

Freud and Herzl*

FREUD (1856-1939) AND HERZL (1860-1904), two great revolutionaries and Viennese Jews who founded epoch-making movements and who for two years even lived almost across the street from each other,¹ never actually met and spoke to each other, nor did they refer to each other in their writings and speeches. Yet almost daily Freud read the *Neue Freie Presse* of which Herzl was *feuilleton* writer, Paris Correspondent and finally Literary Editor;² Freud followed the establishment of the Zionist movement and its first International Congress in 1897; he saw Herzl's play [*The New Ghetto*] in 1898 and had a dream provoked by that play.³ He dreamed of Herzl⁴ and in 1902 wrote to him.⁵ Thus we have on the one hand Freud's intense preoccupation with Herzl, and on the other his avoidance of him.

People who knew both Freud and Herzl have given widely varying accounts of their relationship. Goldhammer reported that

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¹ On the Berggasse in Vienna's Ninth *Bezirk* (district). See Amos Elon, *Herzl*. New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1975, pp. 32, 215, which is based on records in the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem. Herzl lived at Berggasse 6 (from 1897-1898), Freud at Berggasse 19 for most of his life.

² See Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 3 Volumes. New York: Basic Books, 1953, 1955, 1957, Vol. 2, pp. 8, 13, 78, 335 and Vol. 3, p. 505.

³ Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Vol. 4 & 5 of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Edited by James Strachey, London: Hogarth, 1957 (Henceforth S.E.), Vol. 5 (1900) pp. 442 ff.

⁴ Leo Goldhammer, *Theodor Herzl and Sigmund Freud: Traume*. In *Theodor Herzl Jahrbuch*, edited by Tulo Nussenblatt, Vienna: Victor Glanz, 1937, pp. 266-268.

⁵ Sigmund Freud, Letter to Theodor Herzl, 28 September 1902, Herzl Archives, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem. Ref. No. H-VIII/247.

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he had heard Freud lecture on dream interpretation around 1905 or 1907, at which time Freud related a dream he had had of Herzl:

Herzl appeared to me, a majestic figure with a pale, darkly toned face adorned by a raven-black beard and with infinitely sad eyes. This apparition forced me to do something at once to clarify to myself what I must do should the Jewish people be saved. These words surprised me by their fierce logic and intense accompanying feeling.⁶

According to Goldhammer, Freud added that he had never seen Herzl nor had he ever occupied himself with Herzl's ideas, and that only some time after the dream, on an omnibus, did he see the "figure of his dream" (Herzl) in person. Yet he made no attempt to talk to Herzl or to make his acquaintance. The date of the dream itself is not mentioned. Goldhammer concluded that Herzl had had "a strong unconscious effect" on Freud, which resulted in the dream, but failed to explain why Freud had to repress that effect.

We have no direct evidence to corroborate Goldhammer's account, even though it rings true.⁷ In any event, one central and poignant issue comes up in this dream: Freud feels that Herzl is forcing him to deal with the issue of his own Jewishness.

On this point Meitlis reports as follows: [Freud's son in London told me that] "Freud always had a genuine love for Hebrew and Yiddish. Whenever any of his works were translated into either of those languages he refused to accept royalties. As a national Jew [his own description of himself] he was sympathetic toward Zionism from the very first days of this movement when Herzl was still alive. When Freud's sons studied in Vienna they belonged to the Student Zionist Corporations *Kadimah*, *Ivritah* and *Unitas*. Freud had a high regard for Theodor Herzl and was closely acquainted with him. The two families—the children especially—were close friends."⁸

⁶ Goldhammer, 1937, above (note 4).

⁷ It was published in the 1937 Herzl Yearbook (note 4) edited by the Zionist and Herzl researcher Tulo Nussenblatt, who in June 1938 sent a copy of the Yearbook with a letter to Freud (who by then was living in London), presumably asking Freud to confirm Goldhammer's account. In a note of 2 July 1938 to Leftwich, who served as the intermediary, Freud acknowledged receipt of the Herzl Yearbook and Nussenblatt's letter and indicated he had "immediately" replied to Nussenblatt. But Freud's letter to Nussenblatt must have perished in the flames of the Warsaw ghetto where Nussenblatt's Herzl Archives were left in 1942, when he was carried away to his death by the S. S. troops. See Tuvia Borzykowski, *Between Falling Walls*.

⁸ Jacob Meitlis, *The Last Days of Sigmund Freud*, *Jewish Frontier*, September 1951, pp. 20-22.

Rousseau refers to an actual meeting between Freud and Herzl but cites no evidence for it.⁹ Since his and Meitlis's accounts stand in such stark contrast to Goldhammer's, which quoted Freud as saying he had never met Herzl nor occupied himself with Herzl's ideas, I wrote Anna Freud in London to see if she could shed some light on this riddle; she wrote me as follows:

I understand very well your wish to reconcile the contradictory statements you received. As regards the statement attributed to my brother, part of it is correct and part quite incorrect. I feel quite sure that my brother could not have put it in this way. The facts as I know them are the following: It is true that my father was sympathetic towards Zionism from the first days of the movement when Herzl was still alive. It is also true that he had a high regard for Theodor Herzl. What is not true is that he was closely acquainted with him. I wonder whether he ever met him personally, although this may have happened once or twice, perhaps due to the B'nai B'rith. I would not know about that. But there was no acquaintanceship and no friendship, of that I am sure. The Herzl family lived in the same part of Vienna where we lived and I remember Theodor Herzl being pointed out to me when he walked through our street, the Berggasse. As regards his children, Trude Herzl, the daughter, went to the same girls' school my sister and I attended, but she was in a class between us and, as happens in school, we only saw her without speaking to her. There was never any contact between us. Herzl's son was educated in England and neither I nor my siblings ever knew him.¹⁰

Anna Freud's account elucidates the facts, yet leaves the central riddle unsolved. If Freud had such a high regard for Herzl and was sympathetic to the Zionist movement from the start, if, as we know, he dreamed of Herzl and of Herzl's play (a dream that touched some deep emotional chords in Freud, as we shall see)—why was there "no acquaintanceship and no friendship"? Could this derive simply from the "natural reserve" with which Freud treated people, or with which Viennese of that time kept their distance from each other? In his intriguing study of Freud's ambivalence towards his own Jewishness, Loewenberg wrote:

One of the fascinating things about the high culture of *fin de siècle* Vienna is the apparent lack of contact among leading men who moved in what one would imagine to be inter-related milieux. Only in Vienna could the 66-year old Freud write (in 1922) the 60-year-old Arthur Schnitzler, who was also a Jewish physician, "I have tormented myself with the question [of]

⁹ Alain Rousseau, *L'influence de la tradition spéculative juive sur la pensée de Sigmund Freud et la genèse de son oeuvre*, Unpublished M.D. dissertation, Paris, 1963, p. 18.

¹⁰ Anna Freud, letter to Avner Falk, 23rd June 1975.

why in all these years I have never attempted to make your acquaintance and to have a talk with you."¹¹

The full text follows:

"Had I retained a remnant of belief in the 'omnipotence of thoughts' I would not hesitate today to send you the warmest and heartiest good wishes for the years that await you. I shall leave this foolish gesture to the vast number of your contemporaries who will remember you on May 15 [Schnitzler's 60th birthday].

"But I will make a confession which for my sake I must ask you to keep to yourself and share with neither friends nor strangers. I have tormented myself with the question why in all these years I have never attempted to make your acquaintance and to have a talk with you (ignoring the possibility, of course, that you might not have welcomed my overture). "The answer contains the confession which strikes me as too intimate. I think I have avoided you from a kind of reluctance to meet my double. Not that I am easily inclined to identify myself with another, or that I mean to overlook the difference in talent that separates me from you, but whenever I get deeply absorbed in your beautiful creations I invariably seem to find beneath their poetic surface the very presuppositions, interests and conclusions which I know to be my own. Your determinism as well as your skepticism—what people call pessimism—your preoccupation with the truths of the unconscious and of the instinctual drives in Man, your dissection of the cultural conventions of our society, the dwelling of your thoughts on the polarity of love and death; all this moves me with an uncanny feeling of familiarity."¹²

Freud hints at several reasons that have made him avoid meeting Schnitzler: his fear of rejection (referred to jokingly and in parentheses); his fear of overidentification (again referred to via a negation); and his fear of the uncanny feeling of meeting his own double. (Schur has dwelt at greater length on this last subject.)¹³ Could any of these fears have played some role in Freud's avoidance of Herzl?

Loewenberg seems to think so:

Freud's relationship to Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, also falls into this category. Whereas in 1899 he was enthusiastic about

¹¹ Peter Loewenberg, *Sigmund Freud as a Jew: A Study in Ambivalence and Courage. Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 366-367, 1971.

¹² S. Freud, letter to A. Schnitzler, 14 May 1922, in *Letters of Sigmund Freud*, Ed., Ernst Freud, New York, Basic Books, 1960, p. 339.

¹³ Max Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying*, New York, International Universities Press, 1972.

Emilie Zola's role in the Dreyfus case¹⁴ he did not mention Herzl, who was the Chief Paris Correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*, in this connection. He saw Herzl's play, *The New Ghetto*, and he dreamed of Herzl. In 1902 Freud sent him a copy of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in the hope that Herzl might review it. "But in any event," he wrote Herzl, "I ask you to keep the book as a token of the high esteem in which I—like so many others—have held since many years the poet and the fighter for the human rights of our people. . . ." We note that Freud's reference is to the "human" rights and not to the "national" rights of the Jewish people, in line with his aspiration that his most important book receive recognition for its universal validity and human appeal, rather than being regarded as a Jewish ethnic or national tract.¹⁵

Loewenberg here neglected to mention one interesting and important additional fact: in the same *Interpretation of Dreams* that Freud sent Herzl, Freud reported a dream of his provoked by seeing *The New Ghetto*, known as "My Son, the Myops. . ." Yet Freud had neglected to mention Herzl's name, by then quite famous, as the author of *The New Ghetto*, nor did he correct that omission in all subsequent editions of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Moreover, he failed to mention in his letter to Herzl that the book he wished reviewed in the prestigious newspaper contained an account of his having seen Herzl's play and having had a dream thereafter. Indeed, in all of his published and public writings and discourse, Freud never once mentioned Herzl's name. This studied avoidance, as we shall see, was hardly accidental. Herzl had a profound and painful effect on Freud.

In 1902 Freud wrote Herzl, who was by then back in Vienna energetically pursuing his Zionist political career while continuing as Literary Editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, asking him (between the lines) to review his *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud's dearest and most important book so far. The letter (my translation) is as follows:

28 September 1902
IX., Berggasse 19.

Dear Dr. Herzl,

At the suggestion of your editorial colleague Mr. Max Neuda I have permitted myself to send you through F. Deuticke's bookshop, enclosed

¹⁴ Sigmund Freud, Letter to Wilhelm Fliess, February 9, 1898, in *The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts & Notes: 1887-1902*, Edited by Marie Bonaparte, Ernst Kris and Anna Freud, New York: Basic Books, 1954, p. 245.

¹⁵ Loewenberg, 1971, above (note 11), p. 367.

herewith, a copy of my 1900 book on *The Interpretation of Dreams* as well as a smaller treatise on the same subject.

I do not know whether you will find the book suitable for the purpose Mr. Neuda had in mind; in any event I asked you to keep the book as a token of the high esteem with which I—like so many others—have for many years regarded the poet and fighter for the human rights of our people.

Respectfully yours,

Prof Dr Freud

Up until now, Freud had avoided any direct contact with Herzl. Simon¹⁶ wrote a detailed study of all aspects of Freud's Jewishness, and in a personal talk with me expressed his opinion that Freud's "pride" prevented him from making a more explicit request for Freud's review. But why had Freud waited till 1902 to write this letter? Why did he have to divert the onus of the "overture" (cf. his letter to Schnitzler, above) to Max Neuda? Why did he not mention Herzl's play, *The New Ghetto*, which is prominently mentioned in his *Interpretation of Dreams*? Was he not aware that Herzl would notice the omission of his own name as the author of the play? Why did he speak of Herzl as a "poet" first and a "fighter" second? Why did he speak of the "human" rather than the "national" rights of the Jews?

Loewenberg's explanation that Freud wanted to avoid being identified with Judaism or with Zionism because he wanted the recognition of the universal value and human appeal of his psychoanalytic theories is only part of the reason. So are such explanations that Freud had wanted to obtain his professorship and that having strong ties with Zionism would hurt his chances in an anti-Semitic Vienna. (He had actually received his professorship early in 1902.) He knew that if the book were reviewed in the *Neue Freie Presse* it would be on the merits of its contents, not the Jewishness of its author. Thus his caution and reserve towards Herzl had additional roots, as had his aversion to being identified as a nationalist or religious Jew.

We do not know if Herzl answered Freud's letter, nor whether he published the requested review, or even had time to read Freud's book; the Freud Archives says it has no such letter from Herzl. Alex Bein, Herzl's biographer, has written that Herzl answered every letter he received. It is likely, then, that Freud destroyed Herzl's reply along with many other letters he destroyed in 1907.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ernst Simon, *Sigmund Freud, the Jew. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook II*, 1957.
¹⁷ Jones, 1953.

Was it in fact a polite rejection of Freud's request? No review of the *Interpretation* has been found in the *Neue Freie Presse*.

Herzl's *The New Ghetto* was the crucial play that provoked Freud's complicated and very interesting dream, "My Son, the Myops. . . ." Herzl wrote this poignant play about anti-Semitism and the Jewish Question in 1894.¹⁸ We should note a very important fact: between the writing of Herzl's play in 1894 and its staging in 1898 Freud's father Jacob had died (1896). This death in fact prompted Freud's self-analysis and his writing of the *Interpretation*.¹⁹

The play is set in Vienna in 1893. Hermine Hellmann, daughter of a well-to-do Jewish family, is celebrating her wedding to Jacob Samuel, a young Jewish lawyer. Her sister Charlotte was married three years before to Fritz Rheinberger, a wealthy Jew. Jacob's friend Franz Wurzelechner, a Gentile, is present, but he wants to leave the Hellmann home, feeling ill at ease among all those Jews.

Another Gentile, Rheinberger's friend Count von Schramm, arrives. Von Schramm is a 42-year-old retired cavalry captain and an anti-Semite. He had challenged Jacob Samuel to a duel over an incident at a café; Jacob had apologized, then felt ashamed of his cowardice. A rabbi joins the conversation, which turns around the Jewish question and anti-Semitism. The rabbi says that even though there is no longer a walled Ghetto the Jews are still derided, but anti-Semitism has its good side—it unites the Jews.

Six months later Jacob is not only in debt but also about to lose his friend Franz, who tells Jacob he must break off their association because of Jacob's Jewishness and Jewish ties. Jacob tells Franz he is grateful to him for his frankness, for having taught him duelling and other useful things which have helped him go beyond the Jewish world, yet accuses the Gentiles of having made the Jews what they are.

Franz leaves; Jacob tells his wife how upset he is over being rejected by his friend and being pushed back into the Ghetto. But Hermine is vexed by her husband's financial failures; she wants him to accept money from his brother-in-law Rheinberger so that she can buy a new fall outfit. Jacob does so but tells Rheinberger it's only a loan. Rheinberger tells him to consider it a legal retainer, as he wants Jacob to draw up a contract to buy up stock in the Dubnitz

¹⁸ Alex Bein, *Theodor Herzl*. New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1941, pp. 102 ff.

¹⁹ Jones, 1953.

coal mine, which he and his partner Wasserstein wish to incorporate. It turns out that he and his partner had been secretly buying up the mine from Von Schramm, himself heavily in debt. Von Schramm has been neglecting the mine, which is in a bad state, in order to squeeze as much profit as possible out of it. Rheinberger and his partner also wish to make a killing out of the mine by floating a stock issue, with no intention of repairing the mine or looking after the miners' safety. Jacob is reluctant; he is afraid that Von Schramm will be ruined and blame the Jews. Jacob wants to make Von Schramm feel he is dealing with honest people.

A Slavic mineworker from the Dubnitz mine comes to see Jacob; he tells him of the miners' terrible life. The mine may collapse at any moment; no one dares blast. But the miners have been ordered to blast to increase the coal output so that the mine-stock will sell. If they do so, they will be killed; if they strike they will starve and freeze. Jacob is upset; he offers to help the miners. After the worker has left he calls back his wife and angrily asks for the money he had given her for her outfit so that he can give it back to Rheinberger.

Six weeks later, the miners have struck but have been starved into going back to work. They had blasted, the mine had collapsed, the area had been flooded; many people were killed or injured. Wasserstein had sold all his stock at top market value. Immediately afterward the market itself collapsed and Von Schramm, who had put up his own mine stock as collateral on a bank loan to pay his debts is now bankrupt, as the bank sold his stock at rock bottom prices to cover the loan.

Jacob Samuel is very much disturbed. The rabbi tries to console him and to dissuade him from meddling in the miners' affairs. He tells Jacob of an anti-Semitic incident from 14th century Mainz, when Moses ben Abraham left the Ghetto to help a woman he heard screaming outside the Ghetto walls and was stabbed to death. Jacob justifies the heroic act of Moses ben Abraham, but the rabbi warns him the Jews are too weak to act so militantly.

Von Schramm enters and asks Jacob if he had known about the fraud. Jacob replies there had been no fraud; it was Von Schramm who was to blame for the disaster. Von Schramm accuses Jacob of having instigated the strike, of being in cahoots with his brother-in-law Rheinberger to ruin him, Von Schramm; finally he calls Jacob another dirty Jew. Jacob angrily strikes Von Schramm in

the face and tells him to take back his words. Von Schramm refuses and tells Jacob he will crawl again before him, as Jacob did the first time around. The result is a duel: Franz is Jacob's second; Dr. Bichler also attends. Jacob is mortally wounded by Von Schramm: before dying Jacob asks Bichler to tell the rabbi he had acted "like Moses of Mainz," embraces his parents, tells his father he can understand, cries that he wants to "get out of the Ghetto," and dies.²⁰

The meaning of this play for Herzl has been discussed by others;²¹ it is enough for us here to say that Jacob Samuel is a thinly masked Theodor Herzl, as Hermine, his wife, is a stand-in for Julie Herzl, Theodor's spoiled, narcissistic and hysterical wife. The problem of anti-Semitism is compounded with Herzl's personal concerns; nor is the choice of the name Jacob accidental: Theodor's father's name (as well as Freud's father's!) was Jacob.

But we are concerned with the meaning of the play for Freud, who never referred to its contents either in his account of his dream or in his associations to it.

Grinstein has this to say of *The New Ghetto*:

The obvious theme of the play is the problem of anti-Semitism and the futile position of the Jew who tries to break out of the invisible walls of the "new" Ghetto. The hero is unsuccessful; the forces of opposition are too strong. Behind this, one may see the basically futile conflict of a young man with an authority figure as portrayed in Jacob's struggle with the older Count von Schramm.

The setting of the play in Vienna in 1893 made it very personal for Freud; anti-Semitism was prevalent at the time. Living under such circumstances, Freud was naturally very concerned about the future and education of his children in Vienna, a city he disliked. His reference to moving "freely across the frontiers," alluding to the invisible walls of the Ghetto [this is a reference to Freud's dream, which will be discussed below], may be taken to pertain not only to his children but also to himself as well.²² It will be

²⁰ Alexander Grinstein, *On Sigmund Freud's Dreams*. Pp. 317-333. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968. Compare also Immanuel Velikovsky, *The Dreams Freud dreamed, The Psychoanalytic Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4, October 1941, p. 508.

²¹ Alex Bein, 1941, above (note 18). Also in Ludwig Lewisohn, *Theodor Herzl: A Portrait for This Age*. Cleveland: World, 1955 pp. 152-193; in Elon, 1975, above (note 1) and in Peter Loewenberg, *Theodor Herzl: A Psychoanalytic Study in Charismatic Political Leadership. The Psychoanalytic Interpretation of History*, Edited by Benjamin B. Wolman, New York: Basic Books, 1971.

²² Avner Falk, Border symbolism, *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 650-660 discusses the unconscious meaning of frontiers.

recalled how many of Freud's references in the *Interpretation of Dreams* deal with his wish to attain the rank of Professor and with the anti-Semitic prejudices to which he was constantly exposed. Quite understandably he wanted to spare his children this kind of treatment and wanted to move to another country, such as England, where his children and he himself could enjoy greater freedom and tolerance. He too wanted to fight against the forces of anti-Semitism, and often did. Yet the reference to the play by Herzl seems to indicate his feeling of futility of the fight against these forces and probably connects with a similar frustration expressed in the references to Hannibal and Massena in his associations to the Rome Series.²³

I believe *The New Ghetto* was more than all that to Freud. First, it was written by Herzl, a towering figure who "roared back the answer" to anti-Semitism, according to Stefan Zweig in *The World of Yesterday* [et al.] Second, the hero's name was Jacob, as was his father's, and his father too had to deal with anti-Semitism in a way that Freud had thought cowardly.²⁴ Third, it forced him to deal with the issue of anti-Semitism in almost as powerful a way as his dream of Herzl discussed below; and fourth, it forced him to deal not only with the Jewish Question, but with the question of his own Jewish identity in a very personal way.

Freud relates his dream, provoked by Herzl's play, "My Son, the Myops . . .," in two parts.²⁵ The narrative is as follows:

I had a dream that a man I knew on the staff of the University said to me: "My Son, the Myops." Then followed a dialogue made up of short remarks and rejoinders. After this, however, there was yet a third piece of dream in which I myself and my sons figured. So far as the dream's latent content was concerned, Professor M. and his son were men of straw—a mere screen for me and my eldest son. I shall have to return to this dream later, on account of another of its features. . . .
Earlier in this volume I undertook to show that another dream in which my own ego did not appear was nevertheless egoistic. . . . I reported a short dream to the effect that Professor M. said "My son, the Myops . . ." and I explained that the dream was only an introductory one, preliminary to another in which I did play a part. Here is the missing main dream, which introduces an absurd and unintelligible verbal form that requires an explanation.

On account of certain events that had occurred in the City of Rome, it had become necessary to remove the children to safety, and this was done. The scene was then in front of a gateway, double doors in the

²³ Alexander Grinstein, 1968, above (note 20), p. 321.

²⁴ Sigmund Freud, *S.E.*, Vol. 4, p. 197. (1900).

²⁵ *S.E.*, Vol. 4, p. 269 and Vol. 5, pp. 441-445 (1900).

ancient style (the *Porta Romana* at Siena, as I was aware during the dream itself). I was sitting on the edge of a fountain and was greatly depressed and almost in tears. A female figure—an attendant or nun—brought two boys out and handed them over to their father, who was not myself. The elder of the two was clearly my eldest son; I did not see the other one's face. The woman who brought out the boy asked him to kiss her goodbye. She was noticeable for having a red nose. The boy refused to kiss her, but, holding out his hand in farewell, said *Auf Geseres* to her, and then *Auf Ungeseres* to the two of us (or to one of us). I had a notion that this last phrase denoted a preference.

This dream was constructed on a tangle of thoughts provoked by a play which I had seen, called *The New Ghetto*. The Jewish problem, concern about the future of one's children, to whom one cannot give a country of their own, concern about educating them in such a way that they can move freely across frontiers—all of this was easily recognizable among the relevant dream thoughts.

Before going on to Freud's associations to the dream and to his and others' interpretations of it, let us note that not only, as we have pointed out, does he not mention Herzl's name as the author of the play, but he also says nothing of the fact that Herzl was in fact trying to give his children a country of their own. At the very outset of his interpretation of his own dream Freud is trying to avoid the obvious confrontation with the Herzl phenomenon.

The associations given by Freud are the following (they are woven with interpretation):

"By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept." Siena, like Rome, is famous for its beautiful fountains. If Rome occurred in one of my dreams, it was necessary for me to find a substitute for it from some locality known to me [Freud had avoided visiting his longed-for Rome for "reasons of health" for many years, and in his dreams it had appeared as "the promised land seen from afar."²⁶ Rome to him had clear maternal connotations]. Near the *Porta Romana* in Siena we had seen a large and brightly lighted building. We learned that it was the *Manicomio*, the insane asylum. Shortly before I had the dream I had heard that a man of the same religious persuasion as myself had been obliged to resign the position which he had painfully achieved in a State asylum.

Our interest is aroused by the phrase "*Auf Geseres*" (at a point at which the situation in the dream would have led one to expect "*Auf Wiedersehen*") as well as its quite meaningless opposite "*Auf Ungeseres*." According to information I have received from philologists, "*Geseres*" is a genuine Hebrew word derived from a verb "goiser" and is best translated as "imposed suffering" or "doom." The use of the word in slang would incline one to suppose that it meant "weeping and wailing." "*Ungeseres*" was a

²⁶ *S.E.*, Vol. 4, pp. 193 ff.

private neologism of my own and was the first word to catch my attention, but to begin with I could make nothing of it. But the short remark at the end of the dream to the effect that "Ungeseres" denoted a preference over "Geseres" opened the door to associations and at the same time to an elucidation of the word. An analogous relationship occurs in the case of caviar; unsalted (*ungesalzen*) caviar is esteemed more highly than salted (*gesalzen*) caviar. "Caviar to the general," aristocratic pretensions; behind this lay a joking allusion to a member of my household who, since she was younger than I, would, I hoped, look after my children in the future. This tallied with the fact that another member of my household, our excellent nurse, was recognizably portrayed in the female attendant or nun in the dream. There was still, however, no transitional idea between "salted-unsalted" and "Geseres-Ungeseres." This was provided by "leavened-unleaved" (*gesäuert-ungesäuert*). In their flight out of Egypt the Children of Israel had no time to allow their dough to rise and, in memory of this, they eat unleavened bread to this day at *Easter* [my italics, A.F.J.]

At this point I may insert a sudden association that occurred to me during this portion of the analysis. I remembered how, during the previous *Easter*, my Berlin friend and I had been walking through the streets of Breslau, a town in which we were strangers. A little girl asked me the way to a particular street, and I was obliged to confess that I did not know; and I remarked to my friend: "It is to be hoped that when she grows up that little girl will show more discrimination in her choice of the people whom she gets to direct her." Shortly afterwards I caught sight of a door-plate bearing the words "Dr. Herodes. Consulting hours: . . ." "Let us hope," I remarked, "that our colleague does not happen to be a children's doctor." At this time my friend had been telling me his views on the biological significance of *bilateral symmetry*, and had begun a sentence with the words "If we had an eye in the middle of our forehead like a Cyclops. . . ." This led to the Professor's remarks in the introductory dream, "My Son, the Myops. . ." I had now been led to the principal source of "Geseres." Many years before, when this son of Professor M.'s, today an independent thinker, was still sitting at his school desk, he was attacked by a disease of the eyes which, the doctor declared, gave cause for anxiety. He explained that so long as it remained *on one side* it was of no importance, but that if it passed over to the *other eye* it would be a serious matter. The affliction cleared up completely in the one eye; but shortly afterwards signs in fact appeared of the other being affected. The boy's mother, terrified, at once sent for the doctor to the remote spot in the country where they were staying. The doctor, however, now went over *to the other side*. "Why are you making such a *Geseres?*" he shouted at the mother, "if *one side* has got well, so will the *other*." And he was right.

And now we must consider the relation of all this to me and my family. The school desk at which Professor M.'s son took his first steps in knowledge was handed over by his mother as a gift to my eldest son, into whose mouth I put the farewell phrases in the dream. It is easy to guess one of the wishes to which this transference gave rise. But the construction of

the desk was also intended to save the child from being *short-sighted* and *one-sided*. Hence the appearance in the dream of "Myops" (and, behind it, "Cyclops") and the reference to *bilaterality*. My concern about one-sidedness had more than one meaning; it could refer not only to physical one-sidedness but also to one-sidedness of intellectual development. May it not even be that it was precisely this concern which, in its crazy way, the scene in the dream was contradicting? After the child had turned to *one side* to say farewell words, he turned to the *other side* to say the contrary, as though to restore the balance. *It was as though he was acting with due attention to bilateral symmetry!*

Freud's concluding paragraph about the relation of his dream and his associations to him and to his family is clearly unsatisfactory: it deals only with his feelings about his eldest son (Martin), his concern for his education, development and well-being, but not at all with the Jewish problem and anti-Semitism, which were the central issue in the play that provoked his dream, and which he recognized at the outset as "relevant dream thoughts." Yet the Jewish question is central to the dream and its associations: the Hebrew-Yiddish "*Geseres*" and "*Ungeseres*," the "man of the same religious persuasion as myself" who had been forced out of his position, the weeping "by the waters of Babylon" in exile from the Land of Israel, and the memory of his two half-brothers Emanuel and Philipp who who moved to England²⁷ due to anti-Semitism.

Grinstein points out that Freud also made a parapraxis in his associations, for he and his Berlin friend (Fliess) met in Nuremberg, not Breslau, in Easter of 1897, whereas they met in Breslau in December of that year. The slip of memory was due to Freud's intense disagreement with Fliess over the latter's theories of bilaterality, and his feeling that he was going to have to break with Fliess, who had been his best friend.²⁸

Grinstein made a detailed analysis of Freud's dream, identifying the people referred to and the dates of each event, by making use of Freud's letters to Fliess as well as the actual material. He concludes his analysis thus:

Freud's remark about "bilaterality" again refers to the conversation between him and Fliess at Breslau and the latter's comments about lefthandedness. Freud's remarks about Professor M.'s son fit in with this for he was saved "from being *short-sighted* and *one-sided*." Freud, too, had been accused of being one-sided in his interest (see the dream of *The Botanical Monograph*). The dream expressed the wish that Freud himself,

²⁷ S.F., Vol. 5, p. 444 note.

²⁸ Alexander Grinstein, 1968, above (note 20), pp. 325-328.

like Professor M.'s son, would be cured of his one-sidedness in connection with his friend Fliess. We suspect that this was an allusion to a serious criticism of and aggression toward Fliess. Behind these feelings lay similar emotions against his dead father, as Freud indicated in his prefatory remarks about this dream. At the same time, however, it would seem that by having his son act in the dream "with due attention to bilateral symmetry," Freud was placating Fliess in an attempt to forestall the sadness (*Gesetzes*) of another broken relationship—another parting.

We may now understand some of the meaning of Freud's dream. It was provoked by seeing *The New Ghetto*, which set up "a tangle of thoughts" dealing with the Jewish problem and the future of his children. These ideas were combined with other thoughts dealing with freedom for himself as well, his longing for intellectual freedom and his wish to be free of the bondage of Viennese anti-Semitism. He wanted to go to some other country like England, where he would feel accepted, a wish he had entertained for many years. These thoughts in turn led to sad memories of leaving Freiberg, the home of his childhood, when he was 3 years old, and of the people there, such as the nurse he was fond of.

The themes of breaking off relationships and the desperate desire to be freed of his bondage were connected with his grief and mourning the loss of his father. Whereas in the dream he was weeping over his eldest son's leaving, we suspect the reverse: that actually *he*, as the eldest son, was weeping over the many separations, including the death of his father. It is probably over *this* disease of the eyes (weeping) that Freud reassures himself not to make such a *Gesetzes*. He assures himself that everything will turn out all right in the end and that he, like the son of Professor M., will also become an independent thinker. The dream seems to indicate a definite stage in the process of mourning his father's death in the course of his self-analysis. In addition to this, however, Freud's thoughts also lead to his friend Fliess and their theoretical disagreement about bilaterality in connection with bisexuality. This may in turn have led him to a concern about his own shortsightedness (*myopia*) and oneness in his dependent relationship to Fliess. It would thus appear that Freud already entertained serious thoughts about the break-up of the relationship, and this revived in him feelings of sadness (weeping) which were associated with other painful separations.²⁹

Grinstein's masterful analysis is not complete. He leaves out the intensity of the contradictory feelings Freud had about the Jewish question, about his own Jewishness, and about Herzl who, after all, had provoked the entire dream with his play. He correctly dissects Freud's feelings about his father, yet entirely leaves out the Jewish aspect of that father and what it meant to Freud.

Loewenberg picked up the "hidden Zionist theme" in this dream, and interpreted it mainly in terms of Freud's envy of Herzl and his

²⁹ Grinstein, 1968, above (note 20), pp. 332-333.

repressed concern with the burning Zionist issue. Yet Loewenberg, too, failed to make the connection between Freud's father, whom Grinstein had wisely discovered hidden in the dream, in the guise of Professor M. and of the children's father "who was not myself," and the figure of Herzl, who did not appear in *this* dream yet instigated it with his play.³⁰

I shall attempt to show that in fact Herzl's figure was not only that of a competitor or a "double" to Freud, but that Herzl had played the unconscious role in Freud's mind of his own dead father, which as Grinstein has shown, Fliess had played before. That Herzl was in many ways similar to Freud and could have aroused the uncanny "double" feeling in him that Freud had written Schnitzler about, there can be little doubt: like Freud, Herzl was a visionary, a revolutionary, a founder and leader of a great movement, derided at first by one and all (Karl Kraus, the apostate satirist, ridiculed Herzl as "The Crown of Zion" and Freud as the inventor of "the disease it pretends to cure"—psychoanalysis). Like Freud, Herzl had identified himself with great historical leaders such as Moses³¹ and Joseph. But in that sense Herzl scared Freud less than Schnitzler did; for he was in deeper ways much less like Freud than Schnitzler was. By forcing Freud to come to grips with his Jewishness Herzl filled the place and played—to Freud—the role of Freud's father, Jacob. The *bilaterality* and *myopia* of the dream had also to do with Freud's struggle with his own (and his father's) Jewishness.

Jacob, Freud's father, had come from a Galician Jewish family of Hasidic background in Buczacz, then in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now in the U.S.S.R. He raised his family in Freiberg (Přibor), Moravia; at first he did well in the textile industry until the machines began to replace hand weaving and his factory failed.³² Jacob Freud, like other Jewish factory-owners, became the target of the Gentile workers' ire at the loss of their jobs; he was forced to leave Freiberg for Leipzig, then Vienna. He never recovered his

³⁰ Peter Loewenberg, *A Hidden Zionist Theme in Freud's "My Son, the Myops" Dream*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 129-132, 1970.

³¹ Reuben, Brainin, *Hayey Herzl* (Herzl's Life), New York: Assaph, 1919 (Hebrew), pp. 17-18. Also in Bein, 1941, above (note 18). Martin Bergmann, *Moses and the Evolution of Freud's Jewish Identity*, *Israel Annals of Psychiatry & Related Disciplines*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 3-26, 1976.

³² Jones, Vol. 1, p. 12.

financial security—nor his former status within the family and in young Sigmund's feelings. Freud relates his disillusionment with his father's cowardice in the face of Gentile hostility in one of his "hallowed" stories:

To my youthful mind Hannibal and Rome symbolized the conflict between the tenacity of Jewry and the organization of the Catholic Church. And the increasing importance of the effects of the anti-Semitic movement upon our emotional life helped to fix the thoughts and feelings of those early days. Thus the wish to go to Rome had become in my dream life a cloak and symbol for a number of other passionate wishes. Their realization was to be pursued with all the perseverance and single-mindedness of the Carthaginian though their fulfillment seemed at the moment just as little favored by destiny as was Hannibal's lifelong wish to enter Rome.

At that point I was brought up against the event in my youth whose power was still being shown in all these emotions and dreams. I may have been 10 or 12 years old when my father began to take me with him on his walks and reveal to me in his talk his views upon things in the world we live in. Thus it was on one such occasion that he told me a story to show me how much better things were now than they had been in his days. "When I was a young man," he said, "I went for a walk one Saturday in the streets of your birthplace; I was well dressed and had a new fur cap on my head. A Christian came up to me and with a single blow knocked off my cap into the mud and shouted: 'Jew, get off the pavement!'" "And what did you do?" I asked. "I went into the roadway and picked up my cap," was his quiet reply. This struck me as unheroic conduct on the part of the big, strong man who was holding the little boy by the hand. I contrasted this situation with another which fitted my feelings better: the scene in which Hannibal's father, Hamilcar Barca, made his boy swear before the household altar to take vengeance on the Romans. Ever since that time Hannibal had had a place in my fantasies.³³

In the first edition Freud made a slip of the pen, writing the name Hasdrubal, Hannibal's brother, instead of Hamilcar, his father, which he intended. This mistake irked Freud greatly and he explained that it had to do with "dissatisfaction with my father's behavior towards the enemies of our people" and his wish that his elder brother Philipp (his step-brother in England) would in fact have taken the place of his father.³⁴ In any event, the dissatisfaction and the disillusionment with his father are very clear here.

The story has been repeated and retold by many of Freud's biographers as though this were indeed the sudden turning point in Freud's relationship to his father, from admiration and love to a

³³ Freud, *S.E.*, Vol. 4, p. 197.

³⁴ Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, 1901. *S.E.*, Vol. 6, pp. 217-220.

justified disillusionment and loss of respect.³⁵ But Sigmund's disillusionment had begun earlier. If it had not, he could have asked his father what would have happened had he acted otherwise, and learned that in all likelihood a pogrom or other such disaster would have occurred. He knew from his reading of history that all his favorite generals had at times judged discretion to be the better part of valor. But at age 4 Sigmund had had to leave his beloved birthplace and home town because of anti-Semitism and his father's failure in business. His father had not stood up to anti-Semitism then; he could not have. At that early age Sigmund had not only lost his nanny and his childhood paradise, but also his respect for his father. The Freud family continued to hold Jacob Freud in affection, but he became a "Micawber-like figure, always hoping for something to turn up."³⁶ Yet Sigmund also loved his father, and repressed those negative "Oedipal" feelings until the incident at age 10 or 12, in which they flared up once again.

From the Jewish point of view Jacob Freud was "religiously observant, though not strongly traditional."³⁷ Jones described him as a "freethinker." But Jacob Freud always observed the major Jewish holidays such as Passover; he knew the Haggadah by heart.

In 1930 Freud wrote this about his father:

You will be interested to know that my father actually came from a Hassidic milieu. He was 41 years of age when I was born and had been estranged from his home-town associations for almost twenty years. I had such a non-Jewish upbringing that today I am not even able to read your dedication which is evidently in Hebrew characters. In later years I have often regretted this gap in my education.³⁸

Now this account is clearly at variance with the facts about Freud's Judaism.³⁹ In fact Jacob Freud did try to bring up his son in a Jewish way. He sent him to Professor Hammerschlag in Vienna to learn Hebrew and Scriptures from age 7 until about age 13 (it is not clear whether Freud had a bar mitzvah, but he received a bar mitzvah

³⁵ Jones, 1953, above (note 2), Bakan, David, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*. Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1958, and Loewenberg, 1971, above (note 11).

³⁶ Jones, 1953/55/57, above (note 2), Vol. 1, p. 2.

³⁷ Ernst Simon, 1957, above (note 16).

³⁸ Sigmund Freud, letter to A. A. Roback, 1930, in Roback, *Freudiana*. Cambridge, Mass.: Sci-Art, 1957, p. 27. Cf. Judith Bernays Heller, *Freud's Mother and Father, Commentary*, Vol. 21, 1956, pp. 418-421.

³⁹ Simon, 1957, above (note 16), and Loewenberg, 1971, above (note 11).

present).⁴⁰ Sigmund had a Hebrew name, Shlomo (Solomon),⁴¹ which Hammerschlag called him by, as did his father on formal Jewish occasions. Sigmund was very fond of the Hammerschlags; he even named his daughters Sophie and Anna after a niece and a daughter of Professor Hammerschlag's.⁴²

Hence it is amazing that Freud should refer to the "unleavened bread they eat at *Easter*" in his dream associations, rather than to the "matzohs we eat at Passover," and that he should not be able to read the Hebrew dedication while being so facile in Greek, Latin, French, English, Italian and Spanish in addition to his mother-tongue, German. Amazing, that is, until we realize that Freud had been resisting his father's attempts to make him Jewish all along. While outwardly obeying his father and studying with Hammerschlag, he was inwardly warding off the identification with his no-longer respected father. This resistance had a great deal to do with Freud's mother, as we shall see, who did not observe the Jewish feasts and traditions.⁴³ Jacob Freud, however, continued throughout his life to try to win his son's heart over to Judaism—and to himself. But it was a lost cause. In 1891, on the occasion of Freud's 35th birthday, his father gave him a Bible with a Hebrew dedication.⁴⁴ According to Spector⁴⁵ this Bible was the Philippsohn Bible, in fact more accurately the second part of the Philippsohn Bible, whose first part Jacob Freud had given Sigmund when Sigmund (or rather Sigismund-Shlomo) was 7. The reader will surely remember that Philipp was the name of Freud's admired elder half-brother. In this sense the father was unwittingly

⁴⁰ Simon, 1957, above (note 16), pp. 291-292.

⁴¹ Freud changed his first name from the Jewish-sounding Sigismund to the Nibelungenlied Hero's Sigmund (see Jones, 1953, above, p. 5 and Friedirch Heer, Miller, Boston: Little, Brown, 1972, pp. 6-8). This change occurred at age 22 (1878). See Avner Falk, Identity and name changes, *The Psychoanalytic Review*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 647-659, Winter issue 1975-76.

⁴² Jones, 1953-57, (note 2), above Simon, 1957, above (note 16).

⁴³ Jones, 1953/55/57, above (note 2), Vol. I, p. 19. Also in Martin Freud, *Gloria Reflected*, London: Angus & Robertson, 1957, p. 11.

⁴⁴ See Jones, 1953/55/57, above (note 2), Vol. I, p. 39, Roback, 1957, above (note 38), pp. 92-93, Simon, 1957, above (note 16), p. 272, Bakan, 1958, above (note 35), p. 50; the Hebrew original is reproduced in the Freud Memorial Exhibition brochure (1973), Jewish National & University Library, Hebrew University, Jerusalem and in Roback's book, p. 93.

⁴⁵ Jack J. Spector, *The Aesthetics of Freud*, 1972, *Freud and the Artist*.

strengthening Sigmund's wish to have his brother Philipp for a father, rather than his real father. How interesting, and how odd. (The Philippsohn Bible was so named for its famed illustrator). In Roback's translation (the most complete) the dedication reads as follows:

To my dear son Shlomo/ It was on the seventh year of your life/ that the Spirit of God began to stir you/ And spake to you: Go thou and pore over the Book which I wrote/ and there will burst open for you Springs of Understanding, Knowledge and Wisdom/ It is indeed the Book of Books, a Well dug up by Sages/ and Legislators have derived knowledge and Law/ Thou hast seen the vision of the Almighty, thou hast listened and ventured and achieved/ soaring on the wings of the Spirit.

For long since the Book has been lying about like broken tables/ in a closet of mine/ and as you were completing your 35th year/ I put on it a new leather cover/ and I called out "Spring up, O Well, Sing unto him"/ and I am presenting it to you as a keepsake/ and a token of love.

From your father who loves you forever, Jacob son of Rabbi Sh. Freud
In the Capital of Vienna, 29 Nissan 5651 (6 May 1891).*

This is surely a touching document. The father is trying to win his son's love for the last time. He is trying to remind Sigmund of his Jewishness. Roback's book attests to Freud's father's piety, yet Freud could not accept his father's Judaism, as he could not accept his father. He maintained a life-long aversion to religious Judaism, forgot his Hebrew, carefully avoided Jewish nationalism (and Zionism), and suppressed the inclination to espouse it. Only at the age of 70, in his address to the B'nai B'rith Society in Vienna, could Freud discuss his lifelong struggle with his Jewishness:

That you were Jews could only be agreeable to me; for I was myself a Jew, and it had always seemed to me not only unworthy but positively senseless to deny the fact. What bound me to Jewry was (I am ashamed to admit) neither faith nor national pride, for I have always been an unbeliever and was brought up without any religion, though not without a respect for what are called the "ethical" standards of human civilization. *Whenever I felt an inclination to national enthusiasm I strove to suppress it as being harmful and wrong, alarmed by the warning examples of the peoples among whom we Jews live.* But many other things remained to make the attraction of Jewry and Jews irresistible—many obscure emotional forces, which were the more powerful the less they could be expressed in words, as well as a clear consciousness of inner identity, the safe privacy of a common mental

* Jacob, whose father's name was Shlomo, named his son after him, and was disinclined to become like him.

