

had already become too late. In the first three or four years of life impressions are fixed and modes of reactions are formed towards the outer world which can never be robbed of their importance by any later experiences.

If it is true that the incomprehensible childhood reminiscences and the person's phantasies based on them always bring out the most significant of his psychic development, then the fact corroborated by the vulture phantasy, that Leonardo passed the first years of his life alone with his mother must have been a most decisive influence on the formation of his inner life. Under the effect of this constellation it could not have been otherwise than that the child which in his young life encountered one problem more than other children, should have begun to ponder very passionately over this riddle and thus should have become an investigator early in life. For he was tortured by the great questions where do children come from and what has the father to do with their origin. The vague knowledge of this connection between his investigation and his childhood history has later drawn from him the exclamation that it was destined that he should deeply occupy himself with the problem of the bird's flight, for already in his cradle he had been visited by a vulture. To trace the curiosity which is directed to the flight of the bird to the infantile sexual investigation will be a later task which will not be difficult to accomplish.

III

The element of the vulture represents to us the real memory content in Leonardo's childhood phantasy; the association into which Leonardo himself placed his phantasy threw a bright light on the importance of this content for his later life. In continuing the work of interpretation we now encounter the strange problem why this memory content was elaborated into a homosexual situation. The mother who nursed the child, or rather from whom the child suckled was transformed into a vulture which stuck its tail into the child's mouth. We maintain that the "coda" (tail) of the vulture, following the common substituting usages of language, cannot signify anything else but a male genital or penis. But we do not understand how the phantastic activity came to furnish precisely this maternal bird with the mark of masculinity, and in view of this absurdity we become confused at the possibility of reducing this phantastic structure to rational sense.

However, we must not despair. How many seemingly absurd dreams have we not forced to give up their sense! Why should it become more difficult to accomplish this in a childhood phantasy than in a dream!

Let us remember the fact that it is not good to find one isolated peculiarity, and let us hasten to add another to it which is still more striking.

The vulture-headed goddess *Mut* of the Egyptians, a figure of altogether impersonal character, as expressed by Drexel in Roscher's lexicon, was often fused with other maternal deities of living individuality like Isis and Hathor, but she retained besides her separate existence and reverence. It was especially characteristic of the Egyptian pantheon that the individual gods did not perish in this amalgamation. Besides the composition of deities the simple divine image remained in her independence. In most representations the vulture-headed maternal deity was formed by the Egyptians in a phallic manner,[35] her body which was distinguished as feminine by its breasts also bore the masculine member in a state of erection.

The goddess *Mut* thus evinced the same union of maternal and paternal characteristics as in Leonardo's vulture phantasy. Should we explain this concurrence by the assumption that Leonardo knew from studying his book the androgynous nature of the maternal vulture? Such possibility is more than questionable; it seems that the sources accessible to him contained nothing of remarkable determination. It is more likely that here as there the agreement is to be traced to a common, effective and unknown motive.

Mythology can teach us that the androgynous formation, the union of masculine and feminine sex characteristics, did not belong to the goddess *Mut* alone but also to other deities such as Isis and Hathor, but in the latter perhaps only insofar as they possessed also a motherly nature and became fused with the goddess

Mut.[36] It teaches us further that other Egyptian deities such as Neith of Sais out of whom the Greek Athene was later formed, were originally conceived as androgynous or dihermaphroditic, and that the same held true for many of the Greek gods, especially of the Dionysian circle, as well as for Aphrodite who was later restricted to a feminine love deity. Mythology may also offer the explanation that the phallus which was added to the feminine body was meant to denote the creative primitive force of nature, and that all these hermaphroditic deistic formations express the idea that only a union of the masculine and feminine elements can result in a worthy representation of divine perfection. But none of these observations explain the psychological riddle, namely, that the phantasy of men takes no offense at the fact that a figure which was to embody the essence of the mother should be provided with the mark of the masculine power which is the opposite of motherhood.

The explanation comes from the infantile sexual theories. There really was a time in which the male genital was found to be compatible with the representation of the mother. When the male child first directs his curiosity to the riddle of the sexual life, he is dominated by the interest for his own genitals. He finds this part of the body too valuable and too important to believe that it would be missing in other persons to whom he feels such a resemblance. As he cannot divine that there is still another equally valuable type of genital formation he must grasp the assumption that all persons, also women, possess such a member as he. This preconception is so firm in the youthful investigator that it is not destroyed even by the first observation of the genitals in little girls. His perception naturally tells him that there is something different here than in him, but he is unable to admit to himself as the content of this perception that he cannot find this member in girls. That this member may be missing is to him a dismal and unbearable thought, and he therefore seeks to reconcile it by deciding that it also exists in girls but it is still very small and that it will grow later.[37] If this expectation does not appear to be fulfilled on later observation he has at his disposal another way of escape. The member also existed in the little girl but it was cut off and on its place there remained a wound. This progress of the theory already makes use of his own painful experience; he was threatened in the meantime that this important organ will be taken away from him if it will form too much of an interest for his occupation. Under the influence of this threat of castration he now interprets his conception of the female genital, henceforth he will tremble for his masculinity, but at the same time he will look with contempt upon those unhappy creatures upon whom, in his opinion, this cruel punishment had already been visited.

Before the child came under the domination of the castration complex, at the time when he still held the woman at her full value, he began to manifest an intensive desire to look as an erotic activity of his impulse. He wished to see the genitals of other persons, originally probably because he wished to compare them with his own. The erotic attraction which emanated from the person of his mother soon reached its height in the longing to see her genital which he believed to be a penis. With the cognition acquired only later that the woman has no penis, this longing often becomes transformed into its opposite and gives place to disgust, which in the years of puberty may become the cause of psychic impotence, of misogyny and of lasting homosexuality. But the fixation on the once so vividly desired object, the penis of the woman, leaves ineradicable traces in the psychic life of the child, which has gone through that fragment of infantile sexual investigation with particular thoroughness. The fetich-like reverence for the feminine foot and shoe seems to take the foot only as a substitutive symbol for the once revered and since then missed member of the woman. The "braid-slashers" without knowing it play the part of persons who perform the act of castration on the female genital.

One will not gain any correct understanding of the activities of the infantile sexuality and probably will consider these communications unworthy of belief, as long as one does not relinquish the attitude of our cultural depreciation of the genitals and of the sexual functions in general. To understand the infantile psychic life one has to look to analogies from primitive times. For a long series of generations we have been in the habit of considering the genitals or *pudenda* as objects of shame, and in the case of more successful sexual repression as objects of disgust. The majority of those living to-day only reluctantly obey the laws of propagation, feeling thereby that their human dignity is being offended and degraded. What exists among us of the other conception of the sexual life is found only in the uncultivated and in the lower social strata;

among the higher and more refined types it is concealed as culturally inferior, and its activity is ventured only under the embittered admonition of a guilty conscience. It was quite different in the primitive times of the human race. From the laborious collections of students of civilization one gains the conviction that the genitals were originally the pride and hope of living beings, they enjoyed divine worship, and the divine nature of their functions was transported to all newly acquired activities of mankind. Through sublimation of its essential elements there arose innumerable god-figures, and at the time when the relation of official religions with sexual activity was already hidden from the general consciousness, secret cults labored to preserve it alive among a number of the initiated. In the course of cultural development it finally happened that so much godliness and holiness had been extracted from sexuality that the exhausted remnant fell into contempt. But considering the indestructibility which is in the nature of all psychic impressions one need not wonder that even the most primitive forms of genital worship could be demonstrated until quite recent times, and that language, customs and superstitions of present day humanity contain the remnants of all phases of this course of development.[38]

Important biological analogies have taught us that the psychic development of the individual is a short repetition of the course of development of the race, and we shall therefore not find improbable what the psychoanalytic investigation of the child's psyche asserts concerning the infantile estimation of the genitals. The infantile assumption of the maternal penis is thus the common source of origin for the androgynous formation of the maternal deities like the Egyptian goddess Mut and the vulture's "coda" (tail) in Leonardo's childhood phantasy. As a matter of fact, it is only through misunderstanding that these deistic representations are designated hermaphroditic in the medical sense of the word. In none of them is there a union of the true genitals of both sexes as they are united in some deformed beings to the disgust of every human eye; but besides the breast as a mark of motherhood there is also the male member, just as it existed in the first imagination of the child about his mother's body. Mythology has retained for the faithful this revered and very early fancied bodily formation of the mother. The prominence given to the vulture-tail in Leonardo's phantasy we can now translate as follows: At that time when I directed my tender curiosity to my mother I still adjudged to her a genital like my own. A further testimonial of Leonardo's precocious sexual investigation, which in our opinion became decisive for his entire life.

A brief reflection now admonishes us that we should not be satisfied with the explanation of the vulture-tail in Leonardo's childhood phantasy. It seems as if it contained more than we as yet understand. For its more striking feature really consisted in the fact that the nursing at the mother's breast was transformed into being nursed, that is into a passive act which thus gives the situation an undoubted homosexual character. Mindful of the historical probability that Leonardo behaved in life as a homosexual in feeling, the question obtrudes itself whether this phantasy does not point to a causal connection between Leonardo's childhood relations to his mother and the later manifest, if only ideal, homosexuality. We would not venture to draw such conclusion from Leonardo's disfigured reminiscence were it not for the fact that we know from our psychoanalytic investigation of homosexual patients that such a relation exists, indeed it really is an intimate and necessary relation.

Homosexual men who have started in our times an energetic action against the legal limitations of their sexual activity are fond of representing themselves through theoretical spokesmen as evincing a sexual variation, which may be distinguished from the very beginning, as an intermediate stage of sex or as "a third sex." In other words, they maintain that they are men who are forced by organic determinants originating in the germ to find that pleasure in the man which they cannot feel in the woman. As much as one would wish to subscribe to their demands out of humane considerations, one must nevertheless exercise reserve regarding their theories which were formulated without regard for the psychic genesis of homosexuality. Psychoanalysis offers the means to fill this gap and to put to test the assertions of the homosexuals. It is true that psychoanalysis fulfilled this task in only a small number of people, but all investigation thus far undertaken brought the same surprising results.[39] In all our male homosexuals there was a very intensive erotic attachment to a feminine person, as a rule to the mother, which was manifest in the very first period of childhood and later entirely forgotten by the individual. This attachment was produced or favored by too

much love from the mother herself, but was also furthered by the retirement or absence of the father during the childhood period. Sadger emphasizes the fact that the mothers of his homosexual patients were often man-women, or women with energetic traits of character who were able to crowd out the father from the place allotted to him in the family. I have sometimes observed the same thing, but I was more impressed by those cases in which the father was absent from the beginning or disappeared early so that the boy was altogether under feminine influence. It almost seems that the presence of a strong father would assure for the son the proper decision in the selection of his object from the opposite sex.

Following this primary stage, a transformation takes place whose mechanisms we know but whose motive forces we have not yet grasped. The love of the mother cannot continue to develop consciously so that it merges into repression. The boy represses the love for the mother by putting himself in her place, by identifying himself with her, and by taking his own person as a model through the similarity of which he is guided in the selection of his love object. He thus becomes homosexual; as a matter of fact he returns to the stage of autoerotism, for the boys whom the growing adult now loves are only substitutive persons or revivals of his own childish person, whom he loves in the same way as his mother loved him. We say that he finds his love object on the road to narcissism, for the Greek legend called a boy Narcissus to whom nothing was more pleasing than his own mirrored image, and who became transformed into a beautiful flower of this name.

Deeper psychological discussions justify the assertion that the person who becomes homosexual in this manner remains fixed in his unconscious on the memory picture of his mother. By repressing the love for his mother he conserves the same in his unconscious and henceforth remains faithful to her. When as a lover he seems to pursue boys, he really thus runs away from women who could cause him to become faithless to his mother. Through direct observation of individual cases we could demonstrate that he who is seemingly receptive only of masculine stimuli is in reality influenced by the charms emanating from women just like a normal person, but each and every time he hastens to transfer the stimulus he received from the woman to a male object and in this manner he repeats again and again the mechanism through which he acquired his homosexuality.

It is far from us to exaggerate the importance of these explanations concerning the psychic genesis of homosexuality. It is quite clear that they are in crass opposition to the official theories of the homosexual spokesmen, but we are aware that these explanations are not sufficiently comprehensive to render possible a final explanation of the problem. What one calls homosexual for practical purposes may have its origin in a variety of psychosexual inhibiting processes, and the process recognized by us is perhaps only one among many, and has reference only to one type of "homosexuality." We must also admit, that the number of cases in our homosexual type which shows the conditions required by us, exceeds by far those cases in which the resulting effect really appears, so that even we cannot reject the supposed coöperation of unknown constitutional factors from which one was otherwise wont to deduce the whole of homosexuality. As a matter of fact there would be no occasion for entering into the psychic genesis of the form of homosexuality studied by us if there were not a strong presumption that Leonardo, from whose vulture-phantasy we started, really belonged to this one type of homosexuality.

As little as is known concerning the sexual behavior of the great artist and investigator, we must still trust to the probability that the testimonies of his contemporaries did not go far astray. In the light of this tradition he appears to us as a man whose sexual need and activity were extraordinarily low, as if a higher striving had raised him above the common animal need of mankind. It may be open to doubt whether he ever sought direct sexual gratification, and in what manner, or whether he could dispense with it altogether. We are justified, however, to look also in him for those emotional streams which imperatively force others to the sexual act, for we cannot imagine a human psychic life in whose development the sexual desire in the broadest sense, the libido, has not had its share, whether the latter has withdrawn itself far from the original aim or whether it was detained from being put into execution.

Anything but traces of unchanged sexual desire we need not expect in Leonardo. These point however to one

direction and allow us to count him among homosexuals. It has always been emphasized that he took as his pupils only strikingly handsome boys and youths. He was kind and considerate towards them, he cared for them and nursed them himself when they were ill, just like a mother nurses her children, as his own mother might have cared for him. As he selected them on account of their beauty rather than their talent, none of them--Cesare da Sesto, G. Boltraffio, Andrea Salaino, Francesco Melzi and the others--ever became a prominent artist. Most of them could not make themselves independent of their master and disappeared after his death without leaving a more definite physiognomy to the history of art. The others who by their productions earned the right to call themselves his pupils, as Luini and Bazzi, nicknamed Sodoma, he probably did not know personally.

We realize that we will have to face the objection that Leonardo's behavior towards his pupils surely had nothing to do with sexual motives, and permits no conclusion as to his sexual peculiarity. Against this we wish to assert with all caution that our conception explains some strange features in the master's behavior which otherwise would have remained enigmatical. Leonardo kept a diary; he made entries in his small hand, written from right to left which were meant only for himself. It is to be noted that in this diary he addressed himself with "thou": "Learn from master Lucca the multiplication of roots." [40] "Let master d'Abacco show thee the square of the circle." [41] Or on the occasion of a journey he entered in his diary:

"I am going to Milan to look after the affairs of my garden ... order two pack-sacks to be made. Ask Boltraffio to show thee his turning-lathe and let him polish a stone on it.--Leave the book to master Andrea il Todesco." [42] Or he wrote a resolution of quite different significance: "Thou must show in thy treatise that the earth is a star, like the moon or resembling it, and thus prove the nobility of our world." [43]

In this diary, which like the diaries of other mortals often skim over the most important events of the day with only few words or ignore them altogether, one finds a few entries which on account of their peculiarity are cited by all of Leonardo's biographers. They show notations referring to the master's petty expenses, which are recorded with painful exactitude as if coming from a pedantic and strictly parsimonious family father, while there is nothing to show that he spent greater sums, or that the artist was well versed in household management. One of these notes refers to a new cloak which he bought for his pupil Andrea Salaino: [44]

Silver brocade Lira 15 Soldi 4 Crimson velvet for trimming " 9 " 0 Braid " 0 " 9 Buttons " 0 " 12

Another very detailed notice gives all the expenses which he incurred through the bad qualities and the thieving tendencies of another pupil or model: "On 21st day of April, 1490, I started this book and started again the horse. [45] Jacomo came to me on Magdalene day, 1490, at the age of ten years (marginal note: thievish, mendacious, willful, gluttonous). On the second day I ordered for him two shirts, a pair of pants, and a jacket, and as I put the money away to pay for the things named he stole the money from my purse, and it was never possible to make him confess, although I was absolutely sure of it (marginal note: 4 Lira ...)." So the report continues concerning the misdeeds of the little boy and concludes with the expense account: "In the first year, a cloak, Lira 2: 6 shirts, Lira 4: 3 jackets, Lira 6: 4 pair of socks, Lira 7, etc." [46]

Leonardo's biographers, to whom nothing was further than to solve the riddle in the psychic life of their hero from these slight weaknesses and peculiarities, were wont to remark in connection with these peculiar accounts that they emphasized the kindness and consideration of the master for his pupils. They forget thereby that it is not Leonardo's behavior that needs an explanation, but the fact that he left us these testimonies of it. As it is impossible to ascribe to him the motive of smuggling into our hands proofs of his kindness, we must assume that another affective motive caused him to write this down. It is not easy to conjecture what this motive was, and we could not give any if not for another account found among Leonardo's papers which throws a brilliant light on these peculiarly petty notices about his pupils' clothes, and others of a kind: [47]

Burial expenses following the death of Caterina 27 florins 2 pounds wax 18 " Cataphalc 12 " For the transportation and erection of the cross 4 " Pall bearers 8 " To 4 priests and 4 clerics 20 " Ringing of bells 2 "

To grave diggers 16 " For the approval--to the officials 1 " ----- To sum up 108 florins

Previous expenses: To the doctor 4 florins For sugar and candles 12 " 16 florins ----- Sum total 124 florins

The writer Merejkowski is the only one who can tell us who this Caterina was. From two different short notices he concludes that she was the mother of Leonardo, the poor peasant woman from Vinci, who came to Milan in 1493 to visit her son then 41 years old. While on this visit she fell ill and was taken to the hospital by Leonardo, and following her death she was buried by her son with such sumptuous funeral.[48]

This deduction of the psychological writer of romances is not capable of proof, but it can lay claim to so many inner probabilities, it agrees so well with everything we know besides about Leonardo's emotional activity that I cannot refrain from accepting it as correct. Leonardo succeeded in forcing his feelings under the yoke of investigation and in inhibiting their free utterance, but even in him there were episodes in which the suppression obtained expression, and one of these was the death of his mother whom he once loved so ardently. Through this account of the burial expenses he represents to us the mourning of his mother in an almost unrecognizable distortion. We wonder how such a distortion could have come about, and we certainly cannot grasp it when viewed under normal mental processes. But similar mechanisms are familiar to us under the abnormal conditions of neuroses, and especially in the so-called *compulsion neurosis*. Here one can observe how the expressions of more intensive feelings have been displaced to trivial and even foolish performances. The opposing forces succeeded in debasing the expression of these repressed feelings to such an extent that one is forced to estimate the intensity of these feelings as extremely unimportant, but the imperative compulsion with which these insignificant acts express themselves betrays the real force of the feelings which are rooted in the unconscious, which consciousness would wish to disavow. Only by bearing in mind the mechanisms of compulsion neurosis can one explain Leonardo's account of the funeral expenses of his mother. In his unconscious he was still tied to her as in childhood, by erotically tinged feelings; the opposition of the repression of this childhood love which appeared later stood in the way of erecting to her in his diary a different and more dignified monument, but what resulted as a compromise of this neurotic conflict had to be put in operation and hence the account was entered in the diary which thus came to the knowledge of posterity as something incomprehensible.

It is not venturing far to transfer the interpretation obtained from the funeral expenses to the accounts dealing with his pupils. Accordingly we would say that here also we deal with a case in which Leonardo's meager remnants of libidinous feelings compulsively obtained a distorted expression. The mother and the pupils, the very images of his own boyish beauty, would be his sexual objects--as far as his sexual repression dominating his nature would allow such manifestations--and the compulsion to note with painful circumstantiality his expenses on their behalf, would designate the strange betrayal of his rudimentary conflicts. From this we would conclude that Leonardo's love-life really belonged to that type of homosexuality, the psychic development of which we were able to disclose, and the appearance of the homosexual situation in his vulture-phantasy would become comprehensible to us, for it states nothing more or less than what we have asserted before concerning that type. It requires the following interpretation: Through the erotic relations to my mother I became a homosexual.[49]

IV

The vulture phantasy of Leonardo still absorbs our interest. In words which only too plainly recall a sexual act ("and has many times struck against my lips with his tail"), Leonardo emphasizes the intensity of the erotic relations between the mother and the child. A second memory content of the phantasy can readily be conjectured from the association of the activity of the mother (of the vulture) with the accentuation of the mouth zone. We can translate it as follows: My mother has pressed on my mouth innumerable passionate kisses. The phantasy is composed of the memories of being nursed and of being kissed by the mother.