguish them; and it is particularly easier to travel over modes of reasoning unsanctioned by logic; finally in connecting words or thoughts it is especially easy to overlook the fact that such connections should result in sense.²

All this is done by the joke and gives pleasure—yet outside the joke such procedures cause distaste. In short realities demand mental effort far more than pleasurable whimsicality. Again, children like to play with words; in later life one reverts to this to withdraw from the pressure of critical reason and reality.

Now the general concept of condensation, which covers so large a field of jokes, may be easily seen to be co-extensive with the concept of minimum psychic expenditure³; but how do jokes that come under the category of “displacement” fit the concept?

Consider the example about salmon and mayonnaise. The rich man is disapproving of the poor man’s spending borrowed money on a luxury. The poor man displaces this train of thought: since the luxury is either too expensive or wrong, when can he have it? What exactly is the force of this reply? He does not say, “I don’t understand you; I have the right to spend the money as I like”, or “That is none of your business”. The reply cannot be restated thus, because the meaning would be changed. He is perhaps saying, “You are foolish and illogical, because you are putting me in a contradictory position where every possible occasion for having the luxury is ruled out”. But the position is not, of course, contradictory and the statement is illogical. Hence, whether or not it is a means of attacking the creditor and rebutting the reproach, it is a means of denying the only real position—doing without the luxury. The statement, “I don’t understand you”, is in the same vein—refusal to see the reproach. While, therefore, there is no condensation, there is economy on the part of the person making the reply, for it is easier to deny the reproach than to face the reality or argue the matter out. Exactly the same features are to be found in the example to do with the needy visitor to Ostend.

It is worth noting that economy of psychical expenditure is a factor contributing (in part and perhaps wholly) to the difference between an obscene joke and a factual reference to sex.

(1) It is worth noting, though the point cannot be followed up at present, that dreams usually embody the imagery of the previous day’s scenes, *i.e.* utilise topical material.

(2) *Id.*, pp. 189-90.

(3) Freud was therefore right in introducing the concept of economy in this connexion, though he appears to have done so at an unnecessarily early stage.

first situation, he has a feeling of satisfaction and in the second, one of frustration. In the third, his feeling is more complicated : while it would be an exaggeration to say he feels satisfied, one may say that he is left without any real rancour of frustration. Now it is the comparison of these three possible situations, all of them introspectable and inductive, that enables us to regard the obscene joke as a substitute-gratification. The empirical facts do not warrant our asserting that the obscene joke is exactly equivalent in gratification value to seduction—indeed this could not be so, else the man would be indifferent about which came his way - but it is a more or less satisfactory substitute, a fairly good second best.

The important concept of *substitute-gratification* may therefore be allowed to have inductive status.

§ 13. Psychogenesis :

Of the Purposeful Joke. The purposeful joke is thus a means of overcoming internal resistance or external hindrance to direct expression of a sexual or of an aggressive feeling. Let us introduce the word "inhibition" to mean a situation in which one is reluctant to satisfy a feeling, and let us call the unsatisfied feeling "inhibited". Then the purposeful joke removes an inhibition when it overcomes an internal resistance, while with an outer hindrance the formation of a new inhibition is avoided. Freud now writes : We hardly resort to speculation when we assert that a "*psychic expenditure*" is required for the formation as well as for the retention of a psychic inhibition. Now if we find that in both cases the use of the ... wit produces pleasure, then it may be assumed that *such resultant pleasure corresponds to the economy of psychic expenditure*.¹

This may strike us at first sight as being speculative, or at least non-inductive in the sense of being something beyond what immediately comes out of the data; Freud provides some evidence, however, that points to its being inductive. Thus in the group of word-condensation jokes, the mechanism focussed attention upon the sound of a word rather than upon the meaning. We may agree that in the serious use of words we refrain from this only at the cost of some mental exertion. Further he mentions that many jokes disclose the familiar where something new was expected, and recognition, he claims, involves a pleasurable saving of energy.² This would require some elaboration, but it may be seen that effort has to be made to come to grips with the novel. Again, topical jokes often have more attraction than other forms—little effort is needed to see their point, whereas when they become out of date they no longer seem funny and a good deal of effort is needed to appreciate them at all. Thus the joke about the girl who resembled Dreyfus fails unless we focus the mind on the cir-

(1) Freud, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80.

(2) *Id.*, pp. 183-5.

§ 11. *The Aggressive Joke.* As with the Sex form, the aggressive joke arises from restriction of impulses. Thus it was not possible for the retainer to insult the great ruler directly. It is common to find an attack rebutted through wit. The restriction that makes direct attack impossible may be due to external factors, as the danger to the retainer, or to internal ones, such as good breeding and so on. Cynical and blasphemous jokes become possible in this way.

In general, then, the purposeful joke enables the maker to gain an indirect gratification of a feeling that could not be satisfied directly.

This, however, tells us only that the purposeful joke leads to pleasure, but it does not explain clearly why a reference to sex, for instance, is not funny, while an obscene joke appears funny out of proportion to its wit content. All we know so far is that pleasure in the joke has two sources : the joke mechanism and (when present) the joke-purpose.

§ 12. Generalisation or Hypothesis ?

So far, almost all the general statements of the argument have been inductive, *i.e.* they have been generalisations from observation. Now to be scientific, a general statement need not be inductive — it may be a hypothesis. The difference is that induction involves only concepts that denote what is observable, whereas a hypothesis has at least one concept that does not denote anything observable (though this is subject to the qualification that such a concept must be relatable, however indirectly, to observables). Of such a kind is *gravitation*, which denotes nothing; yet it is capable of scientific application resulting only in observables.¹

If the argument to date is wrong this must be due to faulty observation or to mishandling the results of observation, but it is not due to the unscientific use of concepts apart from one possible exception. We have seen that obscene wit follows frustration of a sexual aim.² This is inductive. It was then asserted that the obscene functioned as a *substitute* for seduction. Now is this a generalisation or a hypothesis — or simply unscientific ?

To deal with this we must ask ourselves what leads us to speak of a substitute-gratification. The man with sexual designs works towards a certain pleasure. Let him contrast three types of consequence : (i) when he attains his end; (ii) when he fails to do so for any reason (inner reluctance on his own part or that of the woman or an unexpected external hindrance such as a sudden recall to duty); and (iii) when he is interrupted by the presence of a third party and has recourse to obscene jokes. In the

(1) J. O. Wisdom, "The Descriptive Interpretation of Science", *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, N.S. Vol. XLIV, London, 1943-4.

(2) Above, § 10.

bursts of laughter often greet witticisms that have such an allusion but hardly any wit; hence the obscene form would seem to have different sources of pleasure-joke-pleasure and another source not funny in itself but made funny or allowed to be funny by the joke element. To see if this is so we must cast our net round further observations.

Freud points out that the obscene joke was originally directed against the woman, the joke to act as a substitute for seduction. This is based on sociological observation : when courtship does not quickly lead to the sex act, the arousing speech of courtship changes into obscene wit. Apart from internal resistance on the part of the woman, the other factor causing a hold up and thus inducing the obscene is the presence of a third party, which precludes the yielding of the woman.

Among rural people or in the ordinary hostelry one can observe that not till the waitress or the hostess approaches the guests does the obscene wit come out.¹

It is of course otherwise in a higher stratum of society, where the situation in which obscenity emerges is apparently quite different; further analysis would no doubt reveal that this situation played the part of a screen covering up the original one, but it is no part of the present purpose to go into further evolution of the obscenity situation.

What is the rôle of the third party, the listener ? It may be noticed that the man directs his conversation and wit *against* the woman, as if, frustrated in his design with her, he now grows hostile. He appears to adopt the intruder as a sympathetic confederate. Before the intrusion the man wished, as part of his goal, to have the woman expose herself to him. With the interruption, his obscene wit conveys an exposure to the imagination—aggressive in that the woman in the presence of a third person is not prepared for this. Now, according to observation, it is not the maker of the joke that laughs but the third party. The latter gets laughter pleasure from the situation, the imagined exposure, without having had to make any effort to get it. The former, too, gets pleasure but not from laughter. Thus his pleasure comes from a source other than a pure joke.

The function of such jokes is easy to discover. What is said in the obscenity cannot be said in stark unveiled language; sense of shame in some degree would prevent that; the joke clearly enables something to be said without putting it in stark fashion.

It is now clear that, though the obscene joke alludes to sex, this must be qualified : the allusion is directed aggressively against the desired object, to cause an imagined exposure as a substitute for real exposure, where the intruder or recipient of the joke who first frustrated the original desire now is utilised as a means of gaining a substitute-gratification.

(1) *Id.*, p. 143.

displacement. It is worth pointing out that, in English at any rate, this classification corresponds with ordinary usage of language. I have all the time used the word "joke" rather than "wit", as being the wider and more generic term. The examples of displacement-jokes given can hardly be called witty. It would seem, therefore, that witticisms are a species of joke, and indeed that they are essentially characterised by the concept of condensation. It is perhaps necessary to remark that the word "joke" is not here used to include "practical joke"; the medium of a joke is understood to be not action but words.

Mr. de Valera visited London in 1938 to negotiate an agreement with Neville Chamberlain between Eire and Great Britain, a situation very different from that of twenty years earlier when he spent some time in an English jail. After the successful conclusion of cordial negotiations, it was reported, Chamberlain wished to present a gift to his visitor. The gift he chose was a pair of field-glasses that had been confiscated from Mr. de Valera when he had been put in jail.

This might be called a joke-situation or a comic story, but it is not a joke in the sense here used.

Now, though we have found a common characteristic for each of two groups of jokes, namely condensation and displacement, there is nothing to show that the characteristics are peculiar : many things possess these characteristics without being jokes.

§ 9. Undirected and Purposeful Jokes.

To investigate further factors let us reclassify jokes as undirected and purposeful (Freud uses other names). In a purposeful joke someone becomes a target. This may be seen from the example in which the Minister of Agriculture is likened to an ox and that in which a great ruler insulted his retainer and was insulted in return. Undirected jokes involve no such target; their sole aim seems to be evoke pleasure in the hearer and narrator. There is a notable difference in the pleasure induced by the two : the pleasurable effect of undirected jokes is moderate, inducing a slight ripple of laughter and rarely followed by the irresistible outburst of laughter evoked by purposeful wit. Hence either the mechanisms of the two forms are different or the purposeful joke has some additional source of pleasure to draw upon.

§ 10. *The Obscene Joke.* Purposeful jokes have two alternative forms—obscene and aggressive.

The obscene joke, whether extremely pornographic or merely naughty, makes allusion to sex; but is this all? More is needed to characterise the obscene as such, for a lecture on physiology or on psychology may allude to sex without being obscene. Is it that the obscene occurs when a sex allusion is embodied in wit? Here observation tells us that great out-

difficulty in subsuming *double application* under *condensation*.¹

Now this shows only that condensation is found with certain types of joke, but there is nothing in this to show that it has anything essential to do with the nature of the joke. It is easy to see, however, that it has an essential connexion; for, if a joke of one of these types is restated in an uncondensed form, the joke is dissipated. Hence we have Freud's rule or reduction method for testing certain types of jokes : *restate the joke in full, i.e. make sure that all it asserts is explicitly stated; then, if the resulting statement is not amusing and if it is fuller than the joke, the latter is an example of a condensation-joke*. Can this rule be used to see if an example is a joke or only to find out if it belongs to a certain class of joke ? The answer to this will appear in a moment.

Consider the displacement-joke. The first example given under this heading seems at first sight to be a play on words, but that this is not an essential feature of the type is evident on further scrutiny and it is clearer from the other examples. In them there is no condensation or double application of material, as may be confirmed by applying the rule, for no expansion is possible and the joke is not lost on restatement. Thus with the best examples of displacement-joke neither condition of the rule is fulfilled. This interferes with any attempt to subsume condensation under displacement, for though a double-meaning joke may appear to involve a displacement from one meaning to another, restatement destroys the joke and renders the statement of it fuller. These facts, however, tell us only that displacement gives rise to another form of joke, but they tell us nothing at all about the nature of this. The feature that Freud finds in it is that the displacement is not merely from one thought or word to another but to a whole new stream of thought from an old stream of thought.² He notes further that

the displacement regularly occurs between a statement and an answer, and turns the stream of thought to a direction different from the one started in the statement.³

We may therefore define the displacement joke, for the present, as a species in which there is displacement from one psychic stream to another without condensation.

From this it is clear that the reduction method is a test for the condensation-joke and not for the joke in general.

Jokes have now been reduced to two categories : *condensation* and

(1) Freud does not do this, because of the existence of a joke that belongs to double application without seeming to fit condensation (*Id.*, p. 51), but while it does not fit verbal condensation it expresses thought-condensation; there is therefore no need to introduce another concept at this point.

(2) *Id.*, p. 68.

(3) *Id.*, p. 69n.

Scot could not see the joke. In the middle of the night the Englishman was wakened up by roars of laughter from the Scot, who said, "I see it now; the blacksmith might be out". It is quite clear that the differences in subheadings do not prevent all these examples from being classed together under "Double application".

§ 7. *Displacement.* Freud gives the following Jewish joke :
Two Jews met at a bathing place. "Have you taken a bath ?" asked one.
"Why ?" replied the other, "Is one missing ?"¹

Here there is a displacement from *bath* to *take*. There is a complication about this example, but the following are perfect specimens of the type :-
A needy man borrowed a fairly large sum of money from a wealthy acquaintance only to be found eating an expensive dish of salmon and mayonnaise. "You borrow money from me and then eat salmon and mayonnaise", reproached the creditor. "I don't understand you", replied the debtor, "when I have no money I can't eat it and when I have some I mustn't eat it — *when can I eat it ?*"²

A poor man tried to borrow from a well-off acquaintance for a trip to Ostend for his health. "Very well", said the other, "I will help you, but why Ostend, which is the most expensive of all the watering places ?" "Sir", came the reply, "nothing is too expensive for my health".³

§ 8. Common Characteristics.

It would take too much space to give all the types Freud mentions, but the examples offered should be sufficient to show that the classification is, so far as it goes, legitimate. Now it may well strike the reader that there is a cross-division, for a good many of the jokes could plausibly be placed under a different general heading, and this suggests that there may be something common to the groups just made.

In the first place, *word-condensation* and *thought-condensation* are both instances of *condensation*; evidently, so far as these groups are concerned, the joke involves either verbal expression or thought and perhaps both though not necessarily both. At any rate either words or thoughts can serve as a medium for condensation jokes. In the second place *double meaning* may be brought under *Double application of the same material*, for double meaning is only a particular case of utilising the same material more than once. Our groups now reduce to condensation, double application, and displacement.⁴ In the third place, there seems to be no

(1) *Id.*, pp. 59-60.

(2) *Id.*, p. 61.

(3) *Id.*, p. 71.

(4) Of these Freud reduces the first two to "economy"; At this stage of the argument, however, he is not very clear about the difference between condensation and economy; all he seems to hold is that economy is a wider concept (*Id.*, p. 51): It will become clear that condensation is a characteristic of the medium of the joke and that economy is a characteristic of the use of the medium.

A great ruler noticed a man in his demesne closely resembling himself and asked, "Was your mother ever employed in my home?" "No Sire", was the reply, "but my father was".¹

The next he calls "representation through the opposite" :

This woman resembles Venus de Milo in many points. Like her she is extraordinarily old, has no teeth, and has white spots on the yellow surface of her body.²

Another is "indirect expression with allusion" :

Two American business men had made a great deal of money by not very scrupulous means and now wished to enter good society. They therefore had their portraits painted by prominent and most expensive painters. The portraits were exhibited at a reception and the men led a well-known connoisseur to see them, where they hung side by side. He looked puzzled, however, as if something were missing. Then he pointed to the empty space between the paintings and asked, "But where is the Saviour?"³

The following have no descriptive title more specific than "thought-jokes" :—

A fourth-form boy wrote, "They sent a small octavo to the University of Gottingen; and received back in body and soul a quarto".⁴

It is almost impossible to carry the torch of truth through a crowd without singeing somebody's beard.⁵

Clearly these all exhibit condensation of thought.

§ 5. *Double Meaning*. As will be expected, large numbers of jokes come under this heading.

A man was once asked why he always sang one tune. "Because it haunts me," he said. "No wonder," was the reply, "you are continually murdering it".

"As Aristotle said, one swallow doesn't make a summer," remarked the dyspeptic philosopher, "neither does it quench the thirst".⁶

A joke current during the trial of Dreyfus was this :

That girl reminds me of Dreyfus. The army does not believe in her innocence.⁷

§ 6. *Double Application of the Same Material*. Oliver Wendell Holmes once remarked :

Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.⁸

Under the heading of "sophistry" Freud gives :

"Is this the place where the Duke of Wellington spoke these words?"

"Yes, this is the place; but he never spoke these words".⁹

As an example of "outdoing wit" he gives :

Commenting on Hamlet's reflection that "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy", Lichtenberg remarked, "But there is also much in philosophy which is found neither in heaven nor on earth".¹⁰

Another example is :

An Englishman and a Scot came to a sign post in the country, which in addition to the names of the places to be reached by the roads leading from it contained the notice, "If you can't read, ask the blacksmith round the corner". The Englishman laughed but the

(1) *Id.*, p. 91.

(2) *Id.*, p. 94.

(3) *Id.*, pp. 101-2.

(4) *Id.*, p. 129.

(5) *Id.*, p. 115.

(6) *Id.*, p. 44.

(7) *Id.*, p. 46.

(8) *Id.*, p. 37n.

(9) *Id.*, p. 80n.

(10) *Id.*, p. 97.

§ 2. Joke-Mechanisms.

Freud has made a thorough collection of joke-mechanisms, which at first sight seem to have little or nothing in common. Such a collection forms the first essential of an inductive study, but there is no need to recapitulate all the details, beyond illustrating some of them; it will then be possible to begin looking for common characteristics.

§ 3. *Word-Condensation*. Freud gives as an example of a joke the remark made by de Quincey that

Old people are apt to fall into anecdotage.¹

Here the tendency of people approaching *dotage* to keep telling *anecdotes* is expressed by the fusion of two words, a mechanism that may be called "condensation". He evidently means to include within this not only word fusion but condensation resulting from the idiomatic use of a word or from a well-known expression. Thus, where a man's early promise has not been fulfilled, it has been said that

he has a great future behind him,²

and this is expressed by substituting "behind" for "before" in the well-known expression "great future before him". Any other exposition of the situation would be much longer; hence once more there is condensation.

Again,

on a certain occasion a nobleman was made Minister of Agriculture although he had no qualification for the post beyond being interested in agriculture; when he retired and returned to his country pursuits, he returned, like Cincinnatus of old, to his place in front of the plough.³

This condenses the statement that Cincinnatus when he retired returned to his place *behind* the plough and the feeling that the nobleman was a mere ox.

§ 4. *Thought-Condensation*. The following jokes are classed as "non-sense" :—

He was surprised that two holes were cut in the pelts of cats just where their eyes were located. How beautifully everything is arranged by nature. As soon as the child comes into the world it finds a mother who is ready to care for it.⁴

The following Freud calls "automatic-error thought" :

A marriage agent brought along an assistant to an interview of a lady by a prospective bridegroom. When he sang the praises of the lady the assistant echoed them in hardly different phrases. When the agent had to admit, "She has a slight hunch on her back", the assistant echoed, "What a hunch."⁵

He considers the next to be examples of "unification" : —

J. B. Rousseau, the French poet, wrote an ode to posterity. Voltaire, thinking that its poor quality did not justify its reaching posterity, remarked, "This poem will not reach its destination".

1) *Id.*, pp. 22-3.

2) *Id.*, pp. 27-8.

(3) *Id.*, pp. 28-9.

(4) *Id.*, p. 78.

(5) *Id.*, pp. 85-6.

THE EGYPTIAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Vol. 2

FEBRUARY 1947

No. 3

A LAW OF JOKE-FORMATION

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§ 1. Introduction. § 2. Joke-Mechanisms. § 3. Word-Condensation. § 4. Thought-Condensation. § 5. Double Meaning. § 6. Double Application of the Same Material. § 7. Displacement. § 8. Common Characteristics. § 9. Undirected and Purposeful Jokes. § 10. The Obscene Joke. § 11. The Aggressive Joke. § 12. Generalisation or Hypothesis. § 13. Psychogenesis : Of the Purposeful Joke. § 14. Of the Undirected Joke. § 15. Relations between Factors. § 16. Differential Characteristics. § 17. Differentiation from the Humorous and Comic. § 18. Contrast of Rôle; Laughter as Discharge. § 19. The Concept of Economy. § 20. Relation between Views of Freud and Eidelberg. § 21. Further Implications. § 22. Summary.

§ 1. Introduction.

Jokes give rise to laughter and laughter is a pleasure. The questions to be asked are : what is the nature of the joke, what is it about the joke that causes pleasure, and why is laughter the form the pleasure takes ? Explanations that have been offered are as a rule true so far as they go, but they do not go very far and they usually are true only of a small proportion of jokes; this led Freud to investigate the matter afresh.¹ Though the investigation throws light on the nature of the mind, the immediate task is not to indicate all that we may learn in this way, but to find out what we can learn from the study of the joke without utilising any additional psychological knowledge we may have. Freud arrived at his results only after he had gained considerable knowledge of the unconscious mind and in particular of dream mechanisms; but, since the study of dreams from the methodological point of view is complicated, it is useful to approach the joke directly, because any conclusions we may reach will then carry more weight and because they may then be used as a support in the investigation of more complex matters such as dreams and the unconscious in general.

1) Sigmund Freud, *Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious*, London, 1916.