



Nostalgia

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*O who can hold a fire in his hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus.
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast.
Or wallow naked on fantastick Summer's heat
O no, the apprehension of the good
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse
Fell Sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more
Than when it biteth, but lanceth not the sore.
(Richard II. Act I Scene III)*

Everybody claims knowledge of nostalgia, and claims to have experienced it. The media constantly refer to it, as if knowing its meaning.

The Oxford English Dictionary disagrees with all of us, and says we are all wrong, and that we are referring to something else, and the word never appears in the index of Freud's Standard Collected Works.

The OED definition of nostalgia is that it is a form of melancholy caused by prolonged absence from one's country and home, the word first appearing in the late eighteenth century, and being formed by the conjunction of two Greek words meaning a return to home and pain.

This is not the version that the word nostalgia has been given in recent years, it has become an indication of almost a pleasant state of mind, easily attainable by artefacts and psycho-facts, which can be conjured up with relative ease, a process I presume designed to alleviate the underlying melancholy or yearning.

We could find ourselves therefore in a position where we have to consider two forms of nostalgia, true and false, the latter being a defence against the true which has according to the definition almost a clinical quality, akin to a depressive state, possibly to be seen in the case of a true exile, even accompanied by feelings of unworthiness and badness.

I remember when I was young frequently visiting Kew Gardens. I developed a habit of going into one of the greenhouses, and breaking off pieces of heath and leaving them in my pocket, for days I would carry with me a beautiful smell of the Erica heath that grew on the mountainside near my childhood home; it may also be meaningful that stealing cuttings from plants was not considered a crime where I had grown up, it was quite a valid way of improving one's garden. This I think is an example of false nostalgia.

The neatest example I have come across was a man of my acquaintance, who on hearing snatches from a particular piece of music would develop immediately a dreamy state of sexual pleasure and would feel a dreamy state of satisfaction. The particular piece of music that provoked this state, the waltz music from Offenbach's *Gaiete Parisienne*, has no particularly sensuous overtones, and my acquaintance could have chosen highly appropriately named, almost erotically named, pieces of music by the same composer had there been a more contrived quality to this conjunction of events. It did not require very much enquiry to elicit certain facts. The music had first been heard when he was a boy, it had heralded each chapter of a serialized version of *Lorna Doone* on the radio. He had read the book, and had been deeply impressed, he believed *Lorna Doone* to have been very beautiful, and the romantic relationship between her and John Ridd had excited him, equally the triumph of stealing her away so successfully, from the vigorous, and elitist, almost aristocratic Doones, and John's triumph over the vicious Carver Doone remained memorable, but unremembered events, split off into, or condensed into, this pleasant experience he had.

Because of the obvious psychoanalytic implications

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of the story, it is not true nostalgia, and it could be seen as a defence against the true nostalgia of a state of mind, oedipally fixed, with all the characteristic frustrations and pain triumphed over in this unusual way.

In a similar vein, an English writer who lives abroad, said during an interview, 'I am convinced that if I taste again the chocolate cigarettes I so liked when I was a boy, that they would still taste of hope'. I don't really know what the man was

saying. I assume he is expressing the conviction of being able to re-establish the hopefulness of his boyhood via chocolate cigarettes. His cynical characters and his equally cynical stories lead me to be equally cynical, of his example, and convince me in effect of his feeling of hopelessness. It equally decided me against the use of the many examples of nostalgia in literature and poetry, and even music and painting of which everyone can supply different examples. Fascinating as it might be to link biographical knowledge of the writer or overt emotional states in the character written about with psychoanalytic theory, this is, I believe, work for other people in other places, and has no place here.

The sensory stimulus via Offenbach's music leads us to a consideration of the relationship between nostalgia, and states of mind such as the *déjà vu* phenomenon, and psychically determined variations in states of consciousness, precipitated by sensory stimuli (not sensory disturbances arising in disturbed states of consciousness, nor the organic case).

The *déjà vu* is to be considered as a paramnesia, with the feeling that one has seen it before, heard it before, or been it before, but does not know when or where. The basis for this may be in some real experience which has been forgotten, something real and not clearly recollected, or real, or fantasy life, from waking or dream life.

Since becoming concerned with this paper I have finally concluded that certainly during the course of a psychoanalysis this phenomenon, particularly when presented after recollection of a dream, is to be seen not only as an attack upon memory but as an attack upon the capacity for having a true nostalgic experience itself, that is, a state of mind that would be pained by an awareness that something that had been there, and experienced, was not; instead we hear from the patient a relatively bland, reiterated statement of some conviction that there was a feeling of knowing and remembering, and nothing further happens.

Recently a patient presented a dream about having and riding a horse, which had certain fine characteristics. These changed during the course of the dream. In place of any associations we had this strange reiteration, but no anxiety, which would usually be presented in this patient, if her mind was not felt to be working properly.

Two days later she told me that she had asked her husband whether she had had any experiences with a horse, and he reminded her that it related to a film they had seen together. Further elaborations led us directly to associations, replete with memories of a father seen as a regal figure, feelings of death in

childhood, and an elaboration of ideas about greed which she felt the film epitomized. The *déjà vu* experience had clearly replaced the actual memories or destroyed them. I am not suggesting that this is the whole story of the *déjà vu* phenomenon. Experiences with patients simply lead me to wonder about it in this way. By the time we had an association from my patient, the potentially nostalgic dreamer was far away.

Many years ago, at the Maudsley Hospital, we followed for a long time, a woman confidently diagnosed as a case of musicogenic epilepsy, despite the total absence of any E.E.G. confirmation. It was, simply, that certain musical chords and variations upon these chords produced distinct variations in consciousness with different regressive features following and medication had not altered the picture. When listening to her however, one developed a very different view of the proceedings of her life, and one moved from a position, which looked at her as a victim of cerebral disturbance, that couldn't tolerate certain sounds, to seeing her as a person who really hated the memories associated with the sounds. It also became clear that certain musical sounds excited definitive pleasures, and that she used the music to drown out certain sounds. The point about this patient and her condition is that she represents for me someone who attacked, in a way unknown to me, the possibility of true nostalgia, whilst the regressive features themselves satisfied the nostalgic yearnings.

'That only Robbers and Gipsies say that one

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must never return where one has once been' is attributed to Kierkegaard, so that almost everybody is exposed to the wish to be where they have once been, which gives a normal quality to nostalgia.

Psychoanalysts seem to me to have always held the view that nostalgia is a sentimental wish to return to that which never existed, or which only exists in the patient's mind, as having been true for a particular time and place.

I remember when I first came to England at the end of the war, being struck by what I felt was the preoccupation of people I met, and the media, with the war. Not so much the war itself, which everyone seemed to recognize as a gruesome obscenity, but with the world in which they had lived at the time. It seemed as if they had felt themselves to be part of a cohesive alive experience, for some it was presented as an exciting time. It was remembered fondly, and constantly compared to the drabness and dreariness they felt around them at this later time.

I knew at the time that it could have nothing to do with experiences in the army itself. It could be claimed that I was beginning my own experience of being an exile; I do however remember how alienating it was to listen to these stories and memories.

I recall this experience because of its similarity to some experiences in a psychoanalysis with patients in a state of nostalgic recall. They can seem cocooned off, or alienated from the analysis, or the analyst himself is alienated from the situation the patient is in.

It is utterly different from the withdrawal of the psychotic, or the dreamy quality of patients in a state of projective delusional safety, via a strange identification. It has some of the characteristics of the latter with the profound difference that one is hearing clearly from the patient about what is for the analyst another time and place, that has for the patient a nowness and a knowingness from which the analyst is excluded.

I have become used to such a procedure in the psychotic patient, which I have learned to understand as a hatred of the transference and the 'here and now', and a hatred of the immediacy of a relationship which the patient finds threatening because of its potential understandability, or a hatred of its real meaning and satisfaction, and because of its potential for producing jealousy and competitive threats from the psychotic area of the mind.

In the non-psychotic, however, we have a paradox. For the patient there is a nowness and a knowingness while the analyst is hearing of another time and place; whilst for the patient it is as if there is a total belief in the transference, as if the then is totally transferred to the now, with the exclusion of the analyst from the content of the now. There seems to be in the countertransference a greater degree of exclusion than is warranted by the nature of the material and the memories, that despite the patient's total experience of the then, being so much in the now, it is as if the analyst is made to contain and feel some of the feelings I have described in the psychotic example, as if to exaggerate the 'reality' of the patient in the nostalgic recall.

The defensive criteria are obvious, but they cannot be the explanation, and such defences are more of a result than a cause, because of the setting, and would deny the universality of the experience.

Many analysts with patients who have had a previous analysis can verify experiences in which the patient yearns for the previous analyst who becomes endowed with very definitive characteristics which the new analyst never had, nor ever will have.

Does this mean that nostalgia is only a repetition of any version of the oedipal story, and that's all there is to say because that's the end of the matter, or are we dealing with something else either additional to this or very much more?

In an autobiographical study in 1924, Freud writes, 'Instinct in general is regarded as a kind of elasticity of living things, an impulsion towards the restoration of a situation which once existed but was brought to an end by some external disturbance'. This essentially conservative character of instinct is exemplified by the phenomenon of the compulsion to repeat.

I am interested in the similarity of this quotation to my view of nostalgia. Does it make nostalgia an instinctual process? It certainly links the true nostalgic experience with the repetition compulsion. As such, nostalgia or its variants, be they defences or modifications, must inevitably appear in every psychoanalysis and be properly apportioned and analysed. Each variation or indication of an underlying nostalgia, via a

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presentation of a false nostalgia, must then be followed to its sources.

I want to consider the relationship of nostalgia to pornography, or a better word would be pornotopia—coined by Stephen Marcus (1966) in an essay in *Encounter* magazine—and to the perversions.

In the case of pornography, I was surprised by its definition given in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*. It too arises from two Greek roots, and originated only in 1864, though a pornographer was described in 1850. Pornography is a description of the life and manners etc. of prostitutes and their clients, hence the expression or suggestion of obscene or unchaste subjects in literature and art.

It is not difficult to see the enlargement of the meaning to become a promissory situation, that will excite and satisfy completely any whim or wish, and equally, we can understand Marcus' portmanteau word, which combines pornography and utopia, and which includes the totally pleasing utopian satisfactions that are possible.

Pornography seems, in our context, to nullify true nostalgia. It supplies and makes anything available, no frustrations abound, and there is no mental pain or yearning, therefore there is nothing to be nostalgic about. A final factor of pornography must be the covert attack upon objects in the nostalgic landscape, totally camouflaged and unpunishable.

In the perversions, it is the identifications that interest me, from the point of view of the question of nostalgia.

The varying identifications unconsciously adopted by the homosexual owe their origins to figures in the early life of the homosexual. Such identifications, particularly if basic to the homosexual practice and the maintenance of the homosexual posture, subserve in addition to modify or lessen feelings and yearning for, or feelings of loss of, the original figures, and thereby modify the possibilities of true nostalgia.

The two earliest references to identifications and homosexuality I came across appear in 1924 in Abraham's 'Development of the libido'. Abraham says, referring to Freud, 'He expresses the view, though he does not support it with clinical material, that we should be able to trace certain cases of homosexuality to the fact that the subject has introjected the parent of the opposite sex. Thus a young man will feel an inclination towards male persons because he has assimilated his mother by means of a psychological process of incorporation, and consequently reacts to male objects in the way that she would do'.

The second example is Freud (1922) on the narcissistic type of homosexuality, where the patient is attracted to a young man who represents himself. The mechanism involved was, in Freud's description, an identification with the mother, and Freud defined it thus, that a man was treating another as his own mother had treated him in the past. Even if we use more modern variations of thinking about this mechanism of the narcissistic attraction, that is, that it should be seen as a projection of parts of the self into another man which cause the attraction, any version of these examples show the locked character of these identifications, and later the experiences which follow thereupon. All have this firm defensive patterning of ensuring safety from feelings of loss and depression, in the instances quoted of a mother or a mother's attitude to the child, they can therefore be seen to mitigate nostalgia of the true kind.

The strange promiscuity of the homosexual could be a further variation of this theme, either as a minimization of the significance of lost objects and losing, because replacements are felt to be so readily available, or the promiscuity is a reassurance against the feelings associated with a cause of losing. The promiscuity relieves the threat of feeling responsible for losing by the possession of an object, albeit a new one, despite its transitoriness, because there is always a 'new' but intrinsically the same object available or possessed.

The transference itself epitomizes all the problems I have touched upon in relation to nostalgia. Freud (1913) in his paper, 'Further recommendations on

the technique of psychoanalysis' states, 'Often enough the transference is able to remove the symptoms of the disease by itself, but only for a while—only for as long as it itself lasts. In this case the treatment is a treatment by suggestion, and not a psychoanalysis at all'. It seems to me that Freud's description mirrors what I have been saying, about the difference between nostalgic memories, as compared to a true nostalgia, in which it is as if

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the nostalgic memories tease rather than enlarge the true situation.

Shakespeare's injunction in Bolingbroke's moving reply to his uncle, Gaunt, who has told him that he is to be banished for six years and that he should enjoy his travels for, 'What is six winters, they are quickly gone', leaves the analyst to re-think the significance of any experience considered to be one of nostalgia, which must need to be reconstructed as a true nostalgia, for as Bolingbroke says, 'Fell Sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more, Than when it biteth, but lanceth not the sore'.

One of the short clinical examples I would like to present concerns a young woman of 25, who came into treatment because of her vagueness, which interfered with her life, and an uncertainty about her relationship to the man she thought she was going to marry. The other is of a chronic schizophrenic, who has had a very long analysis. I said about him previously, 'He has a thing called an analyst, which develops out of a chrysalis called the doctor, during holiday breaks, but this thing is not so readily available for use for psychoanalytic interpretive work during sessions. His hatred for, and attacks upon, his mind and personality, which actually misses an analysis and an analyst, has not been worked through either. I believe that the psychotic man's mind and I have a contractual relationship about a future which is not only threatened during a break, but where paradoxically, the foreverness during a separation, is dependent on his having to recognize the work we have done, allowing him to have achieved a standard of life previously never dreamed of. But his loathing of the pleasure, that he is almost aware that his family experiences about his present existence, precludes any such true awareness, and is reversed into a cruel procedure where I am felt to hate working with him when he allows himself to feel I am working'. This loathing is related to his hatred of any form of indebtedness and gratitude, and his envy of any capacity in any object other than himself, which requires recognition of its absence in himself. These points are interesting in the light of what I am about to present. This man was referred to me many years ago, there had been many therapeutic attempts to cure, or alleviate him, of a chronic schizophrenic illness of many

years' duration. As a little boy in Eastern Poland, along with his family, he had been caught up in the horrors of the war. There had been two occupations of the city in which they lived. Firstly, by the Russians, who were remembered as kind and protective and life-giving. They had also been protective against the local population, and had instituted laws against any pejorative use by the locals of the word 'Jew' and they protected physically the Jews against the local population's periodic anti-Jewish attitudes and habits; this was followed by the German Occupation. The family lived in a ghetto, and he and an uncle were twice arrested and released. They experienced forced labour and knew fully of the destruction of the local Jewish population by the Germans. The whole family were finally kept in hiding for months by a Polish family and escaped the Final Solution. When the family emigrated, the seeds of his schizophrenic illness were already well implanted. By the time he came to me, many years after the war, he loathed the Russians, and idealized the Germans, and was terrified of a Russian invasion of the world.

There were times in which he strutted through sessions as the great German soldier. He expressed hatred of the Jews and Jewish traditions, and to a large degree one was invited to believe that they had either invited or deserved that which had happened to them.

He was hospitalized for many years, whilst a very slow and tortuous analysis progressed. Gradually part-time work was undertaken, and given up to be replaced by periodic full-time work. He developed phobic ideas about his home abroad and hated to return there during holiday periods, but on the whole gradually built up a life and home for himself here. Not well, but not ill, shallow-minded, except before week-ends (he had one-day week-ends).

About a year ago he developed an intense hatred for negroes and coloured peoples. It was as if London was totally populated by them. The internal posturings and projections necessary for such hatreds are obvious; the content and precipitate are important because in the first place the timing was significant. We were entering into the phase of the Summer holiday and the contents of his hatred were that they were foreign, they were mongrels and dependent and unreliable. So that we could see clearly again, as had happened so often before, any dependent, needy aspects of

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himself were hated and identified by his Nazi parts with 'Jewish' attitudes of his own. This became even more clear because his obvious solution to his problem was as final as that of the Gestapo.

I drew attention in the earlier unpublished paper to the countertransference difficulties. There was however a difference to previous similar occasions. The intensity of his belief and rectitude towards the belief of the badness of negroes was not as marked as before. What I am saying is that the projective identification was not as 'successful' as before in maintaining the position of the hating figure towards his own inferiorities, and the interpretive work seemed to be understood and acceptable because the hatred ceased, and the arrogant posturing figures disappeared.

Shortly afterwards he volunteered information about how different he was from others. At the end of the war, everybody who remained alive looked back and said, and felt, that no matter how miserable they may feel, the small amount of life they had was better than the awful misery they had experienced. The fact of life meant so much to them, rather than the conviction that such life could be taken away at any time, as they had experienced during the Occupation. He however felt so differently, he missed it all and still does, he couldn't then and still doesn't understand how their miserable lives could in their words be better than the miserable deathliness of then; instead he feels empty and bored nowadays.

This presentation continued for some time. Gradually he introduced an awareness that 'they' since then had succeeded in making new meaningful lives for themselves, this included his whole immediate family, and he began to hate what he felt were his mother's needs to maintain good and repeated contacts with figures from the past, including the family who had sheltered them. He felt it to be demeaning, this gregarious quality of his mother. (I am making a continuous thread of this development, it emerges from many sessions and much analytic work, I simply wish to show a psychotic man's conscious nostalgia expressing itself for a time of experienced brutality and horror and no awareness of tomorrow—but which had centrally a period of threatened protection and total silence while the family were hiding. A summary would be no recognition of gratitude to anyone or anything (we were all of us Russian).

In the Spring of this year he decided to go to work full-time again, originally hating every moment, and hating the ordinariness and orderliness of such a predictable life. Later there were grudging assertions that such a life was better than compulsive sleeping, and a bored and boring day such as he previously had, and he continued at work and developed a new anxiety, later an awareness of the meaning of the anxiety—that his employers may find his work unacceptable and throw him out. His mother came and went, and their time together was relatively peaceful despite the return of his hatred of her

friendliness with figures of the past, and how he had to be dragged into each social occasion along with her.

He felt she was pessimistic about her future and for the first time became fully aware that she was becoming old—and resented a growing awareness that future visits may have to be reversed—with him being the traveller. The obvious transference reflections began to appear as to what I was feeling, and how I appeared to him, but were quickly erased by convictions of my always being there to 'nag him'.

We had a session which opened with the remark that he was thinking about what now appeared to be an obvious fact, that he would have to go to C (his home) next year, and that he felt sure he would be tempted to stay—a long pause followed—I simply pointed out that he was presenting an idea that he would like to be the sort of person who had a home to go to, a family to be a part of, which he would enjoy but which was viewed at this moment as a temptation, as something which was tinged with wrongness, that is he felt against it as well.

He replied, 'That's really not what I was thinking about, before I came in I was concerned that nobody pays much attention to Galatea'—followed by a long pause. He went on 'Everybody concentrates upon Pygmalion. It is true he made her, and brought her to life, but look at all the things she did by herself'.

I pointed out that he felt I had brought him out of his rock-hard deathliness and brought him to life, but then everybody praises and applauds me and forgets about what he has achieved and done in return. (I regretted the words 'in return', I had wanted to say 'by himself'.) I went on that he now felt that everybody was expecting everything from him while he was tempted to do the reverse (this was an old theme). He began to cry—an unusual

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event in itself—and finally said, speaking about his mother's holiday, how he had spoiled the ending by being stupid at the airport and how he wished he could put it right. He always put everything into a potential Schmelz position—he realizes as well that the temptation meant going away from analysis. The Schmelz position relates to the mockery of the Germans who during the Occupation would collect Jews, and shout 'Schmelz'. They were particularly fond of doing it on Saturdays. The word to him meant boiling down to make fat.

We now have the following situation. A very different picture to the previous idealization of the Germans was present. There was a recognition that he had a

life with his family, that the analysis gave him a home and an awareness thereof, but how easily he could turn it into meaningless fat, by a mad mocking part of himself, previously idealized as good German.

He then considers and wonders about the possibility of living in peace with his family—and suddenly presented a memory of Poland in the early years of the war when the Russians were present—and he wonders whether he would ever learn Russian and how disturbed his mother becomes when he lectures her about how circumcisions deprive Jews of sexual and emotional passion. I point out that he feels a difficulty of passionately maintaining today's attitude and learning its language and that he fears that he is not able to cut himself off from earlier feelings in the session. I enlarged this to illustrate that he feared he would cut himself off from his new-found position by reasserting his hatred of his family customs and traditions. He then says he has a solution because he does not find himself hating the Russians, which would make him feel the loss of me and the family which he had felt he had gained during the session. He will get them (meaning the family) all to emigrate and live here. 'They will have a home together here and naturally the analysis can go on then. It will be as it was before I became mad because I was probably mad long before the Germans and the Russians came' and he returned to his crying which I found particularly moving. The work continues slowly and now at least he goes to an analyst for an analysis.

I simply presented this development to show the distinction between pathological nostalgia and an experience of true nostalgia associated with a man's feeling of being brought to life. Which allows him to remember what he has lost and how easily via the transference he can be seen to lose it again, and replace it with pathological defence systems.

The other patient is a presentable young woman of 25, who was born and grew up abroad in what appear to be very pleasant surroundings. She grew up in a very academic environment, her father directed a scientific department but died when she was 15. There are three younger children. The father died from a condition which has its origin in allergic states. She went to a university in her home country but vaguely stopped attending and came to England with vague ideas of being a student, but a peculiarly un vague idea of having an analysis. She had certain peculiarities. I've never had a patient who was so difficult to hear, who has a strange whispering voice—she has therefore to be listened to terribly carefully and one is forced to give a picture to her of intense interest in her because she has to repeat herself upon being requested to do so, which she does clearly and quite happily. She has a reiterated expression 'Such and such is not cricket'. It is true that her original country plays cricket extremely

well, and we all know the old-fashioned expression, such and such is not cricket—meaning it is unfair or wrong, but for someone of her age and generation it sounded unreal and was part of the peculiar situation. In the analysis of this vague girl, one never knew which rules, or laws, or which riddle or game we were involved in and infractions of the rules were frequent—particularly as we weren't told clearly what the ground rules were.

Naturally her private life bears no reference to any set of laws or rules whatsoever, her history contains hair-raising possibilities. One can well imagine the potentials for vagueness in any given session—particularly in the analyst.

I gave considerable thought to the problem of what was cricket and what wasn't, each time it arrived on the scene. Gradually it was borne in on me that its main character was a threat of an allergic response produced in her by what may prove to be a threatening stimulus. She actually has certain allergic conditions, which have vanished since her analysis began almost two years ago.

There became certain things I was not vague about. That her father was dead, that he had

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never been mourned despite her attachment to him, that she felt she had his brains (she is intelligent); that she wanted to study a particular subject at university which would lead to a particular goal and that this terrified her—which was totally 'not cricket', and that she was beginning to understand her relationship to her fiancé and how she teased him. That she was pleased to have fantasies about every handsome man she saw, although there were no actings-out of such fantasies. She had a strange relationship with her home, she wrote occasionally and was going home one vague day, though when that was nobody knew, and I also knew that she worked very hard at her job, and was saving money for the future as a student.

She was accepted as a student, and a very anxious girl was produced, and the vagueness began to modify, and her sessions began to settle upon events and memories associated with dreams concerned with an area of land called The Dunes, near her home, where she and her brothers and sisters and friends had played as children. It was a lovely place; they seemed cut off from the outside world. Occasionally we become aware that the cut-off character would change, because she and the others would excitedly peep at courting couples who used The Dunes for their own purpose. Now all this information would seem as if we are dealing with true nostalgic pictures of a homeland and its childhood

pleasures, and their having gone on forever. I however consistently remained unvague about my conviction of reticence against accepting this. There were no adults except the intruding courting couples, and the games were always so peaceful and satisfying.

Following the acceptance at the university, a dream was presented again.

The setting was The Dunes. This time even the dreamer was vague about something. There were children in a Land-Rover, they were being taken somewhere, or not being taken anywhere, they were being gassed at the back of the Land-Rover, they were alive or they were dead.

She had what I felt was a peculiar first association to the dream. It was that she had to decide to give up her flat. Although she was living with her fiancé in his flat, she had kept up the lease of her flat all the time, she had kept secret the fact that she had kept up the lease. The next association was even more peculiar: on her first visit, to discuss arrangements for the analysis, I had apparently sat in such a way that she had seen my leg—it appeared to her that I had shaved the hairs off my leg, which led her to the belief that I participated in bicycle races and had shaved my leg hairs so that I could go faster. She found this idea very worrying, but had never told me (the second secret).

It seemed that we were clearly getting evidence of a secret life she had as to where she was, and what she was doing, and how easily she could move into a safe cover; how immediately on meeting I was planning in her mind to leave her quickly, i.e. to die. She countered by saying how she felt on that day that I was lying because I had seemed so alive to her (I am not sure which was the lie, the liveliness or the other). There was still the problem of the manifest dream and its relationship to the anxious associations, how to link The Dunes with death via gassing, and the possibility of the children not being dead. Was this therefore a picture of her internal world—neither really alive or really dead—and was this the vagueness, and 'not cricket' the situation that would make the decision? You are either in or out, so the vagueness was the peculiar compromise.

To these ideas she responded that she was very embarrassed, she remembered a link between home and The Dunes. The sewage pipes from home exited below The Dunes and she was convinced as a child that all her faeces formed an alternative world under The Dunes, and that that world existed with real, but little people.

I then remembered that throughout the preceding week, each time she entered the consulting room she felt she smelled various flowers, particularly

lavender, which I had not understood at the time. Vagueness therefore had multiple meanings. In the case of the flat it meant taking a definite decision to get married, and to be identified firstly with married parents and later with her mother, as a widow; and therefore it threatened to bring an actual sadness and awareness of her father's death.

The new academic situation itself equally brought her academic father into the picture, and threatened further awareness and thereby an increased sadness. Her married parents were clearly linked with the courting couples watched jealously and excitedly by the peeping children. The vagueness protected her from the other side of the mental picture she held of The Dunes, which were a result of her jealous faecal attacks in her mind upon the parents.

This was further elaborated and linked to the children in the dream, who were either gassed or alive in the Land Rover. This seemed to be further evidence of the vagueness protecting her in a state of uncertainty as to whether she was identified with the faecally dead or gassed parents, or vaguely alive parents who would only invite further jealous attacks. The role of the lavender smell to deodorize all this now seemed clear. We could now begin to understand how she had been encased in vagueness from the very beginning of her analysis, terrified of knowing anything definitely and clearly fearing from the first instance that I would hold myself in readiness to escape an awful fate which would turn me into one of the un-alive faecal figures.

The vagueness in my patient lifted enormously, and left us for weeks with an almost clinically depressed young girl whose nostalgia had been so securely gassed by vagueness, as were her capacities, her relationships and her meanings and intentions. Strangely throughout this period of mourning she spoke clearly, and with the characteristic accent of her own country, which had always been curiously absent.

In this case, the peculiar repetitious return to The Dunes with all its multiple activities and possibilities seemed to me to be the centre of so much childhood activity and life—yet not until we clarified what was underground, and where the little alternative people really were, did the full loss of the real childhood and its realities appear with the appropriate mood attached.

That the defences which locked these two patients in their own peculiar way will return, I am sure. That they will 'nostalgically' miss the people they were, and the parts of their personalities which contained and operated the defences, I am equally sure.

I am beginning to be sure however, that they will experience further, true and meaningful nostalgias, and thereby establish themselves in a proper setting.

SUMMARY

An attempt is made to differentiate between true and false nostalgia, with clinical illustrations from the analyses of a chronic psychotic patient, and a far less disturbed young woman, whose main symptom of vagueness clouded the analytic work, and her own perceptions and capacities. The significance of the differentiation for psychoanalytic work is stressed.

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