Chapter 5 **Sigmund Freud's Perplexity: Beyond *Beyond the Pleasure Principle***

> This relation between mind and matter….is the problem which has exercised the wonder and study of every fine genius since the world began: from the era of the Egyptians and the Brahmins, to that of Pythagoras , of Plato, of Bacon, of Leibniz, of Swedenborg. There sits the Sphinx at the roadside, and from age to age, as each prophet comes by, he tries his fortune at reading the riddle.
>
> Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Nature'.

> From a purely positivist point of view man is the most mysterious and disconcerting of all the objects met with by science. In fact we may as well admit that science has not yet found a place for him in its representations of the universe.
>
> Teilhard de Chardin *The Phenomenon of Man*

Europe may have considered itself enlightened in 1900 but the outbreak of war fourteen years later soon dispelled that illusion. The 20th century that followed saw death on an unimaginable scale, so well-developed was the technology for killing and so savage were the political and economic conflicts. One recent historian described it as "the Age of Hatred", a continual war that raged – in hot and cold forms - for 100 years. [i] Yet though people became well acquainted with death in numerical terms they became estranged from it in any meaningful sense, such was the sense of trauma and shell-shock. The experience of loss was huge and the extent of grief too overwhelming to be adequately acknowledged or made sense of. Even those who counselled the value and importance of mourning, as did the psychoanalysts, often gave death meaning only as a destructive drive.

Amidst the violence and the hatred other narratives were discernible to counter the underlying nihilism. Existentialism recognised that death awareness bestowed a kind of freedom and authenticity, though an authenticity experienced along with unmitigated fear, trembling, and despair. But there was also a new openness to the philosophical and psychological understandings of older or non-European cultures. A growing number of people looked for something beyond traditional Enlightenment or modernist values. Some discovered it in what has become known as "the perennial philosophy", that immemorial wisdom to be found in all cultures and all times but which Europe and North America had lost faith with.

Freud's interests and preoccupations led him into areas of investigation that went well beyond Enlightenment reason but there were limits to how far he would go. He was a neurologist initially and, though he had aspirations to be a philosopher and was well read in the human classics, he regarded himself as a natural scientist. [ii] He certainly had friends who were committed to forms of the perennial wisdom. Jung was his "Crown Prince" for a number of years but Freud himself drew back from what he felt were irrational or occult worlds. As a man of science he wanted to make rational sense of the irrational but, in his efforts to try his fortune at reading the riddle of the Sphinx, found himself perplexed and defeated. Nowhere was this clearer than in his attempts to understand the nature and significance of death. [iii]

Any account of the Twentieth century cannot ignore Freud whom W.H. Auden famously characterised as "a whole climate of opinion". Though considering himself a man of science Freud was at the heart of modernism, that artistic movement which constituted a cultural response to scientific modernity. His name belongs with those writers and artists of the early decades of the century who were concerned with such subjective preoccupations as the stream of consciousness, interior monologue, and the use of myth and symbolism. *The Interpretation of Dreams* which opened the Twentieth century ranks alongside such works as T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland,* James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Proust's *La Recherche Du Temps Perdu* as a classic of modernism.

In his introduction to *The Penguin Freud Reader* the psychoanalytic writer, Adam

Phillips, described what it is for him that makes Freud so original and so compelling both to those who admired and those who disliked him. Freud's writing is "haunting" to the reader. He can have an almost religious effect on people. Reading him is "more akin to a conversion experience". One eminent admirer was the great German novelist, Thomas Mann, whose tribute to Freud on the occasion of his eightieth birthday in 1936 Phillips quotes:

> The analytic revelation is a revolutionary force. With it a blithe skepticism has come into the world, a mistrust that unmasks all the schemes and subterfuges of our own souls. Once roused and on the alert, it cannot be put to sleep again. It infiltrates life, undermines its raw naivety, takes from it the strain of its own ignorance ….. [iv]

Scepticism can take different forms. Traditionally, as the opponent of dogmatism it seeks to question what we know and how we come to know it. A more subtle form holds that there are things which cannot be known, though they can be sensed or intuited. These two forms of scepticism are complementary. The one uses reason to arrive at the best knowledge we can attain while the other understands that reason has its limits and cannot know what is beyond it.

Phillips uses an interesting and enigmatic phrase in trying to capture the spirit of Freud's revolutionary blithe scepticism. He suggests "it is *our passion for ignorance* that animates us" (my italics). Freud understands that the excess of our desire and our wish to know is beyond any object's capacity to satisfy it or as Phillips puts it "we are prone to read and listen....too wishfully, too fearfully". Our desire for death for example "can be in excess of our desire for more life". It is as though we are unconsciously looking for something beyond conventional pleasure or ordinary knowingness and perhaps it is our scepticism - or subtle ignorance - that paradoxically we think will take us there. Somehow the world and all its phenomena contain a knowledge that our normal understanding of them obscures. If psychoanalysis is, in Phillips' conception, an elaborate re-description of curiosity it is not surprising that Freud would be curious about the one experience that lies beyond our capacity to know it - the ultimate riddle that is death.

"The Death Drive"

Freud first explored his ideas on death and what he called the death instinct most directly in his 1920 paper *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* published two years after the end of the Great War. In it he replaced his former dual instincts of pleasure and self-preservation with the life and death instincts - or drives. The death drive is that which seeks to lead what is living to death in contrast to the life - or sexual - drive which is perpetually attempting and achieving a renewal of life. The death drive was not a concept that gained acceptance or understanding amongst most of his psychoanalytic colleagues. Even his faithful follower, Ernest Jones, expressed serious doubts about it. Freud himself registered his own reservations in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* by suggesting that his ideas were "speculation, often quite extravagant speculation", [v] though in his later papers he expressed more rather than less conviction in his original speculations.

One problem for Freud was that as a scientist and a convinced atheist he believed "anatomy was destiny" and "life" was therefore necessarily dependent on the continuing existence of the body. Death could only be its negation, the opposite of life and the end to which life returns:

> If we may reasonably suppose, on the basis of all our experience without exception, that every living thing dies – reverts to the inorganic – for intrinsic reasons, then we can only say that *the goal of all life is death*, or to express it retrospectively: *the inanimate existed before the animate*. [vi]

This conclusion, however, did not really answer for Freud the riddle of death. For at the same time as he concluded that the goal of all life was death he was forced to reflect that "at some point or other, the attributes of life were aroused in non-living matter by the operation upon it of a force that we are still incapable of imagining" which he mused may have been a similar process to that which later "at a certain level of living matter, gave rise to consciousness".

Science it seems has not been able to think of a replacement for God. If death

reduces life to *the inorganic* it could only ask itself how, out of the inorganic, life - and then consciousness - arose in the first place. Surely it must have occurred to Freud that “death” might be a transformation of life rather than merely its negation - that the opposites might be birth and death, with “life” embracing them both? With the riddle unexplored the death instinct came to be identified as a destructive drive, which was how the psychoanalyst Melanie Klein also viewed it.

But the hypothesis of a death drive did not really satisfy the speculative instinct that Freud as philosopher had always felt. Addressing the Socratic injunction to “know thyself” involved, Freud knew, facing up to death either as the apparent negation of oneself or as the entry into the realm of the unknowable. Phillip Rieff suggests that the German for “the unconscious” - *das Unbewusste* – could also be translated as “the unknown” and in fact Freud referred uncomfortably to death as “the Great Unknown”. [vii] Since death seems to face us with our non-being it is also the source of our central perplexity.

Metaphysics and ‘metapsychology’

In philosophical terms Freud is considered one of the “masters of suspicion” along with other nineteenth century figures such as Fichte, Nietzsche, and Bergson. The object of their suspicion was a metaphysics that, ever since Kant, had been considered ‘dogmatic’. Kant had suggested that the metaphysical certainties that lay behind our religious and theological beliefs were our own constructions and did not have an objective reality independent of these constructions . In that sense as Hegel, and Nietzsche after him, famously put it, God was dead, though what Nietzsche really said was that *we* had killed him, an event which he considered had serious implications for us as well as God.

Freud had always harboured a wish to construct a “metapsychology” which was his attempt to systematize a psychology “that leads behind consciousness”. His metapsychology was psychoanalysis in its most theoretical and abstract form. It is difficult, as Laplanche and Pontalis point out in their dictionary of psychoanalysis, [viii] to overlook the similarity of the terms “metapsychology” and “metaphysics” and

Freud who had nursed an aspiration from his youth to be a philosopher very likely intended this comparison to be drawn. In a letter to his early mentor Wilhelm Fliess in 1986 he defines metapsychology as “a scientific endeavour to redress the constructions of ‘metaphysics’”. [ix] The superstitious beliefs of religion, as Freud considered them, are the projection of unconscious forces within us onto the outside world: “….a large part of the mythological view of the world, which extends a long way into the most modern religions, is nothing but psychology projected into the external world”. [x]

This ‘metapsychological’ project begs a lot of questions. Reducing the religion and mythology of centuries to a “nothing but” of psychology is a major one. Relying on an obscure “unconscious” as an explanation of superstition raises more doubts. And subjecting this psychology of the unconscious to an empirical, rational science creates even more problems since science is not without its own delusions. The question is whether or to what extent Freud, in substituting a ‘metapsychology’ for metaphysics, may have risked replacing one ‘dogmatic’ system of thought with another. He was, as it were, exchanging the metaphysics of God for the metaphysics of mankind and in his drive to account for the structure and processes of the psyche he risked straying from that blithe scepticism which was the original and radical spirit of psychoanalysis. Certainly there are those who think so. The French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, for one urged his “return to Freud” which was an invitation to revisit the early Freud, prior to the formulations of his later and more elaborate and abstract theorising.

It may be that the shock of the First World War and the deep cultural uncertainties it engendered added impetus to Freud’s wish to build a metapsychology. He had declared in *The Future of an Illusion* an unwavering faith in science - “our science is no illusion” as opposed to the illusions of religion. But to be at the same time a committed scientist and a phenomenological psychologist was a difficult position to hold. Freud was, perhaps, not unambivalent about science. It is known that he held back the publication of his early paper “Project for a Scientific Psychology”.

Modern science has achieved much for us but it is no longer a branch of “natural

philosophy" as it once was. As a mainly empirical endeavour it is unconscious today of its own metaphysical framework and makes no claims in the field of philosophy. It has long left that to the human sciences though in the wake of a powerful technological science they have also turned their back on metaphysics and the ultimate questions of life. For Freud the task of marrying empirical science and a human psychology which rejected engagement with ultimate meanings proved to be a daunting one and he abandoned his metapsychological project in the end. Peter Gay, Freud's biographer, was of the view that the death drive was to be considered distinct from an aggressive drive, and quoted Freud as believing he had gone "far beyond psychoanalysis" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. [xi] Freud never finished the metapsychological book he was intending to write and destroyed a number of papers which he had planned to put into it. Perhaps he was honest enough to realise that he had asked more questions than his science of psychoanalysis could answer. Perhaps the "passion for ignorance" had won in his acknowledging of the perplexities and paradoxes that life will always present to us.

Freud in the twenty-first century

> The new discourse is that of the philosopher who thinks from Freud – that is, after, with, and against him. Paul Ricoeur

Freud was both scientist and phenomenological psychologist. Whereas the latter was in touch with the subtleties, complexities, and ironies of life the scientist had a compulsion to think more schematically. Freud instinctively thought in terms of pairs of opposites, opposites which also evolved with the development of his thinking. As William Blake wrote: "Without contraries is no progression'", a sentiment which fitted with a conflict discourse like psychoanalysis.

But Blake also recognised that opposites were a unity. He famously conjugated "heaven and hell" in a marriage and suggested therein the contrary to contraries – the coincidence of opposites. Whether conceptualising his contraries as ego and id, conscious and unconscious, or life and death instincts Freud tended to see them more as opposing and less as coincidence. Many of Freud's contraries led to

creative "progression" but the simple either/or choice that often goes with oppositional thinking can also be an avoidance of complexity and ambiguity and of the recognition that opposites are the context for each other. They must be *both/and* as well as *either/or* in the end.

The new Penguin Modern Classics anniversary translations of a selection of Freud's writing contain introductory essays by a variety of critics who discuss Freud's work in the light of contemporary cultural thinking. Most of the commentators steer a middle way between admiring and critical esteem. While showing how Freud continues to be interesting to us they also explore the contradictions and perplexities in his writing. For instance giving "the Unconscious" such a central place in the formation of consciousness is essentially paradoxical, a point taken up by Malcolm Bowie in his introduction to the new translation of *The Outline of Psychoanalysis,* Freud's last attempt to summarise psychoanalysis, published in 1938 before the *Anschluss* and before he left for London. Bowie evokes eloquently the days of early 1938 Vienna and admiringly compares Freud and Mahler, virtual Viennese contemporaries. Yet he is not uncritical of Freud in respect of the concept of "the Unconscious". Freud had asserted that "the psychical in itself is unconscious". Consciousness was inadequate to explain the mind. It was full of gaps and needed, according to Freud, the postulate of an unconscious to make sense of the gaps. But, as Bowie concluded:

> the disproportion between the conscious and unconscious components of the mind gives a strange air of self-apology to Freud's defence of science and reason, for science, even with its inferential procedures working at full stretch, is still no more than a specialised and well-ordered version of consciousness. Psychoanalysis, even as it declares its allegiance to the scientific attitude, is building its understanding of the world on a flimsy foundation; it is endlessly reminded, by the mental stuff on which it chooses to dwell, of the limitations of its warrant. [xii]

The contradiction was evident. By postulating a theory of "the Unconscious" Freud was undermining the consciousness with which he postulated it. The Greek word

for this is *aporia* which means literally “no-passage” and figuratively “perplexity”.

The “passage” out of this might be to suggest that what we call “the Unconscious” is not in fact unconscious to itself but has a clarity and lucidity beyond the limits of human reason and consciousness to comprehend. It is surely not beyond the limits of our imagination to consider that the universe which is responsible for the amazing phenomenon of nature and us in it - including the miracle of the human brain - is a supremely intelligent entity and not just a blind, unconscious set of evolutionary drives, and this is a conception which, in the Buddhist view for example, does not require us to construct a creator to account for it. Mark Cousins states in his introduction to the Penguin volume, *The Unconscious,* that “Everything in Freud’s theory depends on the radical separation of consciousness and the unconscious”, [xiii] as though they were two separate and distinct entities. This is a distinction, Cousins asserts, which it is no longer so easy to maintain. If our consciousness is, in the supreme coincidence of opposites, both a knowing and an ignorance, then in emphasising our knowing, as science does, we cut ourselves off from the ignorance which is the subtler form of knowing.

Further Contraries

> The misconception that has haunted philosophical literature throughout the centuries is the notion of ‘independent existence’. There is no such mode of existence; every entity is to be understood in terms of the way it is interwoven with the rest of the universe. Alfred North Whitehead.

The marriage of opposites applies also to other dualities that Freud struggled with. An opposition which has been a given in our culture since the 17th century and has governed so much of our political, economic and cultural life is that of the individual and society. In fact the cult of “possessive individualism” has shaped the modern world for good and ill and psychoanalysis is founded and often practised on the assumption that a person is a distinct biological and mental individual. Yet Freud expressed some doubts about this even as he built his “psychic apparatus” around the essentiality of the individual person.

Jacqueline Rose, in her introduction to *Mass Psychology and Other Writings* questions “the commonplace assumption that psychoanalysis only deals with individuals”. Freud himself, she reminds us, had pointed out in the opening paragraph of *Mass Psychology* that without the presence of the other there can be no mental life. Freud writes:

> The antithesis between the individual and social or mass psychology which at first glance may seem to us very important, loses a great deal of its sharpness on close examination.

And Rose comments: We only exist through the others who make up the storehouse of the mind…..The mind is a palimpsest in which the traces of these figures will jostle and rearrange themselves for evermore. From the earliest moments of our lives…. we are ‘peopled’ by others. Our psyche is a social space”. [xiv]

The construct of the individual person or self, with all that that implies politically, socially, and economically is ripe for questioning. Freud published his *Mass Psychology* in 1921 but in *The Ego and the Id* of 1923 he returned to the construct of the individual mind. In that paper he theorised his second psychological structure, the complex “psychic apparatus” of *ego, id* and *superego.* To base this “apparatus” on the premise of an individual psyche is potentially problematic when our individuality clearly emerges and is identified within relationship and interdependency. The notion of an individual person is a biological concept, not a mental one. Mind is a cultural phenomenon and not confined to the individual body. In all the wisdom traditions a person is not a separate, autonomous, objective individual but essentially an interdependency. This is now understood by therapists who practise in a systemic modality, whether with the family group, stranger group, or with a single person on his own.

Life as Dream

Another primary opposition we impose on experience is that between waking and sleeping. In *The interpretation of Dreams* Freud questioned this and analysed the relationship between dreams and waking life but the scientist in him saw them as two distinct realms. Paul Keegan in his introduction to *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* suggests one of the premises of psychoanalysis is “that a clear-cut distinction between sleeping and waking has no meaning” and quotes Henri Bergson’s conclusion that “it is the awake state rather than the dream state, which requires explanation” [xv] but, despite Freud’s attention to *Everyday Life* after *The Interpretation of Dreams*, dreamwork still depended for him on a solid reality this side of the dream even though we continually “slip” out of it. As I explain in later chapters, in the view of wisdom traditions such as Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism life itself – and therefore waking life - has a dreamlike nature, as it also had for Shakespeare. For the latter life is theatre - “All the world’s a stage” - and in *The Tempest* Prospero famously reminded us that “when our revels are ended”, we will all “melt into thin air”:

> And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> the solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

We already know quite a lot, of course, after September 11th, 2001, about the collapse of “cloud capped towers” but now, with a much greater possible dissolution in sight, we might begin to wonder whether we are about to wake up precipitately to the dream Shakespeare suggested our life is but which Freud as scientist was not able to entertain.

The Interpretation of Dreams was published in 1900 and launched the Twentieth Century, as it were. In it Freud reintroduced us to the world of the dream in which the solid features of the common sense - or classical scientific - world of time and space were dissolved. In our dreams time is no longer linear and we are not confined to our flesh and blood bodies. While Freud's achievement was to invite us to take dreams, and the world of experience they signify, seriously again – as the famous "royal road", analysing them could tell us a great deal about the unconscious activities of the conscious waking mind - what Freud could not unlock for us was the world beyond waking and dreaming – the world of dreamless sleep and the world of death. [xvi] Is death really the unknown bourn from which we don't return, or is it the one perplexing reality within all our waking and sleeping dreams? Could it somehow be where we come from in the first place, the presence which shadows us as we live, and to which we then return?

The *Fort-Da* Game

Freud had his own answer to this perplexity, if he might see it. Death is felt to be the opposite of our waking and dreaming life because unlike in the morning when we wake and return to ourselves and the awareness of the day we leave the body for good. There is a famous story in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* concerning Freud's observations of his grandson which perhaps illuminates the "contrary" of life and death.

In his paper Freud has explored the thought of how we often repeat activities in our behaviour or thinking that bring us pain rather than pleasure and from which he derived his notion of "the repetition compulsion". The story concerned his baby grandson, Ernst Wolfgang Halberstadt, his daughter Sophie's son, and what Freud called his *fort-da* game. Freud was staying with the family at the time and he had observed how the little Ernst would, like many babies, regularly throw his toys out of sight. He was a "good" boy for the most part but, in particular, he would take a wooden spool to which a string was attached, throw it over the side of his curtained cot so that it disappeared from view and make an *o-o-o-o* sound which Freud and

Sophie understood to mean the German word *fort* - in English, “gone”. Then he would haul the spool back and welcome its return with a “joyful *da”* or “there”. That was the entire game – the “disappearing and coming back” - which he tirelessly repeated, taking more delight in the return of the spool than its disappearance in the first place. [xvii]

Freud’s ingenious interpretation of this game is well known. The game was associated with “the child’s immense cultural achievement in successfully abnegating his drives (that is, abnegating the gratification thereof) by allowing his mother to go away without his making a great fuss”. He compensated for his mother’s absence by, himself, re-enacting the “disappearance-reappearance scenario” with the wooden spool. In thinking of the motives behind the enactment of this game Freud considered two possibilities for the child – that of coming to terms with his own “passive” role in relation to his mother’s movements and “revenge” on his mother for leaving him by making a defiant statement: “Alright, go away! I don’t need you; I’m sending you away myself!” This was not about trying to find “pleasure” out of unpleasureable experiences. It suggested to Freud “the prevalence of tendencies *beyond* the pleasure principle; tendencies, that is, that are arguably more primal than the pleasure principle, and quite independent of it”.

The *fort-da* game is capable of other “primal” interpretations that Freud did not make but which pertain to the adult world. Whereas for the baby the spool, according to Freud, represents mother it could equally signify a person’s relationship with himself. “The unconscious” represents the part of ourselves we do not know. We disappear to ourselves at night and reappear again in the morning, with dreams to enact our continuity - the string tied to the spool of life. But more than this is the “game” of life and death. “Death” is awareness of the ever-present possibility of disappearing to ourselves ultimately. Birth and death, then, are a *fort-da* game. But the essential dialogue, or dialectic, is that between the known and the unknown, the known of the phenomenal world and “the Great Unknown” that death signifies. Questions then present themselves: is there a string that attaches life and death to each other and, if so, how do we represent it? Has there always been a string but

we haven't yet learned to see it in the dark? And what if we could see it, how would we know?

Notes

[i] Niall Ferguson *The War of the World. History's Age of Hatred* London: Penguin Books, 2007.

[ii] For a discussion of how Freud might have benefited - and how British psychoanalysis might benefit now - from dialogue and exchange with the more discursive and philosophical perspective of the French psychoanalytic tradition, see Douglas A. Fraser, *The Making of Psychoanalysis as Discourse - Reformations in Theory and Practice -Freud, Lacan, and Foucault,* unpublished Ph.D, University of Lancaster, 1994.

[iii] The Sphinx puts riddles to those who pass by, riddles which embody both fate and mystery. Myth has it that it devours those who cannot answer the riddles. The Greek Sphinx was associated with the myth of Oedipus and was, in one tradition, the daughter of Laius. The famous question it asked is 'What creature walks sometimes on two legs, sometimes on three, sometimes on four and which, contrary to the general law of nature, is at its weakest when it uses the most?' The answer, as many know, is Man. But the Sphinx also had another riddle: 'There are two sisters, one gives birth to the other, and she in turn gives birth to the first.' The answer to this second riddle is 'Day and Night' – day and night are feminine nouns in Greek and therefore 'sisters'. Could another answer be birth and death, one wonders? Oedipus, it is said, eventually solved the riddles and in despair the monster threw itself from the top of a rock and was killed. Freud, as Oedipus, was not so successful. He may have 'solved' the first riddle but failed to answer the second. Perhaps he never addressed the question.

The Egyptian Sphinx expressed assured serenity rather than perplexity. It stares at the sole point on the horizon where the sun will rise. According to Albert Champdor, 'It listens to the song of the planets; it watches on the brink of eternity over all that has been and all that is to come; it gazes at distant Niles flowing across the Heavens and the Sun-boats floating on their waters'. (From *Le Livre des Morts* Paris 1963, quoted in Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols,* 1996.) The Egyptian Sphinx would seem to know things the Greek one doesn't

[iv] From Mann's *Essay of Three Decades,* quoted in Adam Phillips, (Ed) *The Penguin Freud Reader,* London: Penguin 2006. P ix. References to Freud in this chapter are taken, as are Phillips extracts in his *Reader*, from the new Penguin Modern Classics centenary translations and their introductions published recently under the general editorship of Phillips. The new translations constitute a literary event in themselves. Though Phillips pays respect to the original translator, James Strachey, whose monumental achievement was to give us 'the English Freud' - a debt which Phillips fully acknowledges in his London Review of Books article on the new translations (*LRB* October 4, 2007) - Strachey's translations were completed in a different age – the first half of the twentieth century – while these new penguin translations offer us a very readable Freud for the twenty-first century.

Strachey translated the whole 'canon' himself but Phillips invited a group of translators to translate each text individually. At the same time a variety of well known cultural critics contributed introductions to each text. These are especially interesting and I quote from a few of them in this chapter. The translators' prefaces to each volume also make fascinating reading in view of the controversies around the translation of Freud's original German into other European languages.

Phillips is, of course, known as an essayist in his own right and his intriguing and original essays have brought Freud and psychoanalysis to the awareness of the general reading public today perhaps more than any other writer. His first volume, *On Kissing, Tickling and Being Bored (*Faber 1993), has been followed by some dozen further collections, including the more recent, and equally recommendable, *Side Effects* (Penguin, 2006) and *On Balance* (Hamish Hamilton, 2010).

[v] Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings.* Translated by John Re ddick general editor, Adam Phillips. London: Penguin, 2003. P 83.

[vi] Ibid. p.78

[vii] While Rieff reminds us that Freud had ambivalently pictured "Death as 'the Great Unknown'", he also recalls that the phrase 'expressed Freud's own awe, however ironically conveyed, of a "gentleman" about whom he thought much and domesticated little.' As Rieff further remarks, 'that "gentleman" seemed to him, as to Job, no gentleman', and adds that 'the "death instinct" remains the most embarrassing God-term in the Freudian canon'. Phillip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist,* University of Chicago Press, 1959, 1979, p 377n.

[viii] Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis *The Language of Psychoanalysis,* translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. London: Karnac, 1988. See the entry 'Metapsychology'.

[ix] Letter to Wilhelm Fliess quoted in Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p. 249.

[x] Ibid. P 249-250. Laplanche and Pontalis quote Freud further: 'The obscure recognition (the endopsychic perception, as it were) of psychical factors and relations in the unconscious is mirrored in the construction of a *supernatural reality*, which is destined to be changed back once more by science into *the psychology of the unconscious.* One could venture to transform *metaphysics* into *metapsychology.'*

[xi] Peter Gay, *Freud. A Life for Our time*. London: MacMillan, 1988, p 403.

[xii] Malcolm Bowie, 'Introduction' to Sigmund Freud, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis,* translated by Helena Ragg-Kirkby, general editor, Adam Phillips, London: Penguin, 2003, p xviii.

[xiii] Mark Cousins, 'Introduction' to Sigmund Freud, *The Unconscious*, translated by Graham Frankland, general editor, Adam Phillips, London: Penguin, 2005, p xviii.

[xiv] Jacqueline Rose, 'Introduction' to Sigmund Freud, *Mass Psychology and Other Writings,* translated by J.A. Underwood, general editor, Adam Phillips, London: Penguin, 2004, p vii.

[xv] Paul Keegan, 'Introduction' to Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* translated by Anthea Bell, general editor, Adam Phillips, p xxvi.

[xvi] In *The Ego and the Id* Freud had ventured: 'The fear of death poses a severe problem for psychoanalysis for death is an abstract concept with a negative content for which no unconscious correlative can be found.' See Sigmund Freud, 'The Ego and the Id' in S.F. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* op.cit 2003 pp 147-148

[xvii] Freud, Sigmund, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings,* Op.cit. 2003, pp 52-55.