

# Freud and Nietzsche on Sublimation

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KEN GEMES

ABSTRACT: The notion of sublimation is essential to Nietzsche and Freud. However, Freud's writings fail to provide a persuasive notion of sublimation. In particular, Freud's writings are confused on the distinction between pathological symptoms and sublimation and on the relation between sublimation and repression. After rehearsing these problems in some detail, it is proposed that a return to Nietzsche allows for a more coherent account of sublimation, its difference from pathological symptoms, and its relation to repression. In summary, on Nietzsche's account, while repression and pathological symptoms involve a disintegration (of the self), sublimation involves integration. The article concludes with a brief consideration of some post-Freudian accounts of sublimation that represent a return to a more Nietzschean approach.

## 1. Introduction

The penultimate sentence in the entry on sublimation in Laplanche and Pontalis's seminal *The Language of Psychoanalysis* reads: "In the psychoanalytic literature the concept of sublimation is frequently called upon; the idea answers to a basic need of the Freudian doctrine and it is hard to see how it could be dispensed with" (1973, 433). One reason that sublimation is a key notion in psychoanalysis is that from a therapeutic point of view, successful psychoanalytic treatment ideally aims at sublimation, inasmuch as sublimation is seen as a necessary condition for full psychic health. By bringing to conscious light hitherto repressed drives, desires, and wishes, energy that has previously displayed itself in unpleasurable symptoms may be harnessed and directed to more productive and felicitous ends. And indeed, at first glance, sublimation might seem a clear enough concept. It involves the redirecting of a repressed sexual drive toward a nonsexual aim.<sup>1</sup> As Freud puts it in his essay "On Narcissism": "Sublimation is a process that concerns object-libido and consists in the instinct directing itself towards an aim other than, and remote from, that of sexual satisfaction; in this process the accent falls upon deflection from sexuality" (*S.E.* 14:94).<sup>2</sup> Yet Laplanche and Pontalis's entry on sublimation ends with a starkly negative assessment of attempts to clarify the notion of sublimation: "The lack of a coherent theory of sublimation remains one of the lacunae in psychoanalytic thought" (1973, 433). The claim

that sublimation is a vexed concept is repeatedly echoed in the secondary literature on the topic. Indeed, this is true from the early days of that literature, as evidenced in Edward Glover's assertion in his important 1931 article "Sublimation, Substitution, and Social Anxiety": "It is generally agreed that prior to 1923 a good deal of confusion existed regarding the exact nature of sublimation. Since then it has increased rather than diminished" (1931, 263). More recently Jacques Lacan notes "the virtually absurd difficulties that authors have encountered every time they have tried to give a meaning to the term 'sublimation'" (1992, 142–43).

To get an entry to these difficulties let us begin by considering the simple definition given above, which emphasizes the redirecting of a drive from a sexual to a nonsexual aim. Before demonstrating the major problem with this definition we shall briefly consider two minor but important problems with this definition. First, there is the problem of distinguishing aims that involve sexual satisfaction and those that do not. After all, it was Freud who argued that many *prima facie* nonsexual activities (e.g., thumb-sucking) have a sexual component. Perhaps this can be finessed by emphasizing overtly sexual aims from aims that are not overtly sexual. Second, there is the problem that much sublimation seems to involve a diversion of arguably nonsexual instincts. Thus aggressive drives, drives associated with what Freud would later call the death drive, may find sublimated discharge in nonaggressive behavior.<sup>3</sup> These are concerns we will return to later (see section 6 below).

## 2. Substitute Formations, Symptoms, and Sublimations

Now for the major problem: The definition in terms of the substitution of nonsexual for sexual aims fails to distinguish sublimations from symptom formation. An obsessive-compulsive who compulsively aims to avoid treading on cracks in the pavement may have substituted a nonsexual aim for a sexual aim, but that would not normally count as a case of sublimation (though see section 3 below). On Freud's basic account various drives are repressed and later these may manifest themselves in various behaviors. These behaviors, often labeled by Freud as "substitute formations," are related in complex ways to the original drive. They are what Freud calls the "return of the repressed" ("Repression," *S.E.* 14:154). Our key question, then, is how to separate those substitute formations, those instances of the return of the repressed, which are symptoms, from those that are sublimations.

Of all Freud's writings perhaps the one that most acutely demonstrates the need for a clear means of separating symptoms from sublimations is his 1910 essay "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood" (*S.E.* 11:57–137). In that essay Freud argues that Leonardo is a model of that type of individual whose repressed sexual desires find sublimated expression by becoming attached

to a powerful drive for scientific and artistic research. In his summarizing final section Freud shows implicit recognition of the difficulties of separating symptoms from sublimations, and, relatedly, illness from health, when he writes:

We must expressly insist that we have never reckoned Leonardo as a neurotic or a “nerve case,” as the awkward phrase goes. Anyone who protests at our so much as daring to examine him in the light of discoveries gained in the field of pathology is still clinging to prejudices which we have to-day rightly abandoned. We no longer think that health and illness, normal and neurotic people, are to be sharply distinguished from each other, and that neurotic traits must necessarily be taken as proofs of a general inferiority. To-day we know that neurotic symptoms are structures which are substitutes for certain achievements of repression that we have to carry out in the course of our development from a child to a civilized human being. We know too that we all produce such substitutive structures, and that it is only their number, intensity and distribution which justify us in using the practical concept of illness and in inferring the presence of constitutional inferiority. From the slight indications we have about Leonardo’s personality we should be inclined to place him close to the type of neurotic that we describe as “obsessional”; and we may compare his researches to the “obsessive brooding” of neurotics, and his inhibitions to what are known as their “abulias.” (*S.E.* 11:131)

After holding up Leonardo as a model of sublimation throughout the essay and then in the first sentence of this quotation protesting that he has not reckoned Leonardo to be a neurotic, Freud in the final sentence concludes that we must place Leonardo close to the obsessional neurotic. The distance between sublimation and neurotic symptoms seems vanishingly small. Here we have in microcosm our problem: how to separate sublimations from neurotic symptoms, both of which count as substitutive formations.

### 3. The Social Factor in Sublimations

In many of Freud’s explications of sublimation there is an emphasis on the social value of the activity resulting from sublimation. Thus in his *New Introductory Lectures* he says, “A certain kind of modification of the aim and a change of object, in which our social valuation is taken into account, is described by us as ‘sublimation’” (*S.E.* 22:97). In one of his earliest published references to sublimation in the Dora case of 1905 he talks of “the undifferentiated sexual disposition of the child . . . being diverted to a higher sexual aim” and thereby providing “the energy for a greater number of our cultural achievements” (*S.E.* 7:50). And in the *Three Essays* dating from the same period he writes that sexual curiosity can be “diverted (sublimated) in the direction of art” (*S.E.* 7:156).

This emphasis on socially valued achievements would provide some means of separating neurotic symptoms from sublimations but at the high cost of introducing a totally nonpsychoanalytic, indeed a nonpsychological, element to the definition, namely, that of social valuation. One, presumably uncomfortable, consequence

of such an account would be that as social values change, behavior that was at one time pathological would become a sublimation. For instance, suppose our compulsive crack avoider mentioned above successfully presents his activities as a kind of performance art and receives much social acclaim for his continual performances. Does that move his activity from neurotic symptom to sublimation?

The reference to social acclaim has led many authors to be suspicious of such definitions.<sup>4</sup> Thus in his article “What Is Sublimated in Sublimation” Donald Kaplan begins: “The whole idea of sublimation has been a vagrant problem for psychoanalysis from the very beginning. This is because sublimation, in one of its meanings, refers to felicitous exercises of the mind, while psychoanalysis is suspicious of any such simple creed” (1993, 549). One gets a clear picture of the problem posed by the introduction of social valuation as a defining characteristic of sublimation, and the related problem of distinguishing neurotic symptoms from sublimations, by contrasting Freud’s essay on Schreber with his essay on Leonardo. The later is perhaps his most sustained surviving piece covering the topic of sublimation.<sup>5</sup> According to Freud, Schreber’s illness stemmed from his repression of homosexual desires first overtly expressed in his quickly suppressed thought that “after all it would be nice to be a woman submitting to the act of copulation.” This repression later gave rise to the obsessive thought that God was trying to unman him and led to various other obsessive thoughts and behavior. This would not normally count as a case of sublimation. Contrast this with Freud’s Leonardo case. According to Freud, Leonardo, like Schreber, repressed his homosexual desires and this repression later led to his scientific inquisitiveness and inventiveness and his artistic activities, including his obsession with capturing in drawings perfect representations of the male body. This for Freud is a classical case of sublimation. Is the only pertinent difference here that in the Schreber case the end activity that results from a repression of erotic desires, namely, obsessive behavior and thought centering on his relationship to God, is not considered socially valuable, whereas in the Leonardo case the end activity that results from a repression of erotic desires is considered socially valuable? Or, as Kaplan might put it, is it simply that we regard Schreber’s exercises of the mind as nonfelicitous but regard Leonardo’s as felicitous? Such distinctions as socially valuable/not socially valuable, felicitous/nonfelicitous, clearly involve value judgments. Moreover, such distinctions do not seem to be analytical distinctions. Thus it seems that a fundamental notion in psychoanalysis is not to be explained in strictly psychoanalytical terms. Even more worrying, those terms seem irredeemably normative and thus run against Freud’s general claim to be providing a merely scientific/descriptive account of psychological phenomena. It is presumably this kind of concern that leads Laplanche and Pontalis to raise the question: “Should the fact that activities described as sublimated in a given culture are accorded particularly high social esteem be taken as a defining characteristic of sublimation?” (1973, 433).

If we do choose to abandon the social valuation factor in separating sublimation from symptom formation, any new account should, I suggest, be tested by how it handles the Leonardo and Schreber cases. The respective behaviors of Leonardo and Schreber may be taken as paradigms of sublimation and pathogenic symptoms. What we are looking for, then, is a strictly psychoanalytic account that would class Leonardo's behavior as sublimation and Schreber's as pathogenic symptom.

#### 4. The Relation Between Sublimation and Repression

Another serious problem raised by Freud's own writings on sublimation concerns the relation between repression and sublimation. In one understanding of Freud's telling of the Leonardo case, Leonardo's homosexual urges were continuously repressed and hence he lived an asexual adult life, and it is this repression that gave rise to his adult scientific and artistic drives: "The sexual repression which set in after this phase of his childhood [where he experienced the 'excessive tenderness of his mother'] caused him to sublimate his libido into the urge to know and established his sexual inactivity for the whole of his later life" (*S.E.* 11:135). Here it seems out of place to talk of the repression of the original drives being lifted; for if the repression were lifted, there would be no account of the continuation of the scientific and artistic drives and the continual asexuality.<sup>6</sup> On this model, at its simplest, Leonardo's scientific and artistic drives, like his asexuality, are really kinds of symptoms, and, as per the usual on the Freudian model, lifting of the repressions behind the symptoms should lead to elimination, or possibly the transformation, of the symptoms. The notion that sublimation involves repression is reinforced by one of Freud's earliest mentions of sublimation in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*.<sup>7</sup> There he refers to "the diversion of sexual forces from sexual aims and their direction to new ones—a process that deserves the name of 'sublimation'" (*S.E.* 7:178). In the same place he goes on to say that "we would place its [sublimation's] beginning in the period of sexual latency of childhood." Clearly such redirection on the part of the child involves nonconscious repression of those sexual forces qua sexual forces, and such repression is exactly what Freud describes as the progenitor of the period of sexual latency. It is not that the child consciously faces his or her erotic desires and chooses not to act on them but, rather, pursues some other activity as a substitute satisfaction. The sublimation of those desires first requires their repression. Indeed, there is even some tendency in the psychoanalytic literature to at least implicitly identify sublimation as a species of repression. For instance, in his book *Sublimation: Inquiries into Theoretical Psychoanalysis* Hans Loewald writes, "Traditionally sublimation is classified in psychoanalysis as a defence" (1988, 3), and in fact Freud's earliest reference to sublimation in his

1892 letter to Fliess refers to sublimations as “protective structures” (*S.E.* 1:247). A page later in a footnote Loewald notes that “it must be noted, however, that in the psychoanalytic literature, including works by Freud himself, the very distinction between defence and repression has been blurred, in as much as repression is used interchangeably with defence” (1988, 4–5). So if sublimations are defenses and the notions of defenses and repressions are interchangeable, it follows that sublimations are repressions. Fenichel, whose work on sublimation we shall shortly consider, indeed comments that sometimes sublimation is called a “successful repression” (1945, 148).

In fact, while the Leonardo text and the extract from the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* suggest that repression is part of sublimation, often in other texts when Freud explicitly considers repression and sublimation together he claims that sublimation is an alternative to repression. Thus in a passage from *Five Lectures on Psycho-analysis* he says, “Premature repression makes the sublimation of the repressed instinct impossible; when the repression is lifted, the path to sublimation becomes free once more” (*S.E.* 11:54). In a letter to Putnam Freud even goes so far as to claim that the two are mutually exclusive: “It [psychoanalytic theory] teaches that a drive cannot be sublimated as long as it is repressed and that is true for every component of a drive” (Hale 1971, 121).

To clarify the relation between sublimation and repression it helps to consider exactly what gets repressed in repression. Here the best place to turn is Freud’s 1915 essay “Repression” (*S.E.* 14:141–58). A crucial point of that essay is Freud’s claim that a drive has both an “ideational” component and an energetic component, what Freud calls “a quota of affect” (*S.E.* 14:152). The ideational component is the content of the drive, including its aim. The energetic component is the force associated with that aim, including the strength of the drive. In repression both the ideational component and the force component are repressed. The repression of the ideational component involves not letting the aim be consciously apprehended. The repression of the force involves not letting the force be expressed in behavior. While Freud refers to the repression of the ideational component as “primal repression,” he emphasizes that “the vicissitude of the quota of affect belonging to the representative is far more important than the vicissitude of the idea” (*S.E.* 14:152).

With this distinction in hand we can now see how sublimation both does and does not involve repression. In sublimation the ideational component may or may not be repressed. In the case of childhood sublimations the aim of the original drive, the drive’s ideational component, is typically held back from conscious apprehension. In the case of sublimation reached through psychoanalytic treatments, typically, the ideational component becomes available for conscious apprehension. However, in all sublimations, therapeutically achieved or otherwise, the force component is expressed in behavior. All sublimations involve an expression of a pent-up quota of affect. The picture suggested here

is that all sublimations typically take repressions as causal antecedents. In this sense sublimations are another manifestation of the phenomenon that Freud calls “the return of the repressed.” What sublimations undo is the repressing of the energetic component; they steer it to an outlet, an aim that deviates from its original aim. Indeed, in the passage quoted above from *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis* Freud contrasts neurotics who owing to their repressions “have sacrificed many sources of energy” with cases of sublimation “in which the energy of the infantile wishful impulses is not cut off but remains ready for use—the unserviceable aim of the various impulses being replaced by one that is higher, and perhaps no longer sexual” (*S.E.* 11:53–54). Here Freud is explicitly claiming that in sublimation it is the repression of the energy that is lifted.

This reading does not seem to square with the letter to Putnam where Freud says that sublimation precludes the repression of *any* component of a drive. However, it is worth noting that in that letter he is focused on the clinical practice of psychotherapy. Presumably his idea is that the analyst is faced with a patient presenting various symptoms the patient experiences as distressing. These pathogenic symptoms are the manifestation of various unconscious repressions. By bringing the repressed drives into full consciousness—this of course involves more than just the patient’s intellectual recognition of the drives—this allows for their expression in more acceptable forms. Note, on this model it is not that the ideational component of the drive ceases to be *suppressed* but that the suppression takes on a conscious form that somehow allows the energetic component formerly associated with it to be redirected to new, more acceptable ends. This model does not fit the nontherapeutic cases such as that of Leonardo since there is no conscious recognition on Leonardo’s part of his underlying homoerotic drives. Nor does it fit the text of Freud’s *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* where the child in his or her latency period has no conscious awareness of the desires being sublimated. Clearly the child (unconsciously) represses rather than (consciously) suppresses his or her erotic desires. So the conclusion to be drawn here is that the sublimation that is the result of successful psychoanalytic intervention involves the lifting of unconscious repression of both the ideational and energetic components; but the sublimation involved in typical cases of scientific and artistic expression or that occurs in the latency period in childhood typically only involves lifting of the repression of the energetic component and continued repression of the ideational component.

I suspect that it is this model that leads to Fenichel’s idea of sublimations as successful repressions; they are successful in that while the ideational component is kept from consciousness, the energy associated with it is allowed an outlet. Freud’s claim in the Putnam letter that a drive cannot be sublimated as long as any component is repressed would then have to be read as asserting that “in the practice of psychotherapy a drive cannot be sublimated as long as any component of it is unconsciously repressed.” This understanding of the relation of

repression and sublimation still leaves us hard-pressed to distinguish sublimation from other instances of the return of the repressed, such as pathological symptoms.

### 5. Fenichel's Account of Sublimation

Fenichel in his influential work *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* gives an account of the relation between sublimation and repression and the distinction between pathological symptoms and sublimation that is worth recounting since variants of it are very common in the subsequent literature. On Fenichel's account both repression and sublimation are ego defenses against unacceptable instinctual drives. He describes sublimation as a successful defense and repression as an unsuccessful defense. He rejects the attempt to define the difference between success and failure in terms of the social valuation of the relevant behaviors, noting that "the factor of valuation usually included in the definition of sublimation had better be omitted" (1945, 141). In its place he gives a strictly psychoanalytic account. The first difference he locates is that in sublimation "the original impulse vanishes because its energy is withdrawn in favour of the cathexis of its substitute" (1945, 141). A second difference he locates is that sublimated impulses "find their outlet" (1945, 141) whereas repressed impulses do not. And the third difference he (1945, 142) mentions is that in sublimation, as opposed to neurotic substitute gratifications, there is a desexualization.

Let us see how these factors pertain to the test cases of Leonardo and Schreber. Regarding the vanishing of the original impulse, it is questionable that Leonardo's original homosexual impulse had vanished. It is more natural to say that it continued to be expressed in his activity. In particular, his fondness for beautiful disciples of questionable artistic talent in whom he took a very protective interest does not evidence a cessation of his homosexual impulses. Also his obsession with capturing in his drawings representations of perfect idealized male bodies also suggests a continuation of his homosexual impulses. This same evidence militates against Fenichel's third factor of desexualization as a marker that separates sublimations from pathological symptoms. Furthermore, our previous considerations of the obsessive crack avoider, whose pathological symptom is presumably even more desexualized than any of Leonardo's above-mentioned activities, militates against the relevance of desexualization as a marker. So although in much of the literature on sublimation the factor of desexualization, or as it is often called, neutralization, looms large, it seems not to be a significant marker between sublimations and pathological symptoms.<sup>8</sup> Both sublimations and pathological symptoms can appear in sexualized and nonsexualized forms.<sup>9</sup>

The Schreber case is probative against Fenichel's claim that in sublimation, but not repression, impulses find an outlet. Schreber's rich panoply of obsessive

behaviors clearly were a result of his repressed homosexual drive. Presumably they were also an outlet for that drive. Or are we to somehow differentiate between results of drives and outlets of drives? Here the worry would be that outlets are simply those results we find socially acceptable, in which case the factor of valuation Fenichel warns against has reentered the picture.

## 6. Nietzsche's Solution

We will now turn to Nietzsche as it will be argued below that Nietzsche's work provides means for clearly separating sublimation from repression and sublimation from pathological symptoms in a way that neatly explains why da Vinci counts as a case of the former and Schreber counts as a case of the latter.<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche, like Freud and like their common predecessor Schopenhauer, takes individual humans to be, at some fundamental level, collections of drives.<sup>11</sup> However, most modern humans, as members of what he denigratingly calls the herd, are simply disorganized collections of competing drives, with different drives having relative ascendancy at different times: "In the present age human beings have in their bodies the heritage of multiple origins, that is opposite and not merely opposite drives and value standards that fight each other and rarely permit each other any rest. Such human beings of late cultures and refracted lights will on the average be weaker human beings" (*BGE* 200).

In many cases drives, particularly aggressive drives, are treated as per the Freudian model by repression: "All instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly turn inwards—this is what I call the internalization of man: thus it was that man first developed what was later call his 'soul.' The entire inner world, originally as thin as if stretched between two membranes, expanded and extended itself, acquired depth, width, and height, in the same measure as outward discharge was inhibited" (*GM* II:16). Central to Nietzsche's account is the notion of splitting off. Aggressive drives, which are not viewed as acceptable, typically because acting on them would exact a painful retribution, are repressed to the point that one does not even acknowledge that one has such drives.<sup>12</sup> These drives may nevertheless find their outlet, often in disguised form—indeed, often in a form that contradicts their very nature. Thus Nietzsche claims that the Christian value of brotherly love was originally in fact a transformed expression of hostile drives to dominate one's fellow man. By successfully preaching brotherly love the weak get their oppressors to voluntarily disarm themselves and become subservient to the values of the weak. In doing so they, both the weak and the strong who have been converted to the values of the weak, split off their contrary aggressive drives from conscious apprehension, so that at the same time they harbor both unacknowledged aggressive drives and acknowledged beneficent

drives. This repression and splitting off of drives makes us sick creatures of what Nietzsche calls *ressentiment*.<sup>13</sup>

For Nietzsche, in certain rare cases drives, rather than being split off, are harnessed into a centered, unified whole. At one point Nietzsche took Wagner to be such a case: “The dramatic element in Wagner’s development is quite unmistakable from the moment when his ruling passion became aware of itself and took his nature in its charge: from that time on there was an end to fumbling, straying, to the proliferation of secondary shoots, and within the most convoluted courses and often daring trajectories assumed by his artistic plans there rules a single inner law, a will by which they can be explained” (*RWB* 2). The story of Wagner’s achievement of a higher unity born from some master drive is of course the story Nietzsche would repeat about himself in the dramatic section of *Ecce Homo* where Nietzsche elaborates the subtitle of that work, “How One Becomes What One Is”:

To become what one is, one must not have the slightest notion of what one is. . . . The whole surface of consciousness—consciousness is a surface—must be kept clear of all great imperatives. . . . Meanwhile the organizing “idea” that is destined to rule keeps growing deep down—it begins to command; slowly it leads us back from side roads and wrong roads; it prepares single qualities and fitnesses that will one day prove to be indispensable as a means towards the whole—one by one, it trains all subservient capacities before giving any hint of the dominant task, “goal,” “aim,” or “meaning.” (*EH* “Clever” 9)

This notion of training of subservient drives is to be explicated in terms of the redirection of those drives away from their initial, primary goal toward a secondary goal that is more in line with the master drive. This idea is partially expressed in the following passage from *Human, All Too Human*:

*Microcosm and macrocosm of culture.* Man makes the best discoveries about culture within himself when he finds two heterogeneous powers governing there. Given that a man loved the plastic arts or music as much as he was moved by the spirit of science, and that he deemed it impossible to end this contradiction by destroying the one and completely unleashing the other power; then, the only thing remaining to him is to make such a large edifice of culture out of himself that both powers can live there, even if at different ends of it; between them are sheltered conciliatory central powers, with the dominating strength to settle, if need be, any quarrels that break out. Such a cultural edifice in the single individual will have the greatest similarity to the cultural architecture of whole eras and, by analogy, provide continuous instruction about them. For wherever the great architecture of culture developed, it was its task to force opposing forces into harmony through an overwhelming aggregation of the remaining, less incompatible powers, yet without suppressing or shackling them. (*HH* I:276)

A point to be emphasized here is that on Nietzsche’s ideal weaker drives are not suppressed or shackled. Rather, they are to be harnessed to allow their expression in service to a higher aim. Thus in his notebooks Nietzsche writes, “Overcoming of the affects? No, if that means their weakening and annihilation. But instead

employing them; which may mean a long tyrannizing of them. . . . At last they are confidently given freedom again: they love us as good servants and happily go wherever our best interests lie" (*KSA* 12:1[122]).

This gives us the material we need to affect a Nietzschean account of the distinction between repression and sublimation. Sublimation is what happens when a drive's primary aim is substituted for by a secondary aim that allows for expression of the drive in a manner consonant with the master drive. As John Richardson succinctly puts it, "Drive A rules B insofar as it has turned B towards A's own end, so that B now participates in A's distinctive activity" (1996, 33).<sup>14</sup> Repression is what happens when a drive is denied its immediate aim and is then split off from other drives in the sense that its aims are not integrated with the aims of other drives and it must battle, often unsuccessfully, for any opportunity to achieve expression.

Consider again our cases of Leonardo and Schreber. Leonardo's homosexual drive is redirected toward the secondary aims of scientific, as opposed to sexual, researches and artistic creation, including possession of idealized representations of the male body, as opposed to actual sexual possession of male bodies. These ends fit in with his master drive of scientific and artistic creativity. Schreber, on the other hand, by his own admission split off his religious activity completely from his life as senate president. He claimed that neither activity in any way informed the other. Schreber did not integrate his sexual drive with his wider life but strove to isolate it and separate its expressions from his other activities.

The Nietzschean solution to the problem of differentiating sublimation from pathological symptoms may be summed up in the slogan that *sublimations involve integration or unification, while pathological symptoms involve splitting off or disintegration*, as we might call it. What is disintegrated is of course the (possibility of a) unified self. For Nietzsche the difference between repression and sublimation is that in sublimation the stronger drive co-opts a weaker drive as an ally and this allows the weaker drive expression, albeit to an end that contains some degree of deflection from its original aim (for example, Leonardo's homosexual drive is expressed in the possession of idealized representations of male bodies rather than literal possession of male bodies); whereas in repression the stronger drive attempts to stifle any expression of the weaker drive so that its expression either is fully stifled or can only be achieved in a heavily disguised form that often represents the inverse of the original aim (the Christian's hate and envy of, and desire to have power over, his or her fellow man being expressed as professions of brotherly love and disinterest in power). The relation between sublimation and repression is that often but not always sublimations have repressions as antecedents. If a stronger drive does not at first have sufficient strength to co-opt a weaker drive to its own ends, it may simply act to stifle that weaker drive.<sup>15</sup> As the stronger drive gains in strength, opportunities for co-option rather than stifling may arise.<sup>16</sup>

For Nietzsche, unified selves, what he takes to be genuine persons, are rare achievements; hence he cautions that “one should not at all assume that many humans are ‘people’” (*KSA* 12:10[59], my translation) and “most men present pieces and fragments of man: one has to add them up for a complete man to appear” (*KSA* 12:10[228]).<sup>17</sup> It is Nietzsche’s aim to foster the development of such genuine persons. In the same vein his Zarathustra says, “It is my art and aim, to compose into one and bring together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful chance” (*Z* II:20). Sublimation, for Nietzsche, is the primary means to a unified self. Nietzsche, like Freud, takes sublimation as a mark of health. ‘Health’ is a term that both Freud and, especially, Nietzsche, who more than Freud explicitly pronounces a strong normative agenda, positively valorize. However, while for Freud health is measured in more utilitarian terms of relative contentment, for Nietzsche health is measured in terms of such interrelated vectors as freedom from *ressentiment*, creative agonal struggle between drives, self-overcoming, and superabundance of expressive energy.<sup>18</sup>

Nietzsche’s important and difficult normative ideas of *amor fati*, eternal recurrence, and affirmation of life are all strongly related to his aim of overcoming *ressentiment*.<sup>19</sup> *Ressentiment* is directly connected to repression, in that where there is *ressentiment*, there is some drive that we have been forced to stifle. Nietzsche claims that in order to fully love fate or to fully wish back everything eternally, both of which are exemplary ways of affirming life, we would have to overcome all such *ressentiment*. To affirm all of one’s life, to overcome *ressentiment*, would be to affirm all of one’s drives—life, for Nietzsche, being nothing but a collection of drives.<sup>20</sup> This does not mean to simply let all of one’s drives have free expression. That would involve conflict, chaos, and, inevitably, disintegration.<sup>21</sup> It means harnessing one’s drives to allow them a form of concerted expression. As Nietzsche himself nicely puts the point: “The multitude and disgregation of impulses and the lack of any systematic order among them results in a ‘weak will’; their coordination under a single predominant impulse results in a ‘strong’ will: in the first case it is the oscillation and lack of gravity; in the later, the precision and clarity of direction” (*KSA* 13:14[219]). Sublimation is for Nietzsche the key means to such concerted expression and, hence, to overcoming *ressentiment*.<sup>22</sup>

On Nietzsche’s picture of sublimation the questionable element of social valuation drops out of the picture.<sup>23</sup> Another important difference from the Freudian account is that the notion of desexualization also drops out. Where in his account of sublimation Freud deals primarily with a libidinal drive (Eros), Nietzsche allows for a multiplicity of drives. Relatedly, for Nietzsche aggressive drives as well as sexual drives are prone to sublimation. Given the problems of Freud’s notion of desexualization, and his concomitant failure to revise his account of sublimation after his positing of a death drive separate from the libidinal drive, these differences in Nietzsche’s account are a gain rather than

a loss. The price paid for this gain is that Nietzsche, much more than Freud, remains unclear about the range of drives available for sublimation and repression.<sup>24</sup> More important, what also gets dropped out in Nietzsche's account is the role of the ego. Rather than having a higher-level agency, such as Freud's ego, censor lower-level drives, Nietzsche simply posits an agonal struggle between the drives; thus he says in *Beyond Good and Evil*: "The will to overcome an affect is, in the end, itself only the will of another, or several other, affects" (*BGE* 117). And even in those cases where there is consciousness of the drive that is causing a disturbance, that consciousness is not the engine of repression:

*That one wants to combat the vehemence of a drive at all, however, does not stand within our own power; nor does the choice of any particular method; nor does the success or failure of this method. What is clearly the case is that in this entire procedure our intellect is only the blind instrument of another drive, which is a rival of the drive whose vehemence is tormenting us. . . . While "we" believe we are complaining about the vehemence of a drive, at bottom it is one drive which is complaining about the other; that is to say: for us to become aware that we are suffering from the vehemence of a drive presupposes the existence of another equally vehement or even more vehement drive, and that a struggle is in prospect in which our intellect is going to have to take sides. (D 109)*

While this passage allows that our conscious selves may be aware of the drive that is causing us distress, it emphasizes another drive, not the conscious I, as the repressing force. Other texts from Nietzsche make clear that he envisages such struggles between drives often occurring with no conscious awareness, that is, with no participation of the conscious I, or ego, as Freud would call it (see, for instance, the passages above describing Wagner and Nietzsche himself).

An advantage here is that Nietzsche does not face the notorious censor problem pointed out by Sartre: For Nietzsche there need be no ego that rejects and thus in some sense faces—to reject X is to be aware of X—impulses it cannot face.<sup>25</sup> However, this in turn brings with it the worry that this notion of drives struggling against each other implies some recognitional capacities on the part of the drives. They are in danger then of becoming subpersonal homunculi.<sup>26</sup> While Freud faces the problem of a conscious I, which in order to repress various ideas must recognize those very ideas it seeks to repress and hence not recognize, Nietzsche seems to have subpersonal units engaged in acts of recognition that we normally ascribe to consciousness. The first point to be noted here is that modern psychology and the philosophy of mind have little trouble ascribing the functional equivalent of recognition capacities to subpersonal units. Thus those who follow Fodor's modularity of mind thesis take there to be, for instance, calculational capacities below the level of consciousness that determine behavior that is naturally described in terms of recognitional capacities. Some argue that the simple act of catching a ball involves recognition of trajectories and calculations of changes of trajectories that occur at a level below consciousness. Furthermore, a Nietzschean account of repression itself could simply bypass

any suggestion of recognitional capacities on the part of the drives themselves by focusing on the notion of a drive commanding resources at the expense of other drives seeking to command those same resources. Thus consider an individual who sees a moderately large animal in his or her proximity. The drive to nourishment might prompt the individual to interact with that animal as if it were a potential source of food; so, for instance, under the influence of that drive perceptual capacities would be trained to help figure the quickest route toward that animal. On the other hand, if the drive for survival is stronger perhaps it will orient the perceptual capacities to help figure the quickest escape route from that animal's vicinity. Here it is not a case of a drive recognizing another drive and deciding to not let it be expressed but, rather, simply a matter of the stronger drive grabbing resources and thus preventing a competing drive from grabbing those same resources and using them to achieve its aim.

While this type of account might work to provide a nonhomuncular Nietzschean account of repression, it seems more difficult to provide an analogous nonhomuncular account of sublimation or at least nonconscious sublimation. The problem is that in sublimation, since there is redirection of a weaker drive to a secondary aim, which is a deflection from its primary aim, it seems hard to account for this without attributing to the stronger redirecting drive some amount of recognition of the divergence between its aim and the original aim of the weaker drive. In sublimation the weaker drive is not simply blocked off from commanding resources but, rather, its command of resources is at first blocked and then eventually permitted when, through the influence of the stronger drive, it is directing them to new ends consonant with those of the stronger drive. Now in cases of nonconscious sublimation perhaps this can be attributed to some subpersonal, nonconscious, computational structure whose resources are commanded by the stronger drive. In this case one would not be attributing recognitional capacities to the stronger drive itself. Rather, some computational structure, one to which an agent does not have conscious access, assesses that the weaker drive's initial aim is not consonant with that of the commanding drive and so redirects it to a new aim. While on such a picture it is the computational structure that is the proximate cause of the weaker drive's redirection, since it is the stronger drive that causes the computational structure to seek to redirect the weaker drive, it would not be amiss to talk here of the stronger drive co-opting the weaker.<sup>27</sup>

Rather than pursue these issues, which would take extensive philosophical analysis requiring essay-length treatments, I want to conclude by making an important qualification and then briefly noting some similarities between the Nietzschean account of sublimation and certain post-Freudian accounts. First the qualification: the emphasis on Nietzsche's picture of the sublimated self as a coherent structure of sublimated drives under the dominance of the sublimating master drive may easily suggest a static notion of the self, as if once the lesser

drives have been sublimated there is a permanent harmony within the drives. However, famously Nietzsche rejected all such static notions on both descriptive and normative grounds. All life, or at least all healthy life, for Nietzsche involves overcoming and indeed self-overcoming. But note, the Nietzschean picture of sublimation I have developed need not transgress this Nietzschean dictum. When a master drive reorientates a lesser drive to an object that is a deflection from its original object, that does mean that the weaker drive has totally lost all impetus toward the original object. Thus in the case of Leonardo, his sexual drive still had an impetus toward sexual congress with males, even though, through the direction of his master drive, it only expressed itself in his obsessions with representations of perfect male bodies, his fondness for platonic relations with beautiful male models, and so on. However, if in the continual agonal struggle between drives his original master drive should have weakened sufficiently and/or his sexual drive should have strengthened sufficiently, it could well be that his sexual drive would have asserted itself as the new master drive and thus reoriented the direction of Leonardo's activities. That a master drive for some time asserts a hegemony over other drives does not imply that those other drives cease their efforts at self-assertion. As Nietzsche observes in one of his notebooks, "Every drive is a kind of attempt to dominate; each has its own perspective, which it wants to force as a norm on the other drives" (*KSA* 12:7[60]).<sup>28</sup>

### 7. Klein, Segal, and Leowald: Toward a Reconciliation of Freud and Nietzsche

While, as noted above, most of Freud's texts on sublimation emphasize notions such as desexualization and social valuations, there are occasional texts that emphasize the unifying element in sublimations. In *The Ego and the Id* Freud tells us that sublimated energy may "retain the main purpose of Eros—that of uniting and binding—as it helps towards establishing unity, or a tendency to unity" (*S.E.* 19:45).<sup>29</sup> While Freud fails to thematize this notion of sublimation as unification, some post-Freudians, in particular those working in the tradition of Melanie Klein, do attempt to thematize the important notions of disintegration and integration in their discussions of sublimation.

In her essay "Infant Analysis" Klein explicitly turns to consideration of Freud's analysis of Leonardo in order to "set forth more exactly the analogies and differences between symptoms and sublimations" (1926, 41). The key component she attributes to Leonardo, which allowed him to achieve sublimations rather than hysterical conversions, is his capacity for "identification with the objects of the world around him." It is this that allowed his fixations to "become consonant with the ego" (Klein 1926, 43). According to Klein, having introjected

various objects that are assigned both good and bad qualities—this for Klein is a feature of what she calls the depressive position, which is reached after an initial paranoid-schizoid position where enduring objects are not recognized as such—sublimation is achieved when hostility to these introjected objects is overcome through fantasies that allow a symbolic representation of the introjected object in a nonhostile form. It is through such fantasies and symbolic representations that these introjected objects are integrated with the ego. While we cannot hope to fully rehearse here Klein’s notion of depressive position and so forth, what is clear is that for Klein sublimation involves integration and overcoming of hostility to inner objects. Since these inner objects are for Klein manifestations of drives (for instance, bad objects are manifestations of aggressive drives), Klein’s account of sublimation bears a striking resemblance to the Nietzschean account offered above.<sup>30</sup> The Kleinian account of sublimation as integration is a theme taken up by Hanna Segal in her “A Psychoanalytical Approach to Aesthetics,” which concludes that “a satisfactory work of art is achieved by a realization and sublimation of the depressive position” (1952, 206). For Segal this sublimation involves “the desire to unite” (1952, 207). Art, for Segal is a form of sublimatory activity, a working through of the depressive position, which allows us through symbolic representations to take objects toward which we have sadistic hostile impulses and reintegrate them into a world that is “whole, complete and unified” (1952, 204).

Another psychoanalyst, influenced by Klein, who identifies sublimation with a type of integration, albeit under the name of “internalization,” is Hans Loewald. Internalization, according to Loewald, involves “unconscious ego processes that undo the splitting off” that is characteristic of repression (1973, 12). The splitting off that characterizes repression, according to Loewald, “maintains psychic processes and structures on lower organizational levels,” while sublimation, or internalization, as he calls it, “leads to higher organization and an enriched psychic life” (1973, 14). In his later book *Sublimation*, in reference to Freud’s Leonardo case, Loewald notes that “there are unitary experiences which give way to experiences of differentiation, but that in sublimation the experience of unity is restored” (1988, 45). Interestingly, Loewald (1973) cites Nietzsche, and in particular Nietzsche’s *On the Genealogy of Morals*, as a precursor for his own notion of internalization. In fact, Nietzsche’s term *internalization* is closer to the notion of repression than sublimation. For Nietzsche, as expressed in the passage from *GM* II:16 quoted above, internalization is the turning back inside of instincts that cannot be discharged outside.<sup>31</sup>

What is missing from these post-Freudian accounts of sublimation as integration or unification, or a higher level of organization, is an account of what exactly is meant by integration, unification, or higher organization. Nietzsche’s account of a master drive with a determinate aim realigning the aims of weaker drives, to aims that augment rather than conflict with the aim of the master drive, at least

provides a start to such an account. Whether Kleinians or other post-Freudians can utilize such a Nietzschean conception of sublimation as unification without joining Nietzsche in putting such strong conditions on what is necessary for unification, or joining Nietzsche in his rejection of the notion of the ego, is something that awaits further investigation.

*Birkbeck College, University of London  
School of Humanities, University of Southampton  
K.Gemes@bbk.ac.uk, K.Gemes@soton.ac.uk*

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#### NOTES

1. Freud often distinguishes between the aim and object of a drive. On one version of Freud's aim/object contrast the aim of a drive is simply satisfaction, or put another way, its aim is to discharge its associated quanta of energy; and the object of a drive is that characteristic activity or thing toward which that energy is directed. However, Freud often uses the aim/object contrast to differentiate the characteristic activity of a drive (the aim) from the particular things that drive focuses on at different times (the objects). In this essay the term *aim* is typically used in the sense of the active direction of a drive. Thanks are due to Sebastian Gardner for bringing my attention to this point.

2. The term Freud invariably used is 'Trieb,' which the translators of the *Standard Edition* have unfortunately rendered as "instinct" rather than "drive." There are three reasons to be wary of the *S.E.* choice here. One is that the German language contains the distinct term 'Instinkt,' which is literally translated as the English "instinct," and, as the editors of the *S.E.* themselves note (*S.E.* 1:xxv), Freud does in fact occasionally use the German term 'Instinkt.' Second is that many writers in the German psychological tradition before Freud, including Nietzsche, used the term 'Trieb' rather than 'Instinkt,' and here 'Trieb' has generally been translated as "drive." Third is that the notion of instinct carries with it today the connotation of being hard-wired—drives but not instincts can be acquired; relatedly, and, more important, instincts have the connotation of being nonplastic in their aims—this is part of their hard-wired nature. Now one might want to claim that for Freud all *Triebe* are indeed part of our inherited constitution and cannot be acquired after birth, but it is absolutely essential for Freud that their aims are indeed plastic, since the substitution of aims in 'Triebe' is a central explanatory notion in Freud's theories.

3. Bergler similarly notes, "At the time Freud formulated his views on the subject [of sublimation], only the repressed phallic and pre-genital wishes and their contributaries were considered to be part of the id. Later, Freud put at least equal stress on repressed aggressive trends.

However, no revision of the problem of sublimation was undertaken on the basis of this inclusion of aggressive trends” (1945, 77).

4. See, for instance, Arlow 1955, 515; Glover 1931, 266–67; Hartmann 1955, 10.

5. The editors of the *S.E.* hypothesize that among Freud’s lost metapsychological essays from 1915–17 there was a paper dealing explicitly with sublimation (*S.E.* 14:106).

6. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud gives perhaps his strongest formulation of the claim that sublimations do not involve the removal of repressions: “The repressed instinct never ceases to strive for complete satisfaction. . . . No substitute or reaction formations and no sublimations will suffice to remove the repressed instinct’s persisting tension” (*S.E.* 18:42).

7. The first known references by Freud to sublimation occur in letters and drafts of letters to Fliess dating from 1897 (*S.E.* 1:247–48). The first reference to sublimation in works published by Freud occurs in the Dora case (*S.E.* 7:50) and in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, both published in 1905.

8. See, for instance, Kris (1955) and Hartmann (1955), the latter of whom says that “neutralization is essential in what we call sublimation” (1955, 18). A key source for this notion of neutralization is Freud’s 1923 work *The Ego and the Id* where he refers to a “displaceable energy . . . neutral in itself . . . desexualized libido, it may also be described as sublimated energy” (*S.E.* 19:44–45).

9. Note, while Freud himself often emphasizes desexualization in his accounts of sublimation, in the above quotation from *Five Lectures on Psycho-analysis* he makes the pointedly weaker claim that the aim of sublimated energy is “perhaps no longer sexual” (*S.E.* 11:54; emphasis added). Given how much of art, itself a much heralded result of sublimation, involves a more or less explicit sexual component, this weaker formulation is well advised.

10. There is a good deal of literature devoted to expounding the relationship between Freud and Nietzsche. Unfortunately much of it concerns the question of to what degree Nietzsche anticipated Freud and to what degree Freud did or did not cover up influence from Nietzsche. By and large literature governed by these concerns tends to do little to illuminate the work of either Freud or Nietzsche. Perhaps the best, or at least most comprehensive, book of this questionable genre is Lehrer 1995. Less helpful is Assoun 2000. A most succinct example of this genre is Chapman and Chapman-Santana 1995.

11. Schopenhauer was more prone to speak of wills (*Willen*) rather than drives (*Triebe*). How much this is merely a terminological difference is a difficult question to answer. For Schopenhauer, beyond individual time-located willings, there is, notoriously, the transcendental notion of *Wille*, for which Nietzsche had no sympathy. However, Freud’s notion of Eros may, arguably, be seen as a return to a more transcendental picture.

12. While Nietzsche never takes on anything approximating Freud’s topological model of the id, ego, and superego (see, for instance, *The Ego and the Id* [*S.E.* 19]), Nietzsche countenances different modes of repression that have echoes in Freud’s topological model. For instance, in *On the Genealogy of Morals* I Nietzsche tells the story of slaves who initially repress their drives principally because their reality principle tells them that they are too weak to act on those drives in the face of the masters’ oppression; later in *GM* Nietzsche tells how that practical repression takes on a more moralized form. Indeed, in sections 19–22 of *GM* II, Nietzsche tells how it is in reaction to our debts to our fathers, forefathers, and God that we develop what he calls a guilty conscience. The first kind of repression is somewhat akin to repression seated in the ego, and the second kind is akin to repression seated in the superego (itself formed according to Freud through the internalization of godlike authoritarian father figures).

13. Reginster also argues that a kind of splitting of self is integral to *ressentiment*, claiming that “ressentiment corrupts or dis-integrates the self” (1997, 301).

14. More generally Richardson (1996, e.g., 25) gives an account of Nietzsche on sublimation that anticipates the one given here. It is quite possible that this essay’s original inspiration comes

from the excellent Richardson 1996 since, on reflection, that seems to be true of so much of my work. Another source may have been May 1999, which persuasively argues that sublimation, power, and form creation are Nietzsche's key criteria for value. For an amusing, but much more important, case of such "anxiety of influence" I direct the reader to Bos 1992, which expounds the convoluted relationship between Nietzsche and Freud on the concept of the "It" or "Id" as mediated by the curious figure of George Groddeck, author of the somewhat notorious *Book of the It* (2006).

15. As Dina Emundts has pointed out to me, and as acknowledged above, such stifling, which can be short of full stifling, does not mean that the weaker drive need find no form of expression. For instance, in Shreber's case his repressed homosexual drive found outlet in his paranoid fantasies and his transvestism. In the Christian slave, according to Nietzsche, his repression of his desire to have what the masters have is expressed in his proclaimed repudiation of the masters' attainments. The point is that in repression, as opposed to sublimation, those expressions typically take on the logic of opposites—Shreber's desire to be a female is expressed as his being forced by God to be a female against his will, the Christian slave's desire to have power over his masters is disguised as an alleged love of his enemies and his renunciation of the desire for power. So where repressed desires find expression they do so in a way that cannot be integrated into a coherent whole; they represent a disintegration, not an integration, of the subject.

16. Note, it is not being claimed here that Nietzsche uses the term 'sublimation' with this exact meaning. While Nietzsche does occasionally use the term 'Sublimierung' and cognates in his writings (see, for instance, *GM* II:7), he never gives a thematized account of sublimation. The account of sublimation as unification given here is described as a Nietzschean account in that it is in line with many of his uses of that term and, more important, it is based on one of Nietzsche's central ideals of health (see below); and equally important, this account serves to underwrite the very distinctions between repression and sublimation and between pathological symptoms and sublimations that Freud's account of sublimation fails to underwrite. This reading allows that in certain passages, for instance *KSA* 12:254, Nietzsche uses the term 'Sublimierung' and cognates in ways more akin to Freud's actual usage and in ways that do not imply the notion of a united self. Schacht (1983) plausibly claims that in fact Nietzsche tends to use the term 'spiritualization' (*Vergeistigung*) in the sense of sublimation. He further contrasts this to Nietzsche's term 'internalization' (*Verinnerlichung*). This accords with the argument presented in section 7 below that Nietzsche's use of the term *internalization* is better construed as repression rather than sublimation. For a reading that argues that Nietzsche's notion of sublimation is closer to that of Freud's, see Golomb 1989, especially 67–77.

17. Similarly, Nietzsche sees the achievement of free will as something open to a limited few. For more on both these themes, see Gemes 2006.

18. Nietzsche, like Freud, often makes a direct connection between artistic creation and the sublimation of sexual energy: "It is one and the same energy that man expresses in artistic conception and in the sexual act" (*KSA* 13:23[2]).

19. The French term 'ressentiment' is expressly used by Nietzsche, most notably in *GM* I.

20. For more on this, see Gemes 2008, where affirming drives is not explicated in terms of taking a certain cognitive stance, endorsing some positive proposition about one's drives, but, rather, as fully expressing one's drives.

21. One needs to be a little careful here in avoiding the suggestion that Nietzsche favors some static permanent hierarchy among the drives. In fact, Nietzsche often emphasizes the need for a kind of agonal struggle between the drives. Agonal struggle is along the lines of a contest that develops, brings out, the best of the participants, rather than a struggle that leads to their evisceration. While I do not believe that there is genuine conflict between the Nietzsche ideal of a unified self and the Nietzschean ideal of a self engaged in agonal struggle, limitations of space prevent me from here developing this point. Suffice it for now to say that even a master drive, in order to fully develop itself, needs the conflict of robust challenges.

22. Kaufmann (1980) similarly lays great stress on the importance of the notion of sublimation for Nietzsche. In chapter 7, “Morality and Sublimation,” Kaufmann explicitly contrasts repression and sublimation as two methods for dealing with the chaos of impulses. Kaufmann places Nietzsche as a strong advocate of the second of these methods. Indeed, Kaufmann (1980, 219–20), while noting that other modern philosophers including Goethe, Novalis, and Schopenhauer used the notion of sublimation, claims that it was Nietzsche who gave the notion the connotation of the transformation of sexual energy that it carries today.

23. Since Nietzsche says little about the nature of master drives, there is a certain amount of vagueness about what counts as a unified self for Nietzsche. With the element of social valuation absent there is the worry that, for instance, a reclusive obsessive stamp collector may count as a unified self. For such a person we may envisage a stamp collecting master drive. The answer here is that Nietzsche as a naturalist believes that as humans we come with a rich panoply of inherited drives—this allows that we may also in the course of acculturation acquire new drives. As a matter of empirical fact the reclusive stamp collector will not be a being who is giving expression to all his or her drives (for instance, drives to sociability, sexual drives, and aggressive drives).

24. At one point Nietzsche talks of “fifty separate drives” (*D* 422). Commenting on this Paul Katsafanas in his dissertation notes that “he is undercounting: throughout his corpus he names over one hundred distinct drives” (2008, 130). In fact, some interpreters, including the philosopher Heidegger (1979) and the psychoanalyst Adler (1928), insist that for Nietzsche there is one basic drive or force, namely, will to power, and all more specific drives are just modifications of this drive or force. But this is a difficult matter in Nietzsche interpretation that I cannot here enter into.

25. See Sartre 1958, 51–54. Also the excellent Gardner 1993 contains a good presentation of the censor problem (1993, 47–52) and attempts a Kleinian defense (1993, chap. 7).

26. Robert Pippin and Sebastian Gardner have pressed on me a different philosophical worry about this Nietzschean account of genuine persons as unified hierarchies of drives and its attendant neglect of emphasis on the notion of ego. They argue that such third-person accounts of personhood fail to account for a first-person point of view; in particular, they ignore the phenomenology of what it is to be a person, to, for instance, feel one’s mental states and actions to be one’s own. While I cannot fully document an answer here, my basic response to this is that Nietzsche generally aimed for third-person accounts of such notions as personhood, agency, and free will and took allegedly related phenomenological states to be largely epiphenomenal and often illusory. For instance, members of the herd may believe that they are, may experience themselves as, persons who act freely, but for Nietzsche they are wrong on both counts and their experience is illusory.

27. This section has benefited immensely from conversations with Jane White.

28. Conversations with Edward Harcourt were especially helpful in alerting me to the fact that the picture of the harmonious alignment of drives suggested in my account of sublimation needed to be reconciled with Nietzsche’s repeated valorization of continuous agonal struggle.

29. Generally Freud emphasizes not unity but incompatibility between the demands of various subpersonal agencies, such as the ego, superego, and id. This is also true of *The Ego and the Id* where he paints a picture of the ego being ever menaced by the conflicting demands of the reality principle, the id, and the superego. It is in this voice that he there labels Eros not as a uniter but as “a mischief maker” (*S.E.* 19:59).

30. I owe this observation about the relationship of internal objects to drives to a private correspondence from Bernard Reginster.

31. An important attempt to differentiate pathological symptoms from sublimations, stemming from the work of Klein, stresses the notion of symbolization. Basically, in pathological symptoms there is a failure of symbolization. For instance, a fetish object is taken to literally be the penis rather than a symbol for the missing penis. In a case cited in Segal 1957 a violinist refuses to perform in public because he takes his violin to be his penis and so playing in public is for him

masturbating in public. In contrast, sublimation involves recognition of substitutes as symbols rather than an identification of the symbol with that which it substitutes for. See also Gardner 1993, sec. 6.8; Klein 1926; Loewald 1988, chap. 4. If failure of symbolization simply means failure to realize that a symbol stands for something else, then it is not immediately clear how the distinction between successful symbolization and failed symbolization could be used, for instance, to distinguish Leonardo's behavior from Schreber's. In particular, it is not at all clear that Schreber suffered such a failure of symbolization. Even if, as Hanna Segal suggested to me in conversation, failure of symbolization can be broadened to include failure to realize that symbols are being used to hide, obliterate, parts of reality (for instance, Schreber used the idea of God persecuting him to hide his own homoerotic desires), it is not clear how this can underwrite the distinction between pathological symptoms and sublimation. Indeed, one might argue that inasmuch as Schreber acknowledged that someone (God) wanted him to play the part of the woman, he was closer to acknowledging his homoerotic desires than was Leonardo. Though a lot more needs to be said about the Klein/Segal approach, limitations of space prevent me from here giving this line of thought the attention it deserves.

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