

## XXVIII

### ON THE DEFINITION OF INTROJECTION<sup>1</sup>

(1912)

DR. A. MAEDER<sup>2</sup> refers in one of his papers to my article on Introjection,<sup>3</sup> and on comparing this concept with that of exteriorization proposed by him, he concludes that the two mean much the same. If this is so, then we have to agree which of the two technical terms is to be dropped.

A repeated reading of both papers has convinced me that the identification of these two concepts can only be based on a misunderstanding of the ideas developed in my paper.

I described introjection as an extension to the external world of the original autoerotic interests, by including<sup>4</sup> its objects in the ego. I put the emphasis on this 'including' and wanted to show thereby that I considered *every sort of object love* (or *transference*) both in normal and in neurotic people (and of course also in paranoiacs as far as they are capable of loving) as an extension of the ego, that is, as introjection.

In principle, man can love only himself; if he loves an object he takes it into his ego. Just like the poor fisherman's wife in the fairy tale, on to whose nose a curse made a sausage grow and who then felt any contact with the sausage as if it were her own skin, and had to protest violently against any suggestion of cutting off the unpleasant growth: so we feel all suffering caused to our loved object as our own. I used the term introjection for all such growing on to, all such including of the loved object in, the ego. As already stated, I conceive the mechanism of *all*

<sup>1</sup> German original: *Zb. f. Psa.* (1912), 2, 198. First English translation.

<sup>2</sup> A. Maeder, 'Zur Entstehung der Symbolik im Traum in der Dementia praecox usw'. *Zentralbl. f. Psa.* (1910-11), 1, 383.

<sup>3</sup> S. Ferenczi, 'Introjektion und Übertragung', 1909. Reprinted in *First Contributions*, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> (The word used in German is *Einbeziehung*, which means to pull in, to integrate, to incorporate, but as all these words have acquired a specific meaning during the development of analytic thinking, I had to choose a word in which nobody had a vested interest.—Translator)

*transference on to an object, that is to say all kinds of object love, as introjection, as extension of the ego.*

I described the excessive proneness to transference of neurotics as *unconscious exaggeration of the same mechanism*, that is, as addiction to introjection, while paranoiacs<sup>1</sup> tend to withdraw their love from the objects and, after its recovery therefrom, to project it again into the external world (addiction to projection). The true paranoiac could think of part of his own nose (his own personality) as a sausage and then cut it off and throw it away; but nothing could induce him to tolerate something foreign growing on to it.

I know full well, and in fact have pointed out in the paper quoted above, that the same mechanisms occur in normal people.<sup>2</sup> It is true that projection is mobilized also in certain cases of neurosis (for instance in hysterical hallucinations); and similarly in some cases of paranoia capacity for transference (introjection) is not completely lacking. In any case projection in paranoia and introjection in neurosis play so much more important a role than all the other mechanisms that we can regard them as characteristic of these clinical entities.<sup>3</sup>

Now let us turn to Maeder's exteriorization. As described by him, it means that individual organs of the body become identified with things in the external world and are then treated as such. (The paranoiac patient F. B. sees in the apples of the orchard duplications of his own genitals. Another thinks the water-pipes are his own blood-vessels.)

Maeder thinks that these are projections. According to my

<sup>1</sup> Unlike Dr. Maeder, I do not doubt the existence of paranoia without dementia.

<sup>2</sup> I could even add to the examples there given. One could, for instance, classify the metaphysical systems of philosophy as systems of projection and of introjection. The materialism which dissolves the ego completely into the external world marks the climax of projection; solipsism, which includes the whole external world in the ego, the maximum of introjection.

<sup>3</sup> According to recent experiences, paranoia is characterized, in addition to this pathognomic form, also by pathognomic content (homosexuality). (S. Freud, 'Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia', 1911: *Collected Papers*, III, and Ferenczi, 'On the Part Played by Homosexuality in the Pathogenesis of Paranoia', 1911. Reprinted in *First Contributions*, 154.)

way of thinking these cases must be explained as follows: the paranoiacs have perhaps in these cases attempted to project their pleasure in their own organs; they were only able, however, to achieve a *displacement* of this, subjectively preserved, interest. The ego can regard its own body as belonging to the external world, that is, objectively. In Maeder's exteriorization the interest is only *displaced* from one object in the external world (one's own organ) on to another similar one (the water-pipes, the fruit). We have known displacement for some time as a special case of the *mechanism of introjection*, to wit of *transference*, in the course of which, in place of the censured object, another similar one will be included in the sphere of interest, for the satisfaction of the 'free floating' libido. Maeder's 'exteriorization' is therefore not a process of projection, but of introjection.

In a really successful paranoid projection (for instance, in a delusion of persecution) one part of the mental personality itself (the homosexuality) is deprived of its connexion with the ego, deprived, so to speak, of its civic rights, and as it cannot be so simply removed from the world, it is treated as something objective, something alien. Such a transformation of the purely subjective into something objective may be referred to as projection. I think the 'exteriorizing' paranoiac, who has a kind of, though displaced, interest in the objects of the external world, and therefore can still introject, and, through such a detour, behave socially, must be regarded as not very far from the neurotic; for that reason he possibly offers somewhat more favourable therapeutic prospects.

Anyhow, Maeder's exteriorization must be considered not as projection, but as a special kind of introjection which incidentally occurs also in normal people,<sup>1</sup> and I propose to stick in the future to the notion of introjection which well describes all our past experiences.

<sup>1</sup> cf. reference to the mythical anthropomorphosis of inanimate objects in my paper *Introjection and Transference*, 1909. Reprinted in *First Contributions*, p. 35.