PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION, IMAGINATION AND PSYCHOANALYSIS.

Introduction

In this paper psychological identification provides the problem, imagination the philosophical tool, and psychoanalysis the context and the content of explanation. Psychoanalysis is employed widely in cultural studies and in the humanities, but attracts little recognition or interest in mainstream analytic philosophy. Some philosophers do use psychoanalytic concepts and theses, and some have taken psychoanalysis to be of philosophical interest in its own right.[1] In general however philosophical work is needed to make psychoanalytic theory and practice intelligible to philosophers. Clarification is also needed elsewhere: in psychology itself (much of which is unreceptive to the idea of a psychoanalytic psychology) and in social sciences such as anthropology and politics which make use of psychoanalytic theory. In this paper the psychoanalytic conception of identification is made available in a more precise philosophical form.

Richard Wollheim's writing on identification and imagination (1973, 1974, 1984, ch.3) is the key reference here; identification is analysed in terms of the psychological activity of what he calls "central imagining".[2] I take his analysis further to show how centrally imagining enables a subject to see himself in relation to another, to put himself in the other's place in that relation, and to discover, self-reflectively, the identifications that form his character. I also extend this to the psychoanalytic concepts I draw on: psychoanalytic interpretation in contemporary practice depends on the psychoanalyst understanding her own state of mind in the counter-transference. The counter-transference itself may be explained as the psychoanalyst centrally imagining the patient; she comes to understand the patient's state of mind through reflecting on her own central imagining.

Identification can be conceptualised as a psychological relation between individuals.[3] It is often transient, particularly in childhood or adolescent attachments to significant figures. When longstanding it contributes to character and we may call it "characterological identification". Here ordinary psychology has been sufficiently influenced by Freud's ideas for the following definition from *The Language of Psychoanalysis* to apply: "Psychological process whereby the subject assimilates an aspect, property or attribute of the other and is transformed, wholly or partially, after the model the other provides." (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.205). The definition continues: "It is by means of a series of identifications that the personality is constituted and specified".[4]

Ordinary psychology assumes that the dispositions of a subject to act, think, behave and feel in ways said to be "characteristic" (taking due account of individual constitution and temperament) are acquired largely through psychological mechanisms of training and habit. According to psychoanalysis some dispositions have a further, functional, role in maintaining psychic equilibrium; they are unconscious defensive structures embedded in character. Character is not irrevocably fixed in adulthood, however; people can change through coming to know themselves better in self-reflection. For character dispositions to be modified reflectively, they must be consciously available to the subject. With unconscious dispositions reflection is possible once psychoanalytic interpretation brings unconscious thoughts into consciousness. Wollheim shows how in Freud's account, characterological identification is based on an unconscious thought: the wish to be the person identified with. The claim of my paper is that to explain identification we do require this psychoanalytic dimension. Identification cannot be understood apart from the conception of the unconscious on which psychoanalysis is founded .[5]

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[1] I discuss philosophical attitudes to psychoanalysis in the Introduction to Braddock and Lacewing (2007).
[2] The imagination is central to Wollheim's analysis of Freud's theory as a whole; see eg Wollheim (1979). Other advocates of this view include Castoriadis (1997). Freud's own use of the concept is unsystematic.
[3] Identification is also said to occur with fictional, mythical, or dead, figures. A further form is "social" identification between an individual and a group.
[4] Nothing in my argument depends on distinguishing "personality" and "character".
[5] Psychoanalysis theorises the unconscious mind as dynamically organized in the service of psychic defence against psychic pain. I deal here only with Freud's theory and its Kleinian development (notably

1. Identification as imagining

Wollheim distinguishes a form of imagination he calls "central imagining", most often encountered in the visual modality. It possesses a property of "iconicity": its content, which is non-propositional, is directly present to the imaginer.[6] In central imagining the content present to the imaginer includes a perspective belonging to some figure within the imagined scene. The subject thus imagines the scene from a point of view occupied by that figure, who may or may not be the subject himself. The perspective fixes the position occupied by the "protagonist" of the imagining; central imagining is protagonist-centred. Imagining the entry of the Sultan Mahomet II into Constantinople in 1453, Wollheim is the imaginer but the imagined perspective is the Sultan's: Mahomet II is the protagonist of Wollheim's imagining. Wollheim writes: "I [shall] successively represent the sights and sounds and smells and internal sensations as they would have reached the eyes and ears and nose and proprio-perceptive system of the triumphant Sultan: the noise of the horses, and the clatter of spears and armour behind him, the sight of the column of the twisted serpent as the gaze passes upward over it, the smell of shit and summer dust, the thud as his feet, which have shaken themselves free of the stirrups, hit the ground." (1984, p.73). He continues "I centrally imagine what the Sultan says and does and feels or I imagine him from the inside. He is the protagonist of my imaginative project.".

I present Wollheim's claim that imagining can have this structure without critical comment for reasons of space .[7] Wollheim's thesis is elaborated by the device of a "counterpart", a term which he adopts from Wittgenstein while (like Wittgenstein) saying little directly about how we are to understand it (1984, pp.65-72).[8] The counterpart to central imagining is the dramatic production: the joint activities of dramatist, actors, and audience. It provides a ready-made vocabulary in which to talk about the characters in the drama and the "repertoire" of characteristics the dramatist endows them with.[9] It also allows us to identify a particular kind of audience, the "empathic" audience, as one which responds to the situation of a particular figure or, a "protagonist", in the same way as the figure himself does. The empathic audience occupies the same perspective on the events of the drama as the protagonist and its emotions are congruent with his situation and the experiences he is portrayed as undergoing. The audience is drawn to occupy the protagonist's perspective by adopting his character's "repertoire". This provides a vocabulary for talk of central imagining; we may say that the subject's "internal" empathic audience feels congruently with the protagonist of her central imagining.. As her own internal dramatist, she creates a character repertoire for the protagonist whose position she then occupies in the internal dramatic scene, which then draws her internal audience to respond empathically.

The counterpart shows how central imagining can affect behavior, since an empathic audience is in a state of real, not imagined, feeling. The dramatic counterpart is intended to model how the feelings experienced by the subject's internal audience are really felt and so can be motivational, in just the way that they are for a real-life empathic audience. Just as the audience of a drama experiences a real emotion through engaging with events on the stage, so too may the imagining subject experience a real emotion through engaging with events on an internal stage. Under the conventions of the drama, however, members of such an

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the concept of unconscious phantasy). I employ Wollheim's re-working of this as the thesis of the "archaic theory of the mind" (see my Section 4).

[6] For iconicity as a property of mental states see Wollheim (1984, ch.3, pp. 62-65). The concept is not fully developed however.

[7] Critical exposition is too large a task for the present paper. Wollheim's thesis of central imagining forms part of a debate about the imagination inaugurated by Williams (1966).

[8] See Budd (1989, pp.100-101) for some remarks on Wittgenstein's use of the term. The notion is a methodological one; a counterpart is an external situation whose structure which can be objectively described, providing an observational vocabulary for talking about a mental activity (such as central imagining).

[9] "Empathic" is used descriptively here with no commitment to the idea of "empathy" (a concept that Wolleim does not in any case discuss).

audience do not act on these feelings and neither will the imagining subject act on hers, generally speaking.[10] It might then be objected that since what is imagined is understood not to be real it is only exceptionally acted upon, and that we would expect character dispositions owed to identification to be more systematically apparent in what the subject does.[11] If we are to explain characterological identification in terms of central imagining, we will need to show how emotions arising in central imagining can have a systematic effect.

2. The "deflationary" account of identification.

Later sections will develop my claim that psychoanalysis is necessary to explaining identification. First however I consider whether an adequate account of identification could be given without relying on input from psychoanalysis. I will call this sort of account "deflationary"; this does not mean that it must be given without reference to the concepts of psychoanalytic theory, since these can themselves be given in a deflationary version, as I show later. The following example uses the dramatic counterpart to show how central imagining works in transient identification, such as is seen in adolescents with celebrities or teachers and which "ordinary" psychology explains as imitation or pretence. The adolescent centrally imagines some charismatic figure and acquires (temporarily) this protagonist's repertoire of characteristics. She now occupies the protagonist's position in the dramatic scenes she imagines, and experiences emotions and attitudes congruent with the protagonist by having her internal audience in its empathic mode. The feelings she experiences produce behavior which is congruent with the identification (and which bears the appearance of imitation)..

We might then explain characterological identification as central imagining without reference to psychoanalysis, in the following way. A subject centrally imagines a protagonist doing brave things, thus experiencing feelings of bravery. Repeatedly doing this makes the subject feel braver on a regular basis, with the result of braver behavior. (This is exploited in training programmes when role play or imaginative exercises are engaged in instrumentally so as to alter behavior). Repeated central imagining of such a figure can be reinforced by its consequences so as to become dispositional. Here we have a deflationary account of identification as central imagining with disposition-formation, which also provides an explanation of how feelings arising from imagining can be systematic in producing behaviour.

This picture can be extended to Freud's own account where it is the resolution of the Oedipus complex that leads to the primary character-forming identifications with the parents (Freud, 1923). The little boy's attachment to his mother and the animosity of his rivalry with his father are reconciled through his identification with his father. Analogously, the little girl resolves her rivalry with her mother for her father by identifying with her mother. Freud's view of identification has entered ordinary psychology to the extent that there is recognition of children's competition with one (usually the same-sex) parent for the love of the other one. Once psychoanalysis has drawn attention to the observable facts of rivalry, a psychological account of identification follows without commitment to any special psychoanalytic claims about the child's state of mind. Identification with the parents can be attributed on a basis of observable behavior: children are readily seen as imitating the mannerisms and behaviors of their parents, and as adopting their values and personality traits. Now we could give a deflationary account of identification in terms of central imagining, omitting any reference to psychoanalytic theory, so as to make the psychoanalytic account of identification provisionally accessible to an audience unfamiliar with psychoanalysis. On this account the little boy avoids rivalry with his father in real life by becoming his father in relation to his mother in his own imaginings; he resolves his emotional conflict by centrally imagining his father while he continues in his ordinary relationship with his parents. The little boy's character is also explained: he adopts his father's attributes when he centrally imagines his father. The dramatic counterpart shows how: the boy adopts his father's "repertoire" and comes to behave like his father in relevant ways, so that a resemblance now follows from the boy's central imagining. These acquired behaviors on the part of the boy may be rewarded

[10] This is not because the feelings themselves are imaginary but because they are experienced under the rule-governed activity of imagining.

[11] This is not a behaviorist claim; a subject's character dispositions may be manifest in the thoughts that influence her actions.

by adult endorsement as desirably "grown-up" behavior, and so, become reinforced. From these secondary gains as well as from the primary gain of relief from emotional conflict the little boy's centrally imagining his father acquires a function in his mental life and so becomes dispositionally embedded as character. In this deflationary account no appeal is made to the psychoanalytic conception of unconscious thought; the characterological identification consists in dispositional central imagining which is merely accidentally inaccessible to consciousness.[12]

While some character dispositions could be set up in the way described, I shall argue that the deflationary account should be set to one side in the investigation of characterological identification, in favor of an account that retains the fundamental commitments of psychoanalysis. The deflationary account is inadequate to the explanatory uses the concept of identification is put to in the social sciences and also (to the limited extent to which it is used there) in philosophy. Identification is typically invoked in these contexts to explain dissonance between what an individual subject does and what it is in his interest to do. A subject may disregard his interests in different ways. In socialisation, according to Freud, the subject must renounce instinctual gratification, instead identifying with parental figures in the mind (the "super-ego") and accepting their interdictions for his own. Freud saw this renunciation as leading to neurotic illness. Moral philosophy, which notoriously has difficulty explaining the absence of rational autonomy in akrasia, does not have the resources to deal with self-disadvantageous forms of behaviour such as masochism, or the "Stockholm syndrome", nor with situations in which an abused individual habitually inflicts abuse on someone else. Such cases are described, and supposedly explained, in terms of "identification with the aggressor".[13] In the social sciences, notably in the politics of recognition and identity, the motivational power of an individual's identification with a group or its leader is frequently adduced in the explanation of social action. In *Two Concepts of Liberty* Isaiah Berlin (1958) remarks on the extent to which individuals are motivated to accept the authority of someone of their own kind whether or not this is in their own interests.[14] In fascism individuals relinquish their democratic rights to a leader whom they are induced to accept as theirs: Adorno (1991) explains this in Freudian terms as the identification of individual group members with the leader and the adoption of his values.

Such references to psychoanalysis are however unusual, the explanatory import of identification being more often taken for granted. However a deflationary account of identification contains no plausible explanation for such extreme forms of symptomatic or self-disadvantageous behaviour. In contrast, on the psychoanalytic view identifications made unavailable to consciousness by the operation of defence mechanisms can explain a subject's morally deviant or contrary-to-interest actions. But on the deflationary account all such identifications are potentially accessible as sources of motivation; they are only "accidentally" inaccessible to consciousness. [15] In deliberating over action a rational subject can be expected to take account of her dispositions, so far as these are accessible to her in reflection. And one would expect reflection to be maximally provoked by the subject's being prompted to actions that were against her interests. But the sorts of behaviour cited - compliance with political disadvantage; neurotic symptoms; the "Stockholm syndrome"; masochistic behaviour; and the systematic abuse of others by the previously abused - are all notoriously resistant to insight in reflection. Yet the continued unavailability of

[12] This inaccessibility might be explained as the unreflectiveness of young children or the later unreflectiveness of habit. Whether this can account for some forms of identification is immaterial to the argument here; my contention is that it is not enough for all forms of identification.

[13] In abuse the dissonance is not so evidently with the abuser's interests as with what he is in a position to know about its effects, which he intentionally brings about. What needs explaining is how his interests are met by intentionally causing the same suffering in his victim. The (psychoanalytic) explanation of "identification with the aggressor" is merely a descriptive term for the psychic defense mechanism in which anxiety provoked by real or threatened aggression is mastered by identifying with the source of the attack. This in turn requires clarification in terms of central imagining.

[14] On the politics of identity and recognition see Taylor (1992), Honneth (1995).

[15] For the contrast between "accidental" inaccessibility to conscious awareness and "non-accidental" or minimal inaccessibility of mental states rendered unconscious through repression, see Gardner, (1993, pp.89, 185).

these dissonant motivations is, on the deflationary view, only contingent; there is at the very least a burden of proof on the deflationist here, to show how these contingencies militate so intractably against insight.

3. Psychoanalytic identification and character.

We have seen already that the ordinary notion of identification overlaps with the psychoanalytic one. In fact, Freud takes the concept from ordinary usage in the first instance. He writes as if his readers will readily understand what is meant by identification, introducing it as a term in psychological currency in his earliest psychoanalytical work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900).[16] Identification is not theoretically defined until the much later *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921). Here, as throughout his developmental writings, Freud characterises identification as a desire or a wish; it is an attachment to a loved person that takes the form of wanting to be the person to whom one is attached. "Identification is known to psychoanalysis as the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person"; "In [identification] one's father is what one would like to be" (1921, pp.105-6). Freud does not explain why attachment to someone is first of all expressed as wanting to be that person, rather than the (more obvious) alternative of wanting to have or possess the person. The explanation remains implicit; it is however suggested when Freud goes on: "[Identification] behaves like a derivative of the first *oral* phase of the organisation of the libido, in which the object that we long for and prize is assimilated by eating and is in that way annihilated as such." (1921, p.105, Freud's italics). It must be acknowledged that psychoanalytic theory in this idiom is uncongenial to philosophers (who will read it either as florid metaphor or as Freudian biologism gone wild). The theoretical content is philosophically accessible however; Wollheim's thesis of the "archaic theory of the mind" (to be discussed in Section 5) provides a way to read this sort of claim .

Apart from the foregoing, Freud's explanation of identification emerges contextually through the explanatory work it does. The two principal Freudian texts in which it is put to work are *Leonardo da Vinci and a memory of his childhood* (1910) and *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917), and I discuss both of these briefly. Psychoanalytic explanation is functional here: identification is explained in terms of the goal of defending the mind against pain. Mental defense mechanisms do their work by transforming unacceptable thought content into an emotionally undisturbing or gratifying form and thus regulate levels of mental pain and pleasure (performing the task of defense). Structures that deliver such transformations can become dispositionally embedded in the character of the individual.

"Identification" thus has two related uses in Freud's writing. It refers firstly to process: the psychological mechanism which operates in the service of defense to restore psychic equilibrium, which we have analysed in terms of central imagining. It refers secondly to a psychological structure of dispositions to engage in these defensive forms of thought.[17] This second use is what I discuss as "characterological" identification. We have seen that Freud's theory of character (and its place in socialisation) accords a central role to identification through resolving the Oedipus complex. I have said that there is more to the psychoanalytic account of characterological identification than the deflationary account can provide. The psychoanalytic dimension may be explored in what Freud has to say about Leonardo da Vinci and homosexuality.[18]

4. The case of Leonardo.

Throughout his writings, Freud adverts to identification to explain homosexuality. In the paper on Leonardo da Vinci (Freud, 1910) the theory of homosexuality is set out in preparation for interpreting

[16] The only source that Freud himself refers to its use by the anthropologist Robertson Smith writing in 1885 (Freud, 1921, p.110, n.2)
[17] It is in *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) that Freud has most to say about what he thinks actually happens in identification as a process (see my Section 5).
[18] Freud's thesis is given here without thereby endorsing it.

Leonardo's biography. "In all our male homosexual cases the subjects had had a very intense erotic attachment to a female person, as a rule their mother, during the first period of childhood, which is afterwards forgotten; this attachment was evoked or encouraged by too much tenderness on the part of the mother herself, and further reinforced by the small part played by the father during their childhood." (1910, p. 99). Freud goes on to say: "The boy represses his love for his mother: he puts himself in her place, identifies himself with her, and takes his own person as a model in whose likeness he chooses the new objects of his love. In this way he has become a homosexual." (1910, p.100).[19] Leonardo's is just such a case according to Freud. Separated from his mother at the age of five, and taken to live in the household of his father, he was deprived of an (over-eroticised) relation with his mother and later on came in consequence to identify himself with her, so as to defend himself against the loss of her love.

Wollheim (1973, 1974) explores the psychoanalytic psychology in this case study using his own thesis of central imagination to display the psychological process involved. Thus we suppose that, missing his mother, the boy Leonardo centrally imagined himself with her and also, centrally imagined her with him. He could then also centrally imagine himself with his mother's characteristics, her "repertoire", taking on her role *vis à vis* him and so in later life, loving boys as she loved him.[20] And, as the deflationary account allows, such imaginings could become habitual from their comforting effect. Again, all this is within the reach of ordinary psychology. However, one of the defining claims of psychoanalysis is that thinking can alter radically under the exigency of psychic defense. The mind is re-oriented away from adaptation to reality and towards the avoidance of mental pain. Under such defensive pressure mental functioning shifts into the wish-fulfilling mode of thought which Freud (1911) called the Pleasure principle in which thought is unconscious. Thinking is now governed by what Wollheim (1984, pp.144 -147) terms "the archaic theory of the mind". This is a "theory" in the sense that it systematically alters thought and it is "archaic" because of the nature of the alteration effected on the mind. The mind misrepresents itself as bodily, and so misconceives its powers as directly efficacious upon the real world. In this mode of thought (which Freud called 'hallucinatory wish-fulfillment') what is wished for is represented as real and when the mind is working in this way the activity of imagining acquires a distinctive form, becoming what psychoanalysis calls "unconscious phantasy".[21]

In identifying with his mother, then, Leonardo's centrally imagining himself with his mother's characteristics comes to be more than daydreaming. Conducted under the archaic theory his imagining, says Wollheim, is "conceived of as a means by which he can take her into himself and thus lovingly merge with her.". And because the merging is conceived in the corporeal imagery in which the mind misrepresents itself as bodily, for Leonardo merging is "what he thinks he is doing when he imagines what he does." (1973, p. 75).[22] The psychoanalytic conception of thinking under the archaic theory of the mind then completes the psychoanalytic account of identification as central imagining. Identification is centrally imagining oneself with the characteristics of the identified-with person under the archaic theory and so, coming to think that one has merged into and become one with that person. This unconscious imagining, under the archaic theory of the mind, may be transient. Or it may persist, acquiring a functional role in the mind through its defensive mitigation of the pain of loss. This happens when the subject, in the grip of the archaic theory, represents the merging with the lost person as in fact achieved. The wish to retain the person and their love is both represented, and at the same time wishfully realised (under the archaic theory), as the merging with that person. So Leonardo's imagining has the function of assuaging the loss of his

[19] It is not until *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) that Freud elaborates what he thinks occurs in identification.

[20] Here identification involves Leonardo centrally imagining himself with the repertoire of characteristics of his mother which he has taken over for himself. This modification of the original typology of central imagining is an intelligible addition to the account: we may see the little boy Leonardo as daydreaming about his mother, and then coming to take over her repertoire for himself.

[21] See Wollheim (1979, 1999). In ordinary conscious mental life unconscious phantasy can only find expression indirectly, in symbolic form, in dreams, or as 'quasi-manifestation' (Gardner,1993, pp. 218-220).

[22] "Thinking" here means intentional mental activity, conscious or unconscious. Corporeal representations of the mental are unconscious, and only find symbolic expression in normal waking mental life.

mother by representing her as merged with him. This is the unconscious phantasy which is at the core of his characterological identification with her.

I have given Wollheim's account without the distraction of critical comment, in order to set out his analysis of Freud's theory. However, accepting his analysis of identification we encounter an objection. For if this account were the correct one for explaining all character formation, then it looks as if socialisation and also culture, insofar as they depend upon character and the processes of its formation, will thereby depend for their success on the operation of the mind in the grip of the archaic theory, which is to say in the grip of a form of thought in which considerations of reality do not play a part. Indeed, the implausibility of psychoanalysis' theory of socialisation looks to have increased. Freud's account of identification here is intended to be general; homosexuality comes about by identification with the parent of the opposite sex, heterosexuality with same-sex identification in the usual resolution of the Oedipus situation. Socialization depends on successful resolution of the Oedipal conflict by one of these routes (Freud (1930 [1929]).[23] It is the installation of the super-ego as the identified-with internal parental figure that resolves the Oedipal conflict and provides each individual with an internal authority that is experienced as part of the self. If Wollheim were correct, the objection might go, then not only character formation, but civilization itself will depend on members of society unconsciously imagining being merged with another person.

One way to defuse this objection is to take it as presenting a straw man: it was earlier allowed that the deflationary account of identification could be made to cover some at least of what is involved in character formation. Socialisation could, therefore, proceed on this basis with unconscious phantasy only invoked exceptionally.[24] I raise the objection for tactical reasons, however. First, it motivates the account of the ubiquity of unconscious phantasy to be given shortly. It also requires an answer to avoid returning to the deflationary account of identification and character formation which I have argued is inadequate. A further consequence of allowing the objection would be to reduce psychoanalysis to a theory of psychopathology, explaining certain psychological structures of identification (such as homosexuality) as abnormalities. This would lose us the ability to explain the abnormal in continuity with the normal which is one of psychoanalysis' significant contributions to psychology. We would return to a position where phenomena inexplicable by both ordinary psychology and philosophy are once again psychologically obscure to us. Psychoanalysis as a theory of pathology is not a resource for philosophy.

5. Psychoanalytic identification and object relations.

To resolve this problem we must look further at what Freud says about identification in *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) where the new theory about object-relations is first sketched out. In the next section I shall indicate how it has been taken forward in later psychoanalytic thought. In *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud considers how melancholia, a severe form of depressive illness characterised by self-reproach, feelings of guilt and worthlessness, and by despair and suicidality, can be understood in relation to normal mourning. He concludes that melancholia arises as a failure of mourning in which a functionally defensive identification with the lost person has prevented that person being installed as an internal figure. It is a familiar observation that the completion of mourning has as a normal outcome an internal figure felt to be the loved lost person. This figure is more than an image or representation, and more than a memory; the subject who has emerged from mourning may describe conversations, hearing the loved one's voice, seeking and getting their advice. The lost one lives, we might say, in the imagination of the subject who has lost them. This, however, is not identification; the other precisely remains an other, alive in the subject's mind, available for consultation and to give comfort and advice.[25]

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[23] This is so whether the Oedipus complex is explained,in terms of rivalry with one parent for the love of the other or as Freud also suggests, in terms of the incest taboo and castration anxiety.

[24] This point is due to an anonymous referee.

[25] There are however degrees of normal identification with the lost person, which I leave to one side for clarity.

There are two circumstances, says Freud, which (he is vague whether separately or jointly) render melancholia more likely. First, when there is a high degree of unconscious ambivalence towards the lost person; both love and hatred are present. Second, when the pre-illness character of the melancholic individual is narcissistic, self-diminishment from the loss of love is experienced as intolerable. In such cases mourning is impaired. In the former instance, the figure of the lost person must be preserved from the hatred unconsciously felt towards them. In the second instance, the narcissistic pain of losing the person, and so losing their love which feeds the narcissism, must be defended against. The defensive solution in both cases is to assimilate the lost one into the self: "by taking flight into the ego love escapes annihilation" (1917, p.257). As it stands this is metaphorical: we are not told what "taking flight" consists in, nor how it is to achieve the goal of protecting love from annihilation. But the situation becomes clearer when we see how Freud arrives at this result through his explanation of the depressive symptom of melancholic self-denigration. Since the lost person is both loved and hated, the critical part of the mind directs its hatred onto the internalised figure of the lost person who is merged with the subject's ego. It is the subject, the mourner himself, who then comes in for the reproaches and vilification directed at the lost person.[26] Furthermore, the emptiness and nihilistic delusions of melancholia are explained, since destructive attacks directed at the lost person find a misplaced target in the subject.

This explanation of depressive symptomatology is what leads Freud to postulate "an identification of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego" (1917, p.249). Despite another misleading metaphor (since the object is "in the ego", the metaphor of a shadow fails) and despite, as Ricoeur points out (1970, pp.211-229), the obsolete terminology of libido theory which encumbers the text while doing no work, this is generally agreed to be a seminal paper in providing the initial framework of object relations. The problem Freud faces is to show how identification, which he has taken over from ordinary use, can do the work envisaged for it in explaining melancholia. The solution lies in the move from the "objects" of libido theory to "objects" as figures represented in the mind. This new conception of an object brings with it the idea of the ego's relations to these figures, and a vocabulary of "object-relations". This vocabulary then makes it possible to think about identification as the ego in relation to another figure. It is this move that will lead to the new theory of object relations, and it is in terms of this theory that Wollheim's analysis is implicitly framed.[27] Object relations are represented in phantasy in the bodily vocabulary of the archaic theory of the mind.

Wollheim's analysis of identification in the Leonardo case transfers over to melancholia. The melancholic subject centrally imagines herself with the lost loved person's characteristics and under defensive pressure comes to do so under the archaic theory. The upshot is the unconscious phantasy of merging: when Freud says the lost person is "in the ego" we could say that the lost person is now merged with the subject in phantasy. Freud himself does not make this move, however. As noted earlier, he conceived of identification as an oral process, and in *Mourning and Melancholia* he still insists on the orality of early identification, in which the ego "wants to incorporate this object into itself, and, in accordance with the oral or cannibalistic phase of libidinal development in which it is, it wants to do so by devouring it."(1917, p.249). I said that there was a way to read this which rescued it from the charge of wayward biologism. The theme of orality is integrated into the account of identification by Wollheim's thesis of the archaic theory of the mind; under the archaic theory the mind represents itself as spatial and its contents and workings as corporeal. In the bodily vocabulary of the archaic theory inner figures are misrepresented as having been orally ingested or 'incorporated': there is a corporeal representation of the subject's relations to other figures, and to himself. Freud's Just-So story about eating people is a description of the archaic mind's workings in its own idiom.

[26] The critical agency at this stage is still conceived as the ego-ideal, but later becomes the superego.
[27] The theoretical roots of object relations theory are complex, but the capacity for "object-relating" in the British clinical tradition belongs to subjectivity. Inter-subjectivity, as the capacity for relating subject-to-subject, is an achievement (rhe Kleinian "depressive position"). The two earliest object relations, for Freud, are instinctual gratification and dependence.

6. Central imagining and object relations.

I shall argue next that calling on the archaic theory of the mind to explain psychoanalytic does not make identification into a mental abnormality. Central imagining and the theory of object relations taken together describe mental activity across the whole range of normality and pathology. The key psychoanalytic claim is that archaic functioning (as we may call mental activity under the archaic theory of the mind) is ubiquitous in mental life. What explains pathology, as we shall see in the next section, is the excessive deployment of normally occurring defensive processes.

Central imagining is the psychological activity which object-relating requires. It is a pre-condition for object-relating that the subject should be able to represent herself in relation to another. The development of subjectivity can be mapped as a sequence of achievements in object-relating. Central imagining provides the following philosophical analysis. First, the subject centrally imagines herself in some situation in relation to another figure, in which the feelings she experiences are congruent with herself as protagonist. Now, as the dramatic counterpart to central imagining shows, the subject's internal audience may select as the protagonist in the drama a figure who is not the subject. Then, if the internal audience is an empathic one, we say the subject centrally imagines that protagonist. So second, she may centrally imagine another figure in relation to herself and so come to feel congruently with him as protagonist. In counterpart terms this may be put as her own internal empathic audience coming to feel as the protagonist feels; her emotional feeling is that of the audience and it presents her with what the other person is feeling as the protagonist of her imagining. Third, while holding both sets of feeling in mind, she may in what Charles Taylor (1985) calls "self-interpretation" come to reflect on her imaginings and the feelings they engender, and she may then come to understand how she affects the other person from that person's point of view. She may in this way come to see something about her character which alters, or augments, her understanding of herself. In reflecting like this the subject can come to a view of her character which contributes to her self-conception and so to her "identity" as the person she is.[28] And, once this is seen in reflection it can be altered; reflective change can occur.

This may be illustrated by an example. Perhaps I have a colleague with whom I have a disagreement. Then in the first stage, feeling censorious of his behavior my emotions orient me to the aspects of his behavior felt as significant for me.[29] I may unreflectively remain at this level, or I may go on to centrally imagine myself in relation to him and to appraise his behavior accordingly as unhelpful in relation to me. In the second stage I move to centrally imagining him. Now I feel congruently with how he feels: hurt, defensive, or resentful. The third stage, of reflection, is the one that ushers in the capacity to see my own character in one of its aspects, my tendency to censoriousness. I also see its effect on my colleague, through centrally imagining him (this need not be intentional; it may just dawn on me how I strike him). Putting together my own character trait of censoriousness, and my colleague's centrally imagined feelings in response, in reflection I see the relation these feelings make between us. Central imagining thus provides for stages in self-interpretation, leading towards a capacity for seeing oneself in relation to others ("objects") from both positions in the relation.

Now a subject's character need not be reflectively available to her while acting; her dispositions to act in certain ways may be evident to others, but not to the subject herself. However, if she is to engage in self-interpretation, this does require her dispositions to be available to her in reflection. They may be apparent to her directly or to some other person who can make her aware of them, as (though not exclusively) in psychoanalytic therapy. If there are aspects of her character which present as an uninterpretable given, then her sense of herself as author of her actions will be absent or will be a false consciousness in which the reasons given for action are not the true ones. This applies to those aspects of character which are

[28] The philosophical treatment of identity in this sense is distinguished from the metaphysical identity of persons by Velleman (2006, pp.2-5). Informally, the notions of a person's "identity" and their self-conception are equivalent; at least one use of "identity" is to denote the qualities which make up her self-conception as the very person she is. Velleman (2006 p.356) also (briefly) treats "identity" in this sense as "self-conception" or "self-image", understood as the subject's "reflexive representations".

[29] For the orienting role of emotional states see Lacewing (2004).

embedded in an unconscious defensive formation. A subject's authenticity as agent is achieved to the extent that her character, including the identifications which go to make it up, becomes transparent to and owned by her. To achieve this, in self-interpretation and through psychoanalytic interpretation, defensively embedded dispositions must be brought into consciousness.[30]

In the case of Leonardo we saw that the extreme form of identification attributed to him, as his phantasy of merging with his mother, was defensively embedded. How might an identification of this degree, involving a phantasy of this sort, be made available to consciousness? The theory we have been considering tells us that such identification is inaccessible to consciousness first through the transformation into the bodily vocabulary imposed by the archaic theory and second through its defensive role. Psychoanalytic interpretation involves the bringing into consciousness of such deeply embedded unconscious material through the interpretation of unconscious motives and consequent undoing of defenses. However, the psychoanalyst is not applying the theory directly, nor is psychoanalytic interpretation is a matter of "reading off" the meaning of unconscious wishes.The psychological activity of interpretation depends on the psychoanalyst's counter-transference.[31]Psychoanalytic work can over time enable the sort of phantasy involved in identification to become accessible to consciousness, and so to self-interpretation (though not in its extreme corporeal form as a phantasy of bodily merging). In order to establish the psychological feasibility of reclaiming the content of unconscious phantasy generally, I show how the subject's unconsciously represented object relations are explored in the psychoanalytic counter-transference. I give first a theoretical outline of the countertransference and then a brief analysis in terms of central imagining, with a clinical illustration. I then offer some remarks about the archaic theory and the corporeality of extreme forms of phantasy, and the limit this imposes on retrieval.

7. The psychoanalytic counter-transference: theory and practice.

The shift to conceptualising the mind in terms of object-relational representations begun in *Mourning and Melancholia* permits an important change in the theoretical view of the transference. In object relations theory the transference comes to be seen as the field in which the patient's object relations are manifested in his interaction with the analyst. The analyst's "counter-transference" is what she discerns to be the effects of the patient's communications on her; she uses her feelings experienced in the counter-transference as "an instrument for research" to tell her about the object-relational content of the patient's communications (Heimann, 1950). Thus in the clinical setting the analyst's capacity for central imagining is in the service of understanding the patient's unconscious communications in the transference (in contrast to Leonardo's central imagining in the service of defense).

Normally, central imagining is a fluid process. In daydreaming or reading, or at the theatre, we readily move in and out of centrally imagining some figure, and this happens too in normal counter-transference. The Kleinian psychoanalyst Roger Money-Kyrle says, "When the analysis is going well I believe there is a fairly rapid oscillation between introjection and projection. As the patient speaks, the analyst will, as it were, become introjectively identified with him, and having understood him inside, will reproject him and interpret." (1978, pp.331-332). The oscillation Money-Kyrle describes can be seen as the ordinary movement of the analyst's imagination in centrally imagining an internal ("introjected") figure, the patient. When he ceases to centrally imagine his patient, the analyst "re-projects" him as a person in the external world, to whom he then makes the interpretation.[32]

Taking the analyst to be female once more, we may say that in her introjective identification with the patient she is centrally imagining him. The repertoire she draws on in centrally imagining him as

[30] I argue elsewhere (Braddock, 2006) that psychoanalytic interpretation is continuous with interpretation as analysed by Taylor (1971)

[31] This view of the countertransference is not shared by all psychoanalytic schools; it does however characterize the British object relations school. .

[32] Here, "introject" and "project" can be taken non-technically as meaning "in one's mind" and "back out in the world", the difference roughly between an intentional object and a real object.

protagonist comes partly from knowledge of him already gained during the analysis, and partly from what he is now communicating to her, verbally or behaviorally. Her internal empathic audience will then be in a residual state of feeling which forms part of her counter-transference. When the protagonist of the analyst's centrally imagining is endowed with her patient's repertoire and she is in a feeling state congruent with him as her protagonist, then self-interpreting her feelings in the counter-transference tells her how things are with the patient.[33]

This may be illustrated by a clinical example taken from a paper by the psychoanalyst Pearl King (1978, p.332). The analysand was a woman who had had infantile eczema. This had required immobilisation and bandaging during the first year of life, when the mother had herself been hospitalised for several months with another pregnancy. King writes of the woman,

> "During her analysis there were long periods of silence which occurred whenever her anxiety was aroused and it was clear that during analytic breaks and in many of the silences, I had become the mother who had deserted her in her infancy and her silences were masking her murderous feelings to me and her rage at not being able to control me when she so obviously needed me."

King then reflects on her own feelings in the counter-transference:

> "I often felt shut out and impotent to help her and it seemed to me that two things were happening. I had become the absent mother who was now useless to her, so that she was communicating to me how she felt about her mother. But she was also treating me as she felt she had been treated by her mother, by blotting me out in a situation where I was impotent to do anything. I was her baby-self which was not able to use words, whose feelings she communicated to me by arousing those feelings in me that she had found too intolerable to contain, and in order to do so she was treating me as unconsciously she felt she had been treated."

Here King is describing her own part in two separate object relations which the patient has conveyed to her through the medium of feeling. First, the analyst is 'the absent mother'; here, the relation between patient and analyst is the familiar one of the transference in which a significant relation from the patient's past is reproduced in the here and now of the analytic session. But at the same time the analyst's clinical acumen has allowed her to differentiate a second object relation, in which she, the analyst, is also being the patient's "baby-self".

We may understand the psychoanalyst's counter-transference in terms of two pieces of central imagining, where the protagonist is the patient's mother first, and then the patient second.[34] When the analyst is centrally imagining the patient (his baby-self) part of what is experienced by her in the silence is the uselessness felt by the child of attempting to get through to the silent absent mother. Here we see what is unconsciously felt by the patient, being consciously felt by the analyst. It is the task of the analyst to understand this from reflecting on her own feeling of helplessness towards her patient. She can then interpret back to her patient the unconscious content being communicated in the transference through the repertoire of silent unresponsive behavior.

The analyst is using her counter-transference to bring unconscious object-relational content from her patient into conscious reflection. However, according to Money-Kyrle (1978, p.334), there can also be deviation from the normal counter-transference. Here the analyst is unable to move out of her "introjective identification" with the patient, a state which we have just re-described in terms of central imagining. What Money-Kyrle describes as a lack of normal oscillation between introjection and re-projection of the patient

[33] The importance of the repertoire here was pointed out to me by David Mayers.

[34] Although here the transference object relation is experienced by the analyst as part of her counter-transference, it is not itself part of the transference. Transference belongs to the patient's experience, not to the analyst, who may have a quite different experience, or even no experience of her own at all, in reaction to it. Here, the analyst is brought by her patient's unresponsiveness to centrally imagine the mother, and to feel useless in the way the mother did, in trying to get through to the immobilized child

is the loss of normal movement in and out of central imagining exhibited by King. When the introjective identification cannot be relinquished and the patient cannot be "re-projected" Wollheim's account explains this as the ascendancy of the archaic theory of the mind over the analyst's central imagining.[35] But the archaic theory varies in its penetrance of mental functioning and its features are exhibited to a varying extent in the mental states it influences. Wish-fulfilling thought and some degree of corporeality always permeate normal mental life and influence the imagination (Wollheim, 1969).[36]

8. Conclusion.

I have argued that the explanation of identification needs psychoanalytic theory to explain the defensive role which makes identification inaccessible to conscious reflection. This requires us to acknowledge the contribution of the radical thesis about the nature of unconscious thought. This is to be found in the full non-deflationary account of identification, implicating the archaic theory of the mind, given in Wollheim's analysis. However, it then seemed that identification became the unconscious phantasying of bodily merging. I argued in reply that, while the psychoanalytic conception of the mind sees mental activity as always under the influence of the archaic theory of the mind and so, always exhibiting a degree of corporeality of content, this degree is variable. Accordingly, it is not the content of the phantasy of bodily merging which would place an identification such as Leonardo's beyond the normal, but the intractability arising from its defensive function in his mind. Being fixed as a permanent feature in the defensively embedded structure of Leonardo's identification, the phantasy of merging is kept in its archaic bodily form. In that form it is also therefore intractable to reflection. This is contrasted with the clinical example, where the analyst is transiently experiencing the helplessness of the patient's baby-self, and is able to retrieve this as the unconscious content of her patient's communication. Leonardo's identification with his mother is characterological, while the analyst introjectively identifies with her patient transiently. But while Leonardo's character identification is indeed fixed in the way described, the dynamic nature of the mind as conceived by psychoanalysis means that not all identifications need be so defensively embedded, nor, consequently, possess such extreme corporeality.

The claim I have advanced and defended is that the central conception of identification is the psychoanalytic one. Psychoanalytic identification is made philosophically accessible using Wollheim's analysis in terms of central imagining, which also clarifies what occurs in clinical application of the psychoanalytic concepts of object relations and counter-transference. Nevertheless, the philosopher who has followed to this point will consider important questions to have been shelved, and significant claims to be insufficiently substantiated. This is inevitable, given the special difficulties facing the philosophical defense of psychoanalysis. I said at the outset that work is needed to make psychoanalysis intelligible to philosophers. Philosophical exploration of psychoanalysis depends on understanding at least some of the theory, as the above discussion of the countertransference shows. But to expound all relevant psychoanalytic theses in the philosophical exploration of any psychoanalytic idea is an impossibly large task. Psychoanalysis is a very large body of theory, even when restricted to its canonical Freudian form and with significant theoretical variations omitted. It is moreover notoriously inaccessible, since its theories are based on empirical observations drawn from a clinical practice which can rarely be observed by outsiders and are described in an abstruse technical vocabulary. Partly for this reason a relevant critical literature is sparse in traditional analytic philosophy where exegesis and critique of psychoanalytic theses are not seen as contributing significantly to philosophical projects, whether in ethics, philosophy of mind or philosophical anthropology.[37] As things stand therefore, the philosophical exploration of psychoanalysis can only proceed by degrees.

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[35] Accordingly, one would expect intimations of this from the description of the analyst's counter-transference. Discerning these is a matter of interpretation and requires more exposition and defense than can be gone into here.

[36] Psychoanalysis holds that the mind is never free of the archaic mode of thinking; the mind always operates under both the Reality and the Pleasure principles (Freud, 1911).

[37] This is not to deny that individual analytic philosophers have attached a value to psychoanalysis and have investigated and employed it. (See Note 1).

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