

## II The *Sturm und Drang* period 1909–1914

*The widespread interest in psychoanalysis is demonstrated by the very fact that both specialist periodicals and the daily press published articles about it on this occasion.*

Ludwig Jekels, [A report on the Second Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychologists and Psychiatrists (1912, Kraków) for the *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*]

### 1 Nunberg's memoirs: The Three Emperors' Corner in Będzin

In my book *Urwane ścieżki*, I began my account of the history of Polish psychoanalysis with an excerpt from Herman Nunberg's memoirs, where he described his wanderings with his father in the ruins of the Piast Castle in Będzin, whence he could see the border of the three partitions:

I was born in 1884 in Bendzin, a small town in Poland, and spent my early childhood years there.

Bendzin is located at what was known at that time as the *Drei Kaiser Ecke* ("Three Emperors' Corner"), because that was where the borders of Germany, Austria, and Russia met. It was in the part of Poland that had fallen to Russia after the third partition.<sup>106</sup> Ruins of an old castle dominated the valley in which the town was located; I can still remember how my father used to take me up to these ruins, to show me the beautiful view of the countryside. There were many legends woven around the castle; these legends stimulated fantasies in me, which must have become grafted onto my infantile sexual fantasies.<sup>107</sup>

From the perspective of Polish history, the place Nunberg writes about in this excerpt had extraordinary symbolic power. Therefore, the "discovery" of the book with his memories in Freud's library in Vienna profoundly moved me at the time. For here is a future key figure of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, and also a close friend of Freud, who describes the country of his childhood, where he is confronted every day with traces of its former glory.<sup>108</sup>

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106 The third partition of Poland took place in 1795 and led to the total erasure of the Polish state from the map of the world.

107 Nunberg, *Memoirs*, p. 1

108 Herman Nunberg later played a key role in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. *Allgemeine Neurosenlehre auf psychoanalytischer Grundlage* (Bern, Stuttgart: Verlag

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When you read Nunberg's memories, written in the 1950s in American exile, the striking thing is that Będzin was for him a true *Heimat*, his small homeland dwelling somewhere in his heart, with which he felt a deep bond for the rest of his life.<sup>109</sup> Probably this was partly connected with the fact that he had good memories from his youth spent in Poland. He writes: "[...] I must also stress that I did not have to suffer personally, at this time, from anti-Semitism; on the contrary, I was accepted without any reservations by my non-Jewish colleagues, and I had many non-Jewish friends."<sup>110</sup> What is more, Nunberg later describes the huge impression made on him by his few-years-long stay in Częstochowa, where he could personally observe the crowds of pilgrims who succumbed to religious ecstasy when the image of the Virgin Mary was unveiled:

The source of my deepest impressions at that time was the monastery inside the fortress. In it was housed the "Black Madonna," the most revered shrine in all of Poland. The monastery with its altar and the picture of the Madonna; the candles, the incense and the church rituals – all these stimulated new fantasies in me, which probably became linked with the earlier fantasies of my childhood in Bendzin.

I have especially vivid recollections of the processions of pilgrims who would come from all over the country during the summertime and converge on the monastery. As many of these pilgrims as could find room in the church would prostrate themselves before the altar; the rest lay prone on the ground in front of the church. It was almost impossible to go past the church without stepping on someone. Even now, these scenes of what I can only describe as violent piety remain unforgettable.<sup>111</sup>

Notably, Nunberg stresses here for the second time that the images and scenes he watched, strongly affecting his infantile imagination, fused with his earlier sexual fantasies. This juxtaposition of the experience of religious worship of holy images and sexual fantasies is, of course, rather peculiar (you can see the impact of Freud's theory of infantile sexuality here). However, this is not the most important thing in this context. What is striking is the position Nunberg takes towards these experiences. It is neither the position of a believer identifying with

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Hans Huber, 1932) is regarded as his most important work. It was very highly rated by Freud, who wrote an enthusiastic introduction, claiming that it was a comprehensive and very reliable presentation of the psychoanalytical theory of neuroses.

109 We ought to mention the rich patriotic tradition among the Jewish population living in Będzin, which overwhelmingly supported the uprisings in 1831 and 1863. Some of its representatives actively participated in them, others supported it financially. See YivoBleter [YivoPages] 1933, volume 5, p. 174.

110 Nunberg, *Memoirs*, p. 17.

111 Nunberg, *Memoirs*, pp. 1–2.

the pilgrims nor the position of a total outsider looking in at such manifestations of religious worship with the cool eye of a skeptic. For although a nonbeliever, Nunberg is deeply convinced of the profound psychological importance of such religious experiences. They hold something captivating for him – hence they should not be shrugged off. As such, they became deeply ingrained in his memory. Nunberg's memoirs clearly show that although he was Jewish, he also had a Polish cultural identity. His attitude towards the manifestations of the worship of the Black Madonna are the very opposite of the "narcissism of small differences." Paradoxically, it seems that this form of identification was made possible by the universalist claim lying at the basis of psychoanalysis. That is why Nunberg's Polish identity did not contain any elements of nationalism or exceptionalism, but simply meant a bond with the cultural tradition of the country he was born, raised, and educated in. The religious symbolism of Polish Catholicism was for him just one of many forms of religious symbolism, so he was able to appreciate its universal human appeal, even if he clearly distanced himself from the "claim to truth" contained in it.<sup>112</sup> In the same way, at later stages of his life, his Austrian and American identities probably overlaid Nunberg's Polish cultural identity, for he gradually "grew into" the cultural tradition of the countries to which he emigrated, if only because he spoke the local language, wrote articles in it, and so on.<sup>113</sup>

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112 A very similar approach to the religious symbolism of Polish Catholicism was characteristic for Helena Deutsch. In her autobiography, she writes how on Sunday mornings the servants, unknown to her parents, took her and her siblings to the church for Mass, where "in one corner of the church was a painting of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa, the patroness of motherhood. I don't know why I venerated her especially. I bought a little picture of her, not knowing that she was supposed to be a helper in the various problems of motherhood, including those of unmarried mothers. This picture, painted by a Polish artist, still hangs in my house today." Deutsch, *Confrontations*, pp. 64–65.

113 Because of the split of Nunberg's biography between the Polish, Austrian, and American periods, in biographical notes and dictionaries we encounter various descriptions of his nationality. According to the Polish Wikipedia, he is called a Polish-American physician and psychiatrist, while in the Jewish Virtual Library he is described as a "U. S. psychiatrist." However, according to the German Wikipedia he is called a "Polish psychiatrist." Since this concerns many other psychoanalysts born on Polish soil during the partitions, such discrepancies often appear in their cases. Not to mention some blatant mistakes (e.g., defining Eugenia Sokolnicka as a Czech psychoanalyst).

Nunberg's case is, I think, typical for the multiple identities of many Polish psychoanalysts and psychiatrists of Jewish origin, who often wrote the first academic texts in Polish, participated in congresses and various discussions in the Polish lands, etc., and later emigrated and started to function in other cultures and languages. After all, it was in Częstochowa, and later in Kraków and Bystra, that Nunberg started to practice psychoanalysis with Jekels, gave lectures, and so on. He also wrote his first texts in Polish. One of them, the best known, was delivered as a paper during the Second Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychologists, and Psychiatrists, and later published in the *Neurologia Polska* journal.<sup>114</sup>

## 2 The psychoanalytical breakthrough: Two congresses of Polish doctors

One of the first mentions of psychoanalysis in Polish medical literature can be found in Karol Rychliński's work *Istota natręctwa myślowego* (The essence of mental compulsion).<sup>115</sup> He writes there about a theory of drives proposed by a certain "Freund," "a great mind" of our time, whose works open new paths in treating neuroses. It starts quite inauspiciously, with a slip of the tongue. But if we take into account that *Freund* means friend in German, it probably reflected the positive attitude of the book's author towards the Viennese psychiatrist. Of course, only if we interpret this mistake in the Freu(n)dian way.

The first important sign that Freud's psychoanalysis was gaining popularity among Polish psychiatrists was the First Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychologists, and Psychiatrists in Warsaw in 1909. Ludwig Jekels delivered a paper entirely devoted to Freud's psychoanalytical theory, entitled "Treating psychoneuroses with the use of the psychoanalytical method." He presented Freud's views on hysteria as having its source in repressing sexual representations, and on dreams and slips as showing profound structural affinities with neurotic symptoms. The lecture was delivered from Freudian positions, which was strongly emphasized in his final point, where – pre-empting expected criticism – he stated that in order to become a supporter of analysis you "have to experience it in all its details" and he accorded a "philosophical importance" to it. And criticism did appear: it came from Adam Wizel, who recognized the innovative nature of Freud's method, but objected to the pansexualism preached by the

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114 Nunberg, "Niespełnione życzenia według nauki Freuda."

115 Karol Rychliński, *Istota natręctwa myślowego* (Warszawa: Księgarnia E.Wende i S-ka, 1909).

Vienna psychiatrist and the excessive role of suggestion from the doctor during therapy. Interestingly, other participants of the discussion – Karol Rychliński (author of the Freudian slip), Ludwika Karpińska, and Witold Łuniewski<sup>116</sup> – defended Jekels’ paper, speaking enthusiastically about psychoanalysis. Extensive references to Freud can also be found in Tadeusz Jaroszyński’s lecture “On the matter of psychotherapy,” where he presented various contemporary psychiatric theories on hysteria. Speaking approvingly about the assumptions of psychoanalysis, he claimed, however, that its author studied very peculiar cases of “Freudian hysteria,” so his method was not universal.<sup>117</sup> This paper also sparked a heated discussion, which focused on the question if universal application of the psychoanalytical method was possible. It was striking, however, that both sides of the dispute treated this theory as a serious challenge for contemporary psychology and psychiatry, disciplines which could not be ignored. Particularly notable was the fact that the organizers of the Congress, calling themselves “Freudians,” sent a telegram with greetings to Freud and Jung (!).<sup>118</sup> This is confirmed in Freud’s letter to Jung where he writes: “A few days ago I received from the first Congress of Polish Neurologists a telegram of homage signed, ‘after violent debate,’ by seven illegible and unpronounceable Poles. The only one of them known to me is Dr. Jekels; Frau Dr. Karpinska, I hear, has studied with you. I have never heard of the five others; I note the names for your information: Luniewski - Sycianko - Kempinski - Chodzko – Rychlinski.”<sup>119</sup> When writing down these tongue-twisting names of Polish psychiatrists and telling Jung to remember them, Freud evidently looks ahead into the future. Because for him, these people might become pioneers of psychoanalysis in the Polish medical community.

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116 In the interwar period, Witold Łuniewski was a leading figure in Polish psychiatry. In 1919–1939 he was the director of the mental hospital in Tworki and a co-founder of the State Institute of Special Education. He was also the Grand Master of the Freemasonry Grand National Polish Lodge(!).

117 Both lectures later appeared in the collective volume containing conference materials entitled *Prace I-go Zjazdu Neurologów, Psychiatrów i Psychologów Polskich odbytego w Warszawie 11, 12 i 13 października 1909 roku*, Władysław Gajkiewicz, Adam Wizel et al., eds. (Warszawa: Skład Główny Z. Wende i S-ka, 1910).

118 The photocopy of Jung’s telegram can be found in the collections of the Library of Congress in Washington. It was sent in German, and the English translation can be found in the Library of Congress, Washington, C. G. Jung Papers, and online: [lcn.loc.gov/mm95003873](https://www.loc.gov/mm95003873) (accessed December 12, 2015).

119 *The Freud/Jung Letters. The Correspondence between Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung*, William McGuire, ed., trans. Ralph Manheim, R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 253.

And the remark “after a violent debate” signals that not all participants of the Congress were happy with this initiative. This becomes understandable in light of the heated arguments after Jekels’ presentation. Filip Marcinowski comments on this event in his article about the Congress:

What is most surprising about the lively discussion prompted by Jekels’ paper is the positive attitude of the participants of the Congress to Freud’s propositions, because the differences of opinion between their supporters and opponents haven’t yet crystallized. The most critical among the speakers was Wizel, who over the years changed his view about psychoanalysis and used it himself. Rychliński, Karpińska and Łuniewski, authors of the telegram to the creator of psychoanalysis, made enthusiastic comments. The psychiatric section, in which both papers were delivered, formulated a motion that the keynote speech at the next Congress of Neurologists, Psychiatrists and Psychologists should be entitled “Freud’s views on neuroses, mainly on hysteria, and his psychoanalytical method,” which was later passed by the Congress.<sup>120</sup>

The author is right to say that in this first period of the reception of Freud’s theory in Polish medical circles, attitudes on it were not yet crystallized, whether enthusiastic or critical. This was due to the fact that Freudian psychoanalysis was still poorly known by most participants of the discussion at the Congress, so they based their positive or negative judgments on rather superficial readings and on the opinions of others. Many of them would later radically change their approach to psychoanalysis. Wizel would embrace it, as we already said, but Witold Łuniewski, later director of the mental hospital in Tworki, would become skeptical of it. And Karpińska would become involved in “psychotechnics” after the war.

Freud’s and Jung’s theories aroused considerable interest among the participants of the Congress, who were ready to hear more about them during the next one. Moreover, they must have been deeply convinced that these concepts were crucial for contemporary psychology and psychiatry, for otherwise there would not have been a motion for the keynote speech at the next Congress to be devoted to Freud’s psychoanalysis. Incidentally, such an appeal was unusual at the time, if we look at the attitude to psychoanalysis in the medical community in Austro-Hungary, Germany, and other European countries.

In the following year, as a kind of aftermath to the Congress debates, the Neurological and Psychiatric Section of the Warsaw Medical Society organized

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120 Filip Marcinowski, “By popchnąć naprzód świadomość ducha i leczyć jego zboczenia,” in: *Na drogach i bezdrożach historii psychologii*, Teresa Rzepa and Cezary W. Domański, eds. (Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2014), p. 217.

a meeting devoted to Freud's concept of hysteria (lectures were given by Tadeusz Jaroszyński, Władysław Sterling, Maurycy Bornsztajn, and Ludwik Jekels).<sup>121</sup>

At the Second Congress, which took place in 1912 in Kraków and was the second milestone in the integration of the Polish medical community, a separate section on psychoanalysis was established, with eight lecturers (Ludwig Jekels, Herman Nunberg, Karol de Beaurain, Ludwika Karpińska, Jan Nelken, Stefan Borowiecki, Władysław Radecki, and Bronisław Bandrowski). Discussions on the papers dominated the second day of the conference.<sup>122</sup> The speakers focused on presenting specific issues taken up by the psychoanalytical movement and on their own positions concerning them.

The first three papers underlined the compatibility of various aspects of Freud's theory with the findings of contemporary psychology. The session was opened by Stefan Borowiecki's speech "Psychoanalysis and its criteria." In the interwar period, this young doctor headed the Faculty of Psychology at the Poznań University and was highly esteemed by his colleagues. He pointed out that, despite the crucial role awarded by psychoanalysis to the interpretation of symptoms, which may attract charges of subjectivity, it also features objective criteria, as evidenced by similar interpretations of symptoms by various analysts and converging diagnoses regarding the future of the patient. He stated at the end that "no previous method embraces the entirety of mental life in such a way, reaching to its most profound secrets, as the psychoanalytical method does."<sup>123</sup>

Ludwika Karpińska pointed to the similarities between Freud's and Herbart's theories, which according to her were that both these psychiatrists assumed the separate and irremovable nature of unconscious mental states. For Karpińska, a great discovery of psychoanalysis was that it showed affinities between the psychological structures of the child, the neurotic and the savage, and it made it possible to explain various phenomena of the collective mind. These comments

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121 From the meeting of the Neurological and Psychiatric Section of the Warsaw Medical Society [March 19, 1910], *Zbl. Psychoanal.* 1 (1911), pp. 269–270; and from the meeting of the Neurological and Psychiatric Section of the Warsaw Medical Society [May 7, 1910, *Zbl. Psychoanal.* 1 (1911), pp. 428–430].

122 Significantly, a similar picture emerges from the extensive account on the Congress in *Ruch Filozoficzny* (Vol. III, No. 2, pp. 25–31), the journal edited and published by Kazimierz Twardowski. The author of the report was Bronisław Bandrowski, one of the speakers at the Congress, who, despite his own skepticism towards psychoanalysis, admitted that the discussions around it formed one of the main subjects of debate.

123 Stefan Borowiecki, "Metoda psychoanalityczna Freuda i jej kryteria," *Przegląd Lekarski*, No. 53 (1914), pp. 31–32, 494–497, 502–506.

are of special importance to us today, if we recall that Bronisław Malinowski was later inspired by Freud's theory in his anthropological studies.<sup>124</sup>

Bronisław Bandrowski confronted the results of Freud's theory with the findings of other contemporary psychological theories and said that if you formulated the former in the terminology used by the latter, there would be no significant differences between them. It was particularly evident in the case of the so-called associationist hypotheses, that is, the emphasis on the affective foundations of various mental associations.

Subsequent papers were devoted to more detailed issues. The first was Jekels' speech entitled "*Libido sexualis* vs. character and neurosis," where he analyzed the issue of mental bisexuality. He invoked Freud's theory of erogenous spheres, which could be divided into specifically female and male, and therefore could be regarded not only in their biological, but also psychological aspect. This was probably the first Polish attempt at looking at the phenomenon of sexual difference from the "gender" angle. Not to mention that the question of human bisexuality fascinated some Polish Modernist writers from the era and found its expression in the androgynous myths they proposed (Stanisław Przybyszewski and Tadeusz Miciński).

The question of the relationship between the biological and mental aspects of human existence in Freud's theory was also taken up by Waclaw Radecki, who represented the Jungian orientation in Polish psychoanalysis. Karol de Beaurain's paper ("Symbol") explored the areas from the borderline of Freud's and Jung's theories. He saw the foundations of all kinds of symbolism in infantile mentality. He regarded symbolism as a manifestation of the child's "primal language."<sup>125</sup>

In his paper "Psychoanalytical studies of nervous disorders," Jan Nelken presented the methodological problems connected with psychoanalytical treatment of psychosis, relating them to elements of Jung's, Freud's, and Eugen Bleuler's theories. Nelken's clinical examples of psychotic disorders and the way he interprets them are of particular note. His remarks on the linguistic

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124 Ludwika Karpińska's paper was later published under her Germanized name and surname (Luise von Karpinska) in a German version entitled "Über die psychologischen Grundlagen des Freudianismus," *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, No. 4 (1914), pp. 306–326.

125 This paper was also published in a German version under the title "Über das Symbol und die psychischen Bedingungen für sein Entstehen beim Kinde," *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, No. 5 (1913), pp. 431–435. But in the same issue it was sharply criticized by Sándor Ferenczi.



associations of psychotics are especially interesting. For example, he quotes a patient who said:

He is a priest Eli. A few days later, he stereotypically repeats the following sounds for hours: Eli, eli, eli...sa, sa, sa ... beth, beth, beth... Some moments later he explains that these sounds form the name Elisabeth and interprets the whole symptom as follows:

Eli – a Jewish priest who did not scold his son for his sexual excesses and was punished for this with death.

sa – his (Fr.)

beth – 1) bete (Fr.)-. An animal, the animal element in man, a girl.

2) beten (German) – to pray.

Here are the patient's conclusions: 1) "Elisabeth" is Eli's girl. 2) Eli prays to "Elisabeth."

Finally, it should be noted that "Elisabeth" is the name of the patient's mother. We infer from that 1) the multiple conditioning of the symptom, 2) the polarization of the patient's feelings towards his mother, 3) the Oedipus complex. The analysis of other symptoms fully confirms these conclusions.<sup>126</sup>

According to Nelken, this example deserves attention, because the patient unknowingly conducts his own "analysis," relying on a seemingly absurd play with the morphology of the word "Elisabeth." This playing with word particles provides the analyst with invaluable guidelines for diagnosing the sources of the disease, which in this case lie in a disturbed relation of the patient to his mother. The peculiarities of the patient's language would be analyzed in the same vein by the Lacanian school, concentrating on significant relations between the morphological components of his speech.

The psychoanalytical session closed with Nunberg's paper "Unfulfilled wishes according to Freud's teachings." It was devoted to the eponymous crucial term from Freud's theory of dreams. Nunberg strongly emphasized the role of dream fantasies in human mental life, indicating that the primal striving for pleasure was revealed within them. It is particularly evident in the mentality of the child, and in the behaviors and mythologies of primitive peoples. It also occupies a prominent place in artistic creation, making ample use of fantasy. In this way, Nunberg pointed at the significance of Freud's findings for a better understanding of various cultural phenomena and the process of artistic creation. Referring to Freud's book about dreams, he very cogently presented the basic assumptions of his general theory of human mental life. It was probably for this reason that Nunberg's paper opened the issue of *Neurologia Polska* containing the conference materials.

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126 Nelken, "Badania psychoanalityczne chorób nerwowych," p. 147.

Three positions clearly emerged from the discussion on the “psychoanalytical” papers: enthusiastic, represented by Jekels, Nunberg, and Bornsztajn; moderate, that is, containing some criticism, but appreciating the importance of certain aspects of Freud’s theory (Tadeusz Jaroszyński and Jan Mazurkiewicz); and unambiguously “critical,” regarding it as worthless (Izydor Feuerstein, Stefan Rosental, Antoni F. Mikulski, and Witold Rubczyński). But the very fact that the Congress committee allowed such a large number of papers on psychoanalytical theories was extremely meaningful. Moreover, the Congress and the disputes on psychoanalysis which dominated its proceedings attracted the attention of the contemporary Polish press, which widely commented on it. Not hiding his great satisfaction, Jekels wrote in his report for the *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*: “The widespread interest in psychoanalysis is demonstrated by the very fact that both specialist periodicals and the daily press published articles about it on this occasion.”<sup>127</sup>

It should be emphasized that an interest in psychoanalysis on such a scale was unthinkable at the time in the Austrian and German medical communities. The main reason for this, in addition to an overt or covert anti-Semitism, was the predominant scientific approach of a positivist pedigree, which meant that organic causes of mental disorders were primarily sought and research focused almost exclusively on that area. This meant that the views of Freud and his supporters were usually subjected to devastating criticism. One professor went so far as to say that Freud’s theory did not deserve to be a subject of academic discussion at all, but it should be dealt with by the criminal police. Such criticisms were very painful to Freud. In one of his letters to Wilhelm Fliess, he bitterly comments on the negative reaction of the Viennese medical community to his lecture on neuropsychoses: “My lecture met with a cold reception of these dunces. They may kiss me somewhere, to put it mildly.”<sup>128</sup>

It was partly for these reasons that Freud closely followed the academic discussions about psychoanalysis in the Polish medical community. Especially that in 1912 (sixteen years after the lecture quoted above), he was deeply

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127 Ludwig Jekels, “Vom II. Polnischen Neurologen- und Psychiater-Kongreß in Krakau,” *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, Vol. 1 (1913), pp. 190–192. Bartholomäus Gregor Czarnecki, German *Spätaussiedler* from Cieszyn, reports extensively on these congresses and meetings of Polish neurologists and psychiatrists. See Bartholomäus Gregor Czarnecki, *Ludwig Jekels (1867–1954) und die Anfänge der Psychoanalyse in Polen* (Tübingen: Medizinische Fakultät Universität, 2006).

128 Sigmund Freud, *Briefe an Wilhelm Fliess 1887–1904*, Jeffrey M. Masson, ed. (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1986), p. 193.

convinced of the universal nature of his theory, which should become a “common good” in the future and gain full citizenship in the academic community. And therefore the fact that there were such vigorous disputes on psychoanalysis in the Polish medical circles in Galicia (but also in the Congress Kingdom) was of particular importance for him, for it could be used in the promotion of the movement throughout the entire Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and in other countries.

Freud’s interest in how his theory was received in the Polish medical community is evidenced by his letter to Jekels sent in the immediate context of the Second Congress in Kraków – and after Jekels’ book on psychoanalysis was published in Poland.<sup>129</sup> He writes there: “Since you promise to come to Vienna soon, please accept my congratulations on the publication of your book and my words of gratitude for all your efforts for our cause.”<sup>130</sup>

There were two main reasons for the particular openness of Polish psychologists and psychiatrists to psychoanalysis. First, a number of conceptions on the structure of the human mind concerning the important role of “subconsciousness”<sup>131</sup> had already appeared in Polish lands. One of them was the theory of Edward J. Abramowski, the greatest authority in Polish psychology at the time, who in his *chef d’oeuvre* *Badania doświadczalne nad pamięcią* (Experimental studies on memory, Warsaw 1911) devoted the whole second volume to this term. Actually, the meaning of the term “subconscious” and the place awarded to it within the human mind differed fundamentally from Freud’s approach. Nevertheless, it prepared the ground for this approach to be taken seriously by the Polish psychological and medical community, even if many of its members raised several objections to it.<sup>132</sup>

Second, this group – as I already mentioned – included many (about one-third) physicians of Jewish origin, and for a significant number of them psychoanalysis was something more than just one of many interesting scientific

129 It is, of course, Ludwik Jekels’ *Szkic psychoanalizy Freuda*.

130 Sigmund Freud’s letter to Ludwik Jekels’ from March 11, 1912, Siegfried Bernfeld Papers, Library of Congress, Washington.

131 As I have already written, this was how the German *das Unbewusste* was translated, and it was the accepted translation throughout the interwar period. It is also significant that in some articles the concepts of the unconscious and unconsciousness were already used. This was due to the fact that there was no established translated terminology for the various key terms of Freud’s theory.

132 The importance of this tradition is demonstrated in a convincing and well-documented way by Bartłomiej Dobroczyński in his book *Idea nieświadomości w polskiej myśli psychologicznej przed Freudem*.

theories.<sup>133</sup> Such analysts as Jekels and Bornsztajn associated it with a kind of social mission, consisting not only in treating mental disorders, but also in the profound transformation of the whole “economy” of the functioning of instincts in the human mind. And it was this emancipatory claim of psychoanalysis, engrained in its vision of the man of the future as more open and tolerant to his sexual desires, and hence free from various inhibitions and manifestations of aggression, which had such a strong attractive force. It raised hopes for creating a new type of society, where the mutual hostility of different ethnic groups would vanish. Above all, it would be a society “emancipated” from its anti-Semitism, for it would recognize its irrationality.

### 3 Jekels’ sanatorium and his “apostolic” mission in Kraków

The first signs of interest in Freud’s work among Polish physicians appeared much earlier, in the 1890s, before the publication of Freud’s first major books and articles, including *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The first widely known promoter of Freud’s theory, who later attempted to use it in his clinical work, was Jekels. He ran a medical practice in a sanatorium (health resort) for neurotic patients established in 1897 in Bystra (Upper Silesia). The sanatorium was very popular and the largest group of patients were Poles. They included famous Polish public figures, such as the well-known painter Julian Fałat (he even gave Jekels one of his watercolors), the writers Maria Konopnicka and Gabriela Zapolska, and Józef Piłsudski, who visited Bystra in 1902 with his wife Maria.<sup>134</sup>

The sanatorium, which Jekels bought thanks to his wealthy wife, occupied an area of 28 hectares including the park and the adjacent areas, and offered treatment for various types of ailments, ranging from stomach complaints to

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133 It is worth noting that the percentage of Polish doctors of Jewish origin was at that time very similar to that among Austrian and German physicians (about 50 %). This phenomenon was undoubtedly related to the fact that in the second half of the 19th century the assimilation and Polonization processes of the Jewish population in the Polish lands began to gain momentum.

134 Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935). Polish social and independence activist. From 1892, a member of the Polish Socialist Party and later its leader; from November 11, 1918, the Supreme Commander of the Polish Army, in 1918–1922 the Head of State, the first Polish Marshal (1920); leader of the Sanacja camp after the May Coup (1926). He had a decisive influence on the internal and foreign policy of the Polish state from 1918 to 1935.

circulatory ailments and heart diseases.<sup>135</sup> It seems that Jekels' first attempts to use the psychoanalytical method in treating patients took place after 1905 at the earliest. It was in that period that he started to regularly attend Freud's lectures at the Vienna University. And later, having established regular contacts with Freud and other Viennese psychoanalysts, he also became familiar with the practical side of Freud's theory.<sup>136</sup> It was also then that Nunberg, who also treated his patients using the psychoanalytical method, started to come to the sanatorium every summer.

Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient records or other testimonies which would allow us to reliably establish when and to what extent Jekels and Nunberg started to employ psychoanalysis in Bystra. But it was definitely not in 1897, and later it could have only concerned a narrow group of patients. Therefore, it is an exaggeration to call Jekels' sanatorium in Bystra "psychoanalytical" in the strict sense of the term.

Some indication can be found in Nunberg's words that the sanatorium "was very well attended until he began to practice psychoanalysis," because most patients preferred traditional forms of therapy (baths, massages, etc.). Nunberg concludes that Jekels' "adherence to psychoanalysis became a financial disadvantage for him."<sup>137</sup>

It follows from this that the reduction in the number of patients resulted from Jekels deciding at some point that only the psychoanalytical form of therapy was worthwhile, and taking care of hundreds of patients, most of whom expected a

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135 Some idea about the curative techniques used by Jekels can be glimpsed from an essay by Lena Magnone, who attempts to reconstruct them from the memoirs of Gabriela Zapolska. It seems that at least in this case they had very little in common with psychoanalysis. See Lena Magnone, "Polskie przestrzenie psychoanalizy. Zapolska w Bystrej," *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, No. 2 (2011), pp. 49–63.

136 The first meeting of Jekels with Freud in the last decade of the 19th century was not very successful. Jekels went to Vienna to promote his sanatorium in the local medical community and, during a conversation with Freud, introduced him to his methods of treating neuroses. Freud was supposedly sympathetic to it, but he said that Jekels' method had little to do with psychoanalysis. Jekels, however, was so impressed by the meeting that he decided to deepen his knowledge about psychoanalysis. With time, during his next regular visits to Vienna, he became one of Freud's closest and most trusted associates, also enjoying extraordinary esteem among psychoanalysts in Poland.

137 H. Nunberg, E. Federn, ed., *Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society*, Vol. II: 1908–1910 New York 1974; Vol. III: 1910–1911 (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1967).

quite different approach from himself and his assistants, was a pointless effort and an unnecessary burden. So he was ready to sacrifice the traditional way of running the health resort, which offered prospects of financial profit, for the sake of regular contact with Freud and the Vienna psychoanalytical circles.

The way the health resort functioned is perhaps reflected in Minna Bernays's (Freud's sister-in-law) skeptical opinion of its atmosphere. In 1910 she visited Bystra with his daughter after Freud accepted Jekels' invitation, in order to see if this place was "worthy of him." In a letter to Freud she wrote: "At present the health resort bursts at the seams and they are forced to cram people in nearby houses." She also complained that "there is no one here I could exchange a word with" and that "they are so antipathetic and nervous in the most hideous way,"<sup>138</sup> and she added that the very sight of the patients repulsed her. She was equally critical of Jekels himself, saying bluntly that the patients "are incidentally no more abhorrent to anyone than the doctor himself, he courses every arrival."<sup>139</sup>

Equally critical was Anna's letter to her father, where she wrote: "The people at the establishment are very disagreeable and they stare at us as they cannot imagine what we are doing here."<sup>140</sup>

Let us admit that these opinions were simply devastating. It is difficult to judge today if they resulted from the excessive expectations of the two women or from the fact that the health resort really was overcrowded and that Jekels found it difficult to cope with the overwhelming burden of running it. In any case, it is not surprising that after reading the letters from his sister-in-law and his daughter, Freud abandoned the plan to visit Bystra and decided to go on holiday with his family in Holland.

However, even if we assume that somewhere around 1904–1905 (and definitely later) Jekels and Nunberg used elements of psychoanalytical therapy with some patients, it certainly was not the first undertaking of this type in Europe – as Pawlak and Sokolik say in their article on the history of Polish psychoanalysis.<sup>141</sup> In 1898, a psychiatric hospital in Burghölzli (a district of Zürich), later famous across Europe, was founded. It was run by Eugen Bleuler, a psychiatrist

138 Minna Bernays, "Letter from Minna Bernays to Sigmund Freud, July 18, 1910," in: *Sigmund Freud Minna Bernays Briefwechsel 1882–1938*, ed. A. Hirschmüller (Tübingen: Edition Diskord, 2005), pp. 255–256.

139 Bernays, "Letter from Minna Bernays to Sigmund Freud, July 23, 1910," p. 260.

140 Anna Freud, "Letter from Anna Freud to Sigmund Freud, July 13, 1910," in: *Sigmund Freud – Anna Freud: Correspondence 1904–1938*, Meyer-Palmedo I., ed., (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), p. 30.

141 Pawlak, Sokolik, *Historia polskiej*, p. 91

open to psychoanalysis (incidentally, many Polish psychiatrists later gained their experience and knowledge there, as described in more detail below). Another such project was the sanatorium in Baden-Baden founded in 1900 by Georg Groddeck in the Marienhöhe Villa. In the interwar period the third major psychoanalytical center was a clinic in Berlin run by Karl Abraham (operating since 1920). Another one was the *Haus Sielbeck* sanatorium (Holstein province) established in 1907 by Johann Jaroslaw Marcinowski, a German psychoanalyst from Wrocław with Polish roots.

Against this background, the sanatorium in Bystra appears quite modest. Moreover, in 1905 Jekels was confronted with a family tragedy, namely his wife's suicide. Bartholomäus Czarnecki, a German *Spätaussiedler* (late settler) from Cieszyn, writes in his dissertation – relying on testimonies of inhabitants of Bielsko – that there were two versions of this tragic event. According to the first one, Jekels' wife fell in love with a captain who stayed in Bystra as a patient and did not reciprocate her feelings, and according to the other she became profoundly depressed when a local theater refused to stage her trashy play.<sup>142</sup> In any case, this tragedy no doubt left a deep mark on Jekels' personality. Minna Bernays' letters and Gabriela Zapolska's memoirs paint a picture of a young doctor extremely confident in himself and his diagnoses, as well as very arrogant and disrespectful towards his patients.<sup>143</sup> However, a very different picture of a timid and modest man with a pessimistic outlook emerges from later memories of Jekels' friends and colleagues.<sup>144</sup>

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142 Czarnecki, *Ludwig Jekels*, p. 24. The author of this work tried to find the grave of Jekels' wife in Bystra. It turned out that a few decades after her death no one had any idea where it was. It should be added that the credibility of the second version was undermined by Lena Magnone in her book *Emisariusze Freuda*, where she suggests that the play by Jekels' wife was staged in Lviv.

143 On the basis of the memories of the latter, Lena Magnone reconstructed the curative methods used by Jekels at the time. It seems that, at least in this case, they had little to do with psychoanalysis. The author also traces the entire course of the treatment, during which Jekels evidently made a wrong diagnosis, sarcastically rejecting Zapolska's suggestion that the cause of her stomach problems may have been a tapeworm ("You have a tapeworm in your head!"). But when, unluckily, this suggestion was confirmed, the writer put the tapeworm in a jar and displayed it with undisguised satisfaction on her bedside table during Jekels' daily visits. Magnone, "Polskie przestrzenie...", p. 55.

144 Such a picture of Jekels is painted, for example, by Richard Sterba, who writes: "He was always very serious and sometimes bitter. In any case I don't remember him ever laughing." Richard Sterba, *Reminiscences of a Viennese Psychoanalyst*, p. 137.

Be that as it may, his wife's death must have greatly influenced Jekels' later decision to sell the sanatorium. This was when he started to regularly travel between Vienna and Bystra, which did not leave him too much time for managing the health resort, so in 1910 he closed it down, and two years later he sold it (probably quite cheaply) to a group of Polish miners from Karvina. In the same year he moved to Vienna, and underwent analysis with Freud, later becoming one of his closest associates. Once Poland regained independence in 1919, his visits to his home country became sporadic.

But perhaps the most effective period of Jekels' work in terms of his contribution to Polish psychoanalysis was between 1911 and 1914. It was connected with the "apostolic" mission entrusted to him by Freud, who in 1911 sent him to Kraków. The aim of the mission was to familiarize the local medical community with psychoanalysis, also by giving a few lectures.<sup>145</sup> He was probably also tasked with establishing a Polish psychoanalytical society in some indefinite future.

Freud must have attached particular importance to Jekels' mission in Galicia. This is clearly evidenced by his words from a letter to Jekels sent on December 5, 1911: "Thank you for all your efforts. We owe all our successes in Poland to your work. I am curious how your clinicians will react to psychoanalysis. The joy over the news about your apostolic work in Kraków is slightly overshadowed by the fact that you can't simultaneously participate in our evening meetings [...]"<sup>146</sup> Unfortunately, the "apostolic" mission of Jekels, in the spirit of spreading a new faith, ended in failure. It turned out that despite a number of lectures he was unable to attract a sufficient number of physicians to psychoanalysis in order to establish a society similar to the one in Vienna. Echoes of this failure are to be found in the bitter words of Jekels which open his *Szkic psychoanalizy Freuda* (quoted above). He complains about the lack of understanding of psychoanalysis among the "intelligent public." But the failure of his undertaking raises a number of questions to which it is difficult to find a clear answer today. For even

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145 Edyta Dembińska and Krzysztof Rutkowski, in their article "Rozwój psychoterapii jako metody leczenia zaburzeń psychicznych na Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim i w Krakowie do wybuchu I wojny światowej," *Psychiatria Polska*, No. 20 (2015), pp. 1–12, succeeded in identifying two of those lectures. The first was entitled *O czynniku decydującym w stosunku pacyenta do lekarza* [About the factor determining the attitude of the patient to the physician] and delivered in July 1911 at the Eleventh Congress of Polish Physicians and Natural Scientists in Kraków. The second was entitled *O psychoanalizie Freuda* [About Freud's psychoanalysis] and given in February 1912 at a meeting of the Kraków Medical Society.

146 Siegfried Bernfeld Papers, Library of Congress, Washington.



if the reaction of a large part of his listeners was unfavorable to psychoanalysis, it seems that Jekels should not have had difficulties with finding a few or even a dozen physicians ready to join a native psychoanalytical society. Especially because in that time, up to the 1920s, psychoanalytical societies with just a few members appeared across Europe. In just one hospital, the Clinic of Psychiatry and Neuropathology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, headed by Professor Jan Piltz, several assistants – mentioned above – were fascinated with Freud's and Jung's theories and used elements of the psychoanalytical method in therapy. There was Ludwika Karpińska and a few psychiatrists and neurologists from Warsaw, as well as a whole group of physicians clearly sympathetic to psychoanalysis – as evidenced by the telegram sent by the First Congress to Freud and Jung, signed by a group calling themselves “Freudians” (besides Jekels and Karpińska, they were Rychliński, Łuniewski, Sycianko, Chodźko, and Kępiński). And if we look through the titles of papers and panel discussions at the First and Second Congress, it turns out that the list of people speaking favorably about psychoanalysis was quite extensive.

It should be noted that no rigorous requirements and criteria had been developed allowing a given psychoanalytical group to found a society and receive a license, thus becoming part of the International Psychoanalytical Association. They were defined by the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society in the 1920s.

But perhaps Jekels – and Freud – hoped for something more, expecting that the lectures would enjoy a much better reception in the medical community than they really did? Or perhaps Jekels simply lacked organizational skills in implementing this venture, and his lectures, in which he used unfamiliar psychoanalytical terminology, were not very comprehensible for his listeners? But these are only unverified hypotheses and speculations. The fact remains that his attempt at founding a Polish psychoanalytical society in Kraków ended in failure.

#### 4 First translations of Freud and the first Polish publications

Jekels continued his mission as Freud's “apostle” in Galicia until the outbreak of World War I. Its objective, tangible effect was the publication of his book and the translations of a number of Freud's works (*O psychoanalizie Freuda* [About Freud's Psychoanalysis], Lviv 1911, *Psychopatologia życia codziennego* [Psychopathology of Everyday Life], Lviv 1912, with Helena Ivánka). The interwar period saw the translation – with Marian Albiński – of *Trzy rozprawy z teorii seksualnej* (Three Treatises on Sexual Theory, Leipzig-Vienna-Zurich 1924) and the second edition of *Psychopatologia...* (1924). All these books were financed by the foundation of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society. It was yet more eloquent proof of how

much Freud and his Viennese colleagues wanted to popularize psychoanalysis among Polish doctors.

Alongside all this, in those years Jekels delivered papers at congresses of Polish neurologists and psychiatrists, published several articles, took part in various discussions with Polish physicians, and gave lectures. His regular visits to his home country were interrupted by the outbreak of the war. After the end of the conflict the situation was radically different. The psychoanalytical community in Kraków was dispersed, while the Warsaw group of physicians in the Jewish Hospital in Czyste (Adam Wizel, Gustaw Bychowski, Maurycy Bornsztajn, and others) gained in importance and Nelken settled in Warsaw as a military psychiatrist. From today's point of view, the rich psychoanalytical legacy of Jekels in Polish is worth noting. His book, articles, and translations of Freud's works created a foundation for a wider reception of psychoanalysis among Polish intellectuals and academics. They introduced at least two generations of Polish readers into the "mysteries" of Freud's theory. Appreciating his merits in this field, Freud wrote in one of his works: "It is principally due to L. Jekels that psychoanalysis has been introduced to Polish scientific and literary circles."<sup>147</sup>

It should be emphasized that between 1912 and 1914, in parallel with Jekels' works and translations, Polish medical publishers issued a number of books and articles exclusively or partly devoted to psychoanalysis. One could even say there was an explosion of interest in Freud's theory in this community. All these works were of an introductory nature, their authors attempting primarily to discuss the basic assumptions of Freud's theory and focusing on the aspects which they considered the most important. But they also formulated various objections and criticisms. Nevertheless, these were pioneering works in Poland, aimed at familiarizing the domestic readers (first of all from the medical community) with the fundamental elements of this theory.

Tadeusz Jaroszyński's *Odczyty kliniczne* (Clinical readings) and *Przyczynek do nauki o psychonerwicach* (A contribution to the science of psychoneuroses, Kraków, 1913)<sup>148</sup> should be mentioned; the author tries to interpret numerous cases of various types of neuroses along psychoanalytical lines. The extensive dissertation by Leopold Wołowicz, *Jeden z problemów psychoanalizy Freuda*

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147 Sigmund Freud, "On the History of Psycho-Analytic Movement," in: *Standard Edition*, James Strachey et al., eds. (London: The Hogarth Press, 1966), Vol. XIV, p. 25.

148 T. Jaroszyński, *Odczyty kliniczne* (Warszawa: Druk T. Kowalewskiego, 1912); *Przyczynek do nauki o psychonerwicach*. (*Analiza 35 przypadków hysterii, neurastenii, nerwicy lękowej i psychastenii*) (Kraków: Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1913).

(One of the problems posed by Freud's psychoanalysis)<sup>149</sup>, deserves mention; the author was a member of the group of Lviv philosophers centered around Kazimierz Twardowski, and he said in the introduction that his task was to "critically examine the assumptions of the psychoanalytical orientation, which, as its supporters would have us believe, not only has a theoretical significance for philosophy, but also a practical meaning for medicine and – which also interests me very much – for education."<sup>150</sup>

What is remarkable about this statement is that the author first names the theoretical significance of psychoanalysis for philosophy. This sequence eloquently shows that Freud's theory was interpreted at that time in a wider context than just psychiatry (or psychology).<sup>151</sup> At the same time, importantly, it was probably the first attempt in Poland to formulate the answer to the question, what is the meaning, if any, of psychoanalysis for pedagogy?<sup>152</sup> Therefore, Wołowicz's dissertation can be considered pioneering in relation to many works of Polish and foreign pedagogues and psychiatrists who would take up the issue of the relations between psychoanalysis and pedagogy in the interwar period.

The article itself was a thorough – testifying to the author's familiarity with German literature on the subject – attempt at presenting various meanings of the term "repression" (*die Verdrängung*) in Freud's theory. Towards the end, Wołowicz contrasted one of these formulations, in which "repression" means "mental de-intellectualization" of a given representation, with Edward Abramowski's theory of consciousness (and subconsciousness), calling this process "recognizing emotionally not-indifferent phenomena."<sup>153</sup>

In 1912 *Neurologia Polska* published an extensive – almost 50 pages in length – review of Freud's *Die Traumdeutung*, written by Franciszka Baumgarten, where she also quotes her own interpretations of patients' dreams in the Jewish Hospital in Czyste in Warsaw.<sup>154</sup> It is a true rarity in the whole literature on this work, since many years passed before its importance was fully recognized.

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149 Wołowicz, *Jeden z problemów psychoanalizy Freuda*.

150 Wołowicz, *Jeden z problemów psychoanalizy Freuda*, p. 4.

151 Later, in the interwar period, Karol Irzykowski would, for example, accuse Władysław Tatarkiewicz of completely ignoring Freud's theory in Tatarkiewicz's "History of Philosophy."

152 Wołowicz, *Jeden z problemów psychoanalizy Freuda*, p. 5.

153 Wołowicz, *Jeden z problemów psychoanalizy Freuda*, p. 15.

154 Franciszka Baumgarten, "Teoria snu Freuda," *Neurologia Polska*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1912), pp. 1013–1062. The author was born in Łódź as the daughter of a Jewish manufacturer. She studied literature, philosophy, and psychology at the Jagiellonian University. At

A separate place should be awarded to Stanisław Trzebiński's article *O teorii Freuda i psychoanalizie* (About Freud's theory and psychoanalysis),<sup>155</sup> probably the first dissertation on Freud which appeared in Polish under the Prussian partition (the article was based on a paper delivered by the author in 1911 in the Polish Medical Society in Kyiv). Trzebiński, later a leading representative of the so-called younger Polish school of philosophy of medicine and in the interwar period a professor at the Vilnius University, focused on reviewing studies on hysteria published by Freud together with Breuer, as well as on *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He defends Freud against charges of pansexualism, saying that his concept of "infantile sexuality is so extensive that it contains virtually all positive feelings having their source in the physical experiences of the child. For this category includes not only the feeling of pleasure, experienced by the child when you swing it on your knees or in the cradle, but also its satisfaction experienced during (previously held back) defecation or the sensation caused by bathing. [...] Similarly, if all pleasant bodily sensations are sexual sensations, then sexuality ceases to exist as a separate category, merging completely with the concept of a pleasant feeling in general."<sup>156</sup> This reading of the Freudian concept of infantile sexuality contrasted with traditional views on the subject which dominated among the general public and in the medical community of that time. These views partly resulted from the fact that projected onto the concept of infantile sexuality was a narrow concept of adult sexuality, which – as Trzebiński rightly notes – distorted the sense of Freud's claims. In the final part of his article, he criticizes the general level of the "polemic" surrounding Freud's theory, writing: "On the one hand, it was usually characterized by a reckless and fanatical zeal of proselytes and on the other hand by a contempt typical for people who don't want to understand that they might exist a point of view different from theirs, or with an indignation striking the notes of sentimental – and to a smaller or larger extent hypocritical – prudery."<sup>157</sup> Reading these words, we can only guess what heated debates must have been going on around psychoanalysis at the time and what arguments of the heaviest caliber must have been waged against it. The main subject of controversy in these discussions were the views of

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the beginning of World War I, she moved to Berlin and in the 1930s she continued her academic career in Switzerland.

155 Stanisław Trzebiński, "O teorii Freuda i psychoanalizie," *Nowiny Lekarskie*, Vol. 10 (1912), pp. 587–589.

156 Trzebiński, "O teorii Freuda i psychoanalizie," p. 589.

157 Trzebiński, "O teorii Freuda i psychoanalizie," p. 589.

representatives of the movement on infantile sexuality and on the sexual basis of various types of neuroses.

The attitude to these questions was the main criterion of the division into the three groups we spoke about above: the “enthusiastic,” unreservedly accepting Freud’s claims on the matter; the “moderate,” its representatives believing that sexuality did not always explain neuroses; and the “critical,” a priori precluding any significant role of sexuality in the development of the child and in the emergence of neurosis.

Looking at the two Congresses of Polish Neurologists, Psychiatrists, and Psychologists (the third was to be held in 1914 in Lviv, but did not take place because of the war) and the number of academic publications, first translations, lectures, and press articles, we can conclude that between 1909 and 1914 a genuine breakthrough occurred in the interest in Freud’s theory in Polish medical communities. Solid foundations for developing this theory in the interwar period were laid, because despite the fact that Jekels, Nunberg, Sokolnicka, Deutsch, and a few others (Radecki, Baumgarten, and Mira Gincburg) left the country, a rather large group of psychiatrists remained and continued their work in free Poland. We should name here Stefan Borowiecki, Jan Nelken, and Maurycy Bornsztajn, who in the early 1920s were joined by Tadeusz Bilikiewicz, Roman Markuszewicz, Władysław Matecki, Norbert Praeger, and Gustaw Bychowski, who later became a leading figure of the movement. And such psychiatrists as Adam Wizel, Natalia Zyberlast-Zandowa, or Stefan Higier, who initially were very critical towards Freud’s psychoanalysis (this is clearly seen in the discussions during the First and Second Congress and in medical journals’ commentaries), but later gradually accepted the theory and practice. It should be emphasized that all the doctors listed above were at the forefront of Polish psychiatry and they often held key management positions in the hospitals and clinics where they worked. The first works on psychoanalysis written from pedagogical positions were also published (Albert Dryjski, Józef Kretz-Mirski, Estera Markinówna, and Jan Kuchta).

## **5 The psychoanalytical plague. Centers of psychoanalysis in Kraków and Warsaw**

The leaders of Polish neurology, psychology, and psychiatry between 1900 and 1914 were doctors who started their academic careers in the best academic centers and clinics in Western Europe – mainly in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and France, but also in Russia (in the last case because in the Russian partition every Polish physician who wanted to obtain a diploma had to do

an internship in a Russian clinic). And they often had their first experiences and developed their knowledge there. For example, Jan Piltz, founder of the Psychiatry and Neuropathology Clinic at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, the most modern institution of this type in interwar Poland, gained his clinical experience with such persons as Eugen Bleuler in Switzerland and Jules Déjérine in France;<sup>158</sup> Edward Flatau, a world-class neurologist, gained clinical experience in Moscow and then worked for many years in Berlin in the Institute of Emanuel Mendel and Hermann Oppenheim, and after his return to Poland he became head of the neurological ward of the Jewish Hospital in Czyste; Samuel Goldflam, also an outstanding neurologist and co-founder of the Scientific Pathological Institute in the Hospital in Czyste, had acquired his clinical experience in Berlin and with Jean-Martin Charcot in Paris; Zygmunt Bychowski, a leading figure of Polish neurology, studied in Austria and in Germany; Jan Mazurkiewicz got his professional experience at the University in Graz and in the *Asile Saint Anne* clinic in Paris, and after returning to Poland he held a number of management positions in Warsaw universities and clinics.

These are just a few select examples from the academic biographies of leading figures of Polish neurology and psychiatry, both under the partitions and in the interwar period. They illustrate to what extent the Polish medical community maintained close relations with the best academic centers and clinics in Europe. Its leading representatives were very much familiar with new Western theories, movements, and tendencies in these fields and had practical experience acquired abroad.

Interestingly, the first advocates of psychoanalysis in Poland obtained their education and clinical experience at the same prestigious universities, clinics, and research centers where they became familiar with different approaches of a scientific nature (experimental psychology, approaches typical for neurology, and so on). Some of them tried to combine them. Many of them held prestigious positions after returning to Poland. For example, Adam Wizel, the long-time head of the Mental Diseases Ward in the Jewish Hospital in Czyste, had been on an internship with Charcot in Paris; Jan Nelken worked for a time in the famous Burghölzli clinic and then, as a military doctor, became director of the Psychiatry Ward at the Center of Sanitary Training in Warsaw; Herman Nunberg

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158 It should be noted that his students included Stefan Borowiecki and Tadeusz Bilikiewicz, who in the interwar period would be counted among the top Polish psychiatrists inspired by psychoanalysis. Karol de Beaurain would also be his assistant for some time.

studied medicine at the Zürich University, and he gained his therapeutic experience in Burghölzli where he met Eugene Bleuler and Carl Gustav Jung, and later, after a short stint in Professor Piltz's Kraków clinic, became a leading figure of the psychoanalytical movement in Vienna; Karol de Beaurain also studied medicine in Zürich and specialized as a psychiatrist in Munich, and later became an assistant in Professor Piltz's clinic; Maurycy Bornsztajn first studied neurology and psychiatry with Mendel and Oppenheim in Berlin, and later with Emil Kraepelin in Munich, and after returning to Poland he worked as Flatau's assistant and in 1908 became head of the Psychiatry Ward of the Hospital in Czyste; Ludwika Karpińska studied philosophy in Berlin and psychology in Zürich, and in 1920 became director of the Municipal Psychological Institute in Łódź; Waclaw Radecki studied at the Geneva University and still as a student became an assistant in the Psychological Laboratory of Théodore Flournoy, while after the end of World War I he organized the Psychological Institute at the Free Polish University; and so on. Ludwik Jekels, Helena Deutsch, and Eugenia Sokolnicka gained their psychoanalytical education in Vienna and later became leading figures of the movement.

All these doctors fluently spoke German, which, due to the extraordinarily dynamic development of medical sciences in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, was at the time a genuine *lingua franca* of the medical profession in Poland and abroad. German was not only the language of two of the partitioning powers, but also (and above all) the language of the most prestigious research and clinical centers, which were located in German-speaking countries. Not to mention the academic literature in this language. Some of these people were also fluent in French (A. Wizel, W. Radecki), and in both these languages they published articles in leading medical periodicals of these countries. This eloquently shows that the psychoanalytical "plague" reached Poland by the same route as other scientific theories popular in contemporary neurology, psychology, and psychiatry. The infection could be contracted not only in the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, but also – if not primarily – in the scientific centers and clinics of Switzerland, where completely different clinical approaches were also taught. The most important role was played by the famous Bleuler's clinic in Zürich (Burghölzli), that had since 1905 been engaged in intense cooperation with doctors from Professor Jan Piltz's Clinic of Psychiatry and Neuropathology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Incidentally, Piltz founded the clinic in Kraków on the basis of his previous experiences in the Burghölzli clinic, where he had been August Forel's assistant and later, at the request of Bleuler, restructured the clinic. He turned out to be an excellent organizer. It was partly due to his mediatory role and support that his assistants listed above – Stefan Borowiecki, Jan Nelken, Herman

Nunberg, and Karol de Beaurain – gained experience in this Swiss clinic. One of the effects of their studies and internships there was their familiarizing themselves with the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Jung. As Edyta Dembińska and Krzysztof Rutkowski write, “thanks to their experiences in the Burghölzli clinic Piltz’s assistants ‘got infected’ with psychoanalysis and then returned to their parent institutions and used it in treatment.”<sup>159</sup>

As a result, in 1909, the doctors in the ambulatory used psychoanalysis for understanding the causes of the patient’s symptoms, and in 1912 they employed psychoanalysis on a regular basis, as mentioned, for example, by Henryk Nunberg in his autobiography.<sup>160</sup>

We should add – as I already mentioned – that in conservative social and ecclesiastic circles psychoanalysis often gave rise to suspicion and resistance. This is clearly demonstrated by an anecdote told by Nunberg:

During one staff meeting, Professor Piltz was called away to the telephone; when he came back, he asked which one of us was treating a certain girl in the outpatient department. I said that I was the one. The girl, whom I had in psychotherapy on a psychoanalytic basis, was the sister of the bishop’s cook. After each session with me, she would be questioned by her sister as to what we had been talking about. When her sister found out what we discussed, she became very upset and complained to the bishop; he in turn called up the Professor and demanded that that sort of treatment stop immediately. Despite the protests of all my colleagues, Professor Piltz solved the problem by taking the patient into psychotherapy himself.<sup>161</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not know what the therapeutic effects of this change were. Notable here is the understandable indignation of Nunberg at the intervention of the bishop, who as a complete outsider and an absolute layman dared to interfere with the process of the patient’s treatment. On the other hand, the suggestion of both writers quoted above that the psychoanalytical method was commonly used by a group of Piltz’s assistants is very much exaggerated. This method was used by at most a few of them, and we do not even know to what extent it was compatible with Freud’s (or Jung’s) recommendations and to what extent it was,

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159 Dembińska, Rutkowski, “Rozwój psychoterapii,” p. 3.

160 Dembińska, Rutkowski, “Rozwój psychoterapii,” p. 3. I will take the opportunity to add that when Piltz received the call from the bishop, who was indignant that his female cook was subjected to psychoanalytical treatment, Piltz called all the employees of the hospital to his office and asked which one of them conducted the therapy. And when Nunberg stepped forward, Piltz said that from then on he would be treating this patient.

161 Nunberg, *Memoirs*, p. 13.



so to speak, “lay psychoanalysis.” And we know from other sources that Jan Piltz himself was skeptical towards psychoanalysis (as discussed in more detail below), while the way other employees of the clinic introduced conversation with the patient into the therapy process seems to have very little to do with the psychoanalytic approach. (Conversation was treated as an additional measure aimed at improving the mood of the bedridden patient, which resembled more closely the method of persuasion used by Janet and other psychiatrists than it did psychoanalysis.)

Demińska and Rutkowski are certainly right when they say that this group of Professor Piltz’s assistants’ turn to psychoanalysis was influenced by their internships in the Burghölzli clinic. After their stay there, they became staunch supporters of psychoanalysis and tried to use it in a “methodical” way in their clinical practice. The question arises: what did they see that was so interesting, not to say fascinating, in Freud’s and Jung’s theories? Especially because these theories were far removed in their assumptions and methods of treatment from everything offered by other orientations and concepts popular at the time. What prompted them to oppose the views prevailing in the medical community (and elsewhere) at the time and to support this model of therapy or to strongly emphasize what they held to be its positive and innovative aspects?

In their article, Demińska and Rutkowski point to the profound changes in European psychiatry at the time. The interest in psychoanalysis in the Polish psychiatric profession had its roots in the late 19th-century emergence of psychotherapeutic techniques founded on suggestion, both in the form of hypnosis and when the patient was awake. It was also in this era that the very concept of psychotherapy started to be used. But these techniques did not prove very successful, because not all patients succumbed to hypnosis and if they did, the improvement of the patient’s mental state was temporary and the symptoms soon returned. The career of psychoanalysis in the psychiatric profession was due to the fact that its creator and his pupils proposed a new approach to the patient, which on the one hand, as based as it was on talking to the patient, was more sophisticated methodically, more laborious and time-consuming, but on the other hand seemed a better prospect for a permanent removal of symptoms than other forms of therapy. And it was not just simple conversation, like, for example, in the therapy model proposed by Piltz, where conversation was only meant to improve the patient’s mood, and in fact played a secondary role. In psychoanalysis it was of crucial importance, but it also fundamentally differed from all kinds of everyday talk. During a conversation with the patient the analyst had to carefully observe all his symptomatic behaviors, pronouncements, and slips, and also to overcome the patient’s resistance and induce him to speak about his dreams,

and then the role of the analyst was to carefully interpret all these things from the point of view of instinctive drives which had been repressed into the unconscious and now revealed themselves indirectly in a linguistic (or quasi-linguistic) form and usually were of a sexual or aggressive nature. And finally, he had to skilfully communicate his interpretation of the symptoms to the patient, which usually was in conflict with the patient's previous self-understanding, and to persuade him that this interpretation was correct. So the technique of conducting conversation during psychoanalytical therapy was a multistage process, where you had to overcome various forms of resistance in the patient. The analyst had to display great perceptiveness and interpretative creativity, as well as use a number of specific techniques, such as the technique of loose association. Considered from the methodological angle, the form of therapy proposed by Freud was incomparable to all that was on offer from other psychiatric and psychotherapeutic theories from the turn of the 20th century. For many, its attractiveness consisted in the underlying theory of human mental life, assuming the existence of a newly conceived unconscious "system" in which various socially and culturally unacceptable instinctive representations, containing the most fundamental and hidden desires of the individual, were repressed. Although the concept of the unconscious had been put forward earlier, for example by Helmholtz or Fechner, none of them awarded the crucial importance to it as did Freud, who saw it primarily as the location of repressed sexual desires. This raised the hope that getting to know this mysterious "system," deeply hidden in the human mind and not easily accessible empirically, would allow us to solve many mysteries of human mental life, which the existing psychology and psychiatry could not adequately explain. And it also placed psychoanalysis in an antagonistic position vis-a-vis widespread views on sexuality and its role in human life, which attracted some people and caused indignation in others. The former certainly included Jekels, who said, commenting on his impressions of Freud's lectures in Vienna (which he had attended since 1905), "Although I had studied with the leading medical authorities of the time, the world that was opened to me in Freud's lectures was totally unknown to me. An enthusiasm I had never experienced before made me go to Vienna year after year."<sup>162</sup>

It seems that the turn of the 20th century was a period when intellectual, academic, and artistic elites were eager for various types of novelties. It was a time of expecting imminent and profound changes which would open new,

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162 Edmund Bergler, "Ludwig Jekels, M. D., 1867–1954," *Bulletin of the American Psychoanalytic Association* No. 10 (1954), pp. 831–832.

bright prospects of a better life for humanity. Hence the huge popularity among intellectuals of the writings of Marx, Nietzsche, and Arthur Schopenhauer, as well as the philosophy of Henri Bergson, which was permeated with existential optimism.

In addition, there were social and cultural factors related primarily to the intensified assimilation processes among Jews inhabiting the “Polish lands.” A crucial role was played here by the vivid interest in psychoanalysis among young Jews with a medical education. For them, it was a theory which proclaimed not only the necessity of transforming the patient’s self-knowledge in the process of therapy, but also of changing traditional forms of identity in the collective consciousness. Such an approach coincided with the growing leftist tendencies and aspirations to modernize Polish culture among Polish intellectuals and academics. Psychoanalysis, like the socialist theories built on the foundations of Marxist economic thought, seemed to open the possibility of a radical transformation of social self-knowledge and to propel the emergence of a new type of society, more just, progressive, and mentally sound than the previous one.

Particularly receptive to the psychoanalytical concepts of Freud and Jung was the younger generation of emancipated Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who invaded the ranks of the traditional bourgeoisie, where, however, they were by no means accepted with open arms. This perhaps explains their strong belief in the imminent transformation of man, society, and economy – a transformation that would lead to full assimilation, causing the disappearance of all visible and invisible barriers. This would mean that they would no longer live in the unbearable state of suspension between their native religious tradition, to which for many there was no return, and the enlightened middle-class society, which largely still saw them as intruders and strangers. The second assimilation, the genuine one, was to come with the implementation of emancipatory ideas, contained in these philosophical and scientific theories, in cultural and social space. As we know, history was soon to brutally crush these hopes.

The particular popularity of psychoanalysis in the Kraków psychiatric milieu between 1909 and 1914 was due to a combination of factors. These were first of all “objective” factors, such as the growing interest in psychotherapy in this community and widespread use of new psychotherapeutic methods (mainly hypnosis). The essential role of Jan Piltz as the organizer and head of the Clinic of Psychiatry and Neuropathology at the Jagiellonian University should be also emphasized. But in his views on “modern psychiatry” he was situated at the opposite pole in relation to psychoanalysis and all “humanistic” forms of psychotherapy based on conversation (suggestion, persuasion, and so on). This is clearly demonstrated by an excerpt from his speech inaugurating this faculty in 1905, when he said: “The

foundation of modern psychiatry, as a natural science based on experiment [...] is the opinion and fact that the brain forms the organic background to all mental acts; that every change in the state of our consciousness is accompanied by a certain change in the central nervous system and that mental disorders are just symptoms of certain pathological changes in the brain.”<sup>163</sup> Later in the lecture, Piltz claimed: “It is impossible to separate mental from nervous symptoms and it is unreasonable to consider mental symptoms as something special, detached. The soul, mental symptoms, the activity of the brain and nervous activity are all synonyms. There are no mental symptoms without nervous activity, just as there is no nervous activity without mental symptoms (Forel).”<sup>164</sup> It would be difficult to find something more removed from the psychoanalytical approach to the relation between the “activity of the brain” and “mental symptoms,” for in psychoanalysis the latter are perceived as autonomous in relation to the former. Hence Piltz concluded his lecture by saying that psychiatry could not be detached from neuropathology, because these two areas were closely connected with each other. And this was the way to approach mental disorders in the faculty founded by Piltz – which was eloquently confirmed by the name he proposed. His methodological recommendations for behavior towards the patient in the clinic also had very little to do with psychoanalysis; for example, he held the view that the very act of putting the patient in bed (*Bettbehandlung*), as well as summer baths, already had a therapeutic effect on him.

But despite all that he still hired assistants fascinated with psychoanalysis – like Borowiecki, Nelken, Nunberg, and de Beaurain – which probably resulted from the fact that although his approach to it was critical, he granted it a legitimate place in psychiatry. Especially when he stayed in Burghölzli and worked with Bleuler, he must have almost tangibly felt how popular it was among the young assistants in this clinic. After all, Bleuler himself tirelessly promoted psychoanalysis up to around 1905. Not to mention Jung. So Piltz, perhaps against his wishes, contributed to its popularity among physicians in Kraków, supporting the studies and internships of his young collaborators in Burghölzli, from where they returned “infected” with the new theory and method. Yet another factor was the proximity of Vienna, which meant that various “novelties” from there, also scientific, very quickly reached the academic, artistic, and literary circles in Kraków.

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163 Jan Piltz, *Stanowisko psychiatrii w rządzie innych nauk lekarskich, oraz nowoczesne jej zadania i cele*, (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1905), p. 4.

164 Piltz, *Stanowisko psychiatrii*, p. 12.

Another medical community in which the interest in psychoanalysis was then equally strong was in Warsaw. This is clearly evidenced by the pronouncements of representatives of this community at the First Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychiatrists, and Psychologists in 1909 in Warsaw and later during the psychoanalytical panel discussions there.

Maurycy Bornsztajn and Franciszka Baumgarten came from this milieu, and Eugenia Sokolnicka promoted psychoanalysis within it for almost two years (1917–1919). As we already said, in the interwar period this group was joined by Gustaw Bychowski, Władysław Matecki, and Roman Markuszewicz.

A key role in promoting psychoanalysis in the Congress Kingdom was the Jewish hospital founded in 1902 in the Warsaw district of Czyste, where world-class specialists in neurology and psychiatry worked as doctors and researchers. Heads of particular wards were also admirably open and tolerant towards using the psychoanalytical method. Although their personal view of it – just like of Piltz in Kraków – was often skeptical (e.g., Flatau, Goldflam, and initially Wizel), they accepted it as one of the current methods of treatment. This was clearly evidenced by the fact that when retiring, they often designated its ardent supporters their successors. This was the case, for example, of Maurycy Bornstein (Bornsztajn), who early on declared himself an advocate of psychoanalysis as the most effective method of therapy, and yet in 1904 became an assistant of the neurologist Flatau and later, with his recommendation, was appointed head of the Psychiatry Ward.<sup>165</sup> In 1916, Bornstein published in Polish three extensive case histories written from the Freudian perspective. What brought them together was the fact that they were all, as he said, typical “escapes into psychosis” as conceived by Freud. The protagonists of these histories were Polish Jewesses, patients of the Hospital in Czyste, who due to various traumatic events in their lives became schizophrenics and lost touch with reality.

In the stories of these Jewish women, related by Bornstein, various traumatic events transpired which evidently had triggered their mental disorders. These events were related to various predicaments in their personal lives or to terrifying scenes during the anti-Jewish pogroms they had witnessed. The latter appear in the story of the first patient, who saw in her visions

miserable, starving Jews and opposite them peasants with axes. She said that good times had arrived for Jews, that those who boycotted Jews would perish. During the day she

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165 I have already mentioned that Maurycy Bornsztajn used the original family name Bornstein in his publications until the 1920s. Then he used the Polonized version, writing it down in line with its pronunciation.

said to bring her the most pious Jewish women with biblical names and told them to pray. [...] During a stay with her parents (three weeks) the patient had a lot of visual hallucinations: “she saw on the wall a pig on one side and a Jewish sign (folded hands) on the other; she saw a lot of wild and domestic animals, insects; all of them walked around the room; she was not afraid at all; everyone else fled [...]” After returning to Piotrków she calmed down a little, she remembers that she spoke a lot, that she called herself a “victim of a boycott.”<sup>166</sup>

Presenting this case, Bornstein takes into account the wider cultural and social background of the patient’s psychosis, that is, the sudden deterioration of Polish-Jewish relations, previously harmonious, in the early 20th century (“earlier there was ‘unity’, today there is a split, and she is a ‘victim of a boycott’”<sup>167</sup>). What is striking, though, is that he does not relate the poignant image of terrified, miserable Jews and “peasants with axes” to the Łódź pogrom which had occurred three months before, in the summer of 1913, precisely when the patient’s psychosis erupted.

The question arises, of course, what the sources of this concealment (repression?) by Bornstein, a Jew with a strong Polish identity, were. In any case, the cultural and social background of the case history and its analysis presented by him, consisting of deeply antagonistic Polish-Jewish relations in the Congress Kingdom of the early 20th century (pogroms, calls made by the National Democracy politicians to boycott Jewish stores, and so on), plays an extremely important role here.

There is also the theme of the patient’s desire for Polish-Jewish reconciliation, accompanied by a personal recollection of love for a man named “Szyjuś.” But this love did not find its culmination in marriage, as her beloved “had a baptised brother.” Here the crucial role was played by religious prescriptions strictly enforced by the Jewish community, prohibiting marriages with non-Jews. This is where the inner split of the patient came from: she regretted her unconsumed love for a Polish boy, but on the other hand “she could not get tainted.” However, because “more than one time she tainted herself with this desire, in order to erase this youthful sin in psychosis she wants to send money to a rabbi who is starving; she sorts men and women, she chooses the most virtuous, the most devout.”<sup>168</sup>

This is the right context for the interpretation of a scene in the patient’s hallucinations in which “her bed stands in water.”<sup>169</sup> The water clearly symbolizes

166 Maurycy Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie rozszczepienia psychicznego (schizothymia reactiva)* (Warsaw: E.Wende i S-ka, 1916), p. 16.

167 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, p. 21.

168 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, pp. 25–26.

169 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, p. 16.

the Torah, which guarantees the spiritual purity of the patient, her separation from the world of non-Jews, and possesses supernatural qualities. As Bornstein comments, in this way the patient “creates in her psychosis a bliss for Jews in general and for herself in particular, opposed to the hard, cruel reality which she partly puts aside and partly tolerates alongside her desired reality.”<sup>170</sup>

The case described and analyzed by Bornstein clearly illustrates to what extent the psychoanalytical method, focusing on the world of the patient’s visions, dreams, and hallucinations, accounted for the broad cultural and social context to which they symbolically referred, often in an indirect and veiled way. Without this background, the content of all the hallucinations and visions of the psychotic patient would simply be incomprehensible.

Such an approach had its roots in Freud’s and Jung’s belief that the patient’s mental life was essentially autonomous from its physical foundations. Bornstein fully identifies with this conviction and writes: “Not denying even for a moment the seriousness of anatomic and chemical research, the new direction, assuming that all things psychological must have their source in the psyche (‘Alles Seelische aus dem Seelischen’), introduces research – independent from those previous studies – on the psychological emergence and explanation of particular symptoms and their sets, it tries to understand them from the position of a given individual, his mental structure, his life experiences.”<sup>171</sup> This view on the relation between human mental life and the human body is diametrically opposed to the one expressed by Jan Piltz in his lecture from 1905 inaugurating the Clinic of Psychiatry and Neuropathology at the Jagiellonian University. Proclaiming a close dependence of the mental sphere on what goes on in the patient’s brain, Piltz invoked the theory of Kraepelin, a founding father of pharmacotherapy and psychosurgery. Bornstein criticizes this theory, claiming that a much more fruitful approach is “subjective psychology” which “aims at elucidating the *origin*, the genesis, of the content of the mind in mental patients related to the experiences of a given individual [...]”<sup>172</sup> According to Bornstein, this was also the position of Freud, who assumed the existence of unconscious content in the human mind and so was capable of reaching its most profound layers.

This dispute continues in psychiatry to the present day, when it assumes new forms. But regardless of which position we believe to be the most credible in

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170 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, p. 26.

171 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, p. 4.

172 Bornstein, *O odrębnym typie*, p. 5.

this argument, one thing is certain: psychoanalytical case studies where the content of the patient's mental experiences is considered in the context of his biography, taking into account his broad social and cultural background, provide today an invaluable source of historical knowledge on the mental condition of particular social groups living in a given period. Bornstein's case study of the psychotic Jewish woman from Łódź most tangibly shows the dramatic nature of Polish-Jewish relations in the early 20th century in the Congress Kingdom, where tendencies towards "reconciliation" and assimilation were thwarted by strong antagonisms, fueled by the Polish National Democracy and by the partitioning powers. Independently of this, these tendencies found fertile ground in centuries-old stereotypes and prejudices about Jews prevailing in Polish society. Meanwhile, the influx of Jews to the Congress Kingdom caused by Tsarist repressions and pogroms in Russia and Ukraine resulted in an increase of conflicts and tensions. The complex and deeply ambivalent nature of Polish-Jewish relations in the interwar period is also well-illustrated by other case studies presented by Bornstein and other psychiatrists from the Hospital in Czyste (N. Praeer, W. Matecki, and others).

But regardless of these institutional factors active in Kraków and Warsaw, an important role in the increasing interest in the psychoanalytical method was played by purely scientific as well as personal factors. One of them was the fascination with the peculiar nature of this method. It attracted the younger generation of Polish psychiatrists with its innovative, original form. An important role was also played by the peculiar mythology which had grown around the concept of the unconscious and the meaning awarded to the sexual aspect of human mental life. This raised hopes that this method would produce much better therapeutic effects than methods employed previously.

We should mention that the advocates of psychoanalysis in the Polish psychiatric profession included physicians of non-Jewish origin. Like the Poles of Jewish descent, they were fascinated mostly with the innovative character of Freud's method, which, as they believed, promised much more curative effects than other forms of therapy. We suspect that an important role was played by its "Romantic" aspect, closer to the approach of the humanities and expressed in focusing on the patient's mind ("soul") and not just on biological underpinnings. Moreover, psychoanalysis seemed to reach the deepest "mysteries" of the patient's mind hidden in his unconscious, which was in line with the existing tradition of Polish psychology and psychiatry, where – as Bartłomiej Dobroczyński showed in his book quoted above – this concept (more precisely, the concept of sub-consciousness which was akin to it) played an important role in 19th-century theories.



All these factors contributed to the fact that the list of Polish physicians fascinated with psychoanalysis who did not come from assimilated Jewish families, if you compare it to an analogous list in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy or in Germany, was quite long: Borowiecki, Jaroszyński, Rychliński, Radecki, de Beaurain, Karpińska, Trzebiński, Bilikiewicz, etc. They were attracted by the “universalist” message of psychoanalysis, whose emancipatory claim was ingrained in anthropological assumptions related to the functioning of the human mind as such.

The particular popularity of psychoanalysis among Polish psychiatrists in Kraków and Warsaw (we should also add Lviv and later Bystra, because of Jekels’ work) during the partitions provided the foundation for further development of this tradition in the interwar period, continued by the physicians named above. They were to be joined by representatives of the younger generation, such as Gustaw Bychowski, Roman Markuszewicz, and Tadeusz Bilikiewicz, and still later by Władysław Matecki, Norbert Praeger, and others. The center of gravity as to doctors practicing psychoanalysis would shift to Warsaw.

In Polish historiography, there have been few works on the function of psychoanalysis in Polish psychiatry during the partitions and in the interwar period. These were mostly very general reviews, like the article by Pawlak and Sokolik or *Urwane ścieżki* written by the author of this book.<sup>173</sup> We also have a number of short biographical texts devoted to the life and work of individual psychiatrists. The first monographic work was Bartłomiej Dobroczyński’s *Idea nieświadomości w polskiej myśli psychologicznej przed Freudem* (The idea of the unconscious in Polish psychological thought before Freud).<sup>174</sup> We should also mention the extensive chapter on Polish psychoanalytical traditions in the book *Historia polskiej myśli psychologicznej* (The history of Polish psychological thought) written by Dobroczyński and Teresa Rzepa.<sup>175</sup>

We also have the article by Edyta Dembińska and Krzysztof Rutkowski, in which they point to the interest in psychoanalysis among the young assistants at the Jagiellonian University clinic headed by Jan Piltz in the early years of the 20th century. This text also shows the important role of the numerous contacts of this community with the Burghölzli clinic, and Jan Piltz’s openness to psychoanalysis and his contact with this institution.

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173 Dybel, “Urwane ścieżki.”

174 Dobroczyński, *Idea nieświadomości*.

175 Dobroczyński, Rzepa, *Historia polskiej myśli psychologicznej*.

Although the article is confined to psychiatrists from Kraków and covers the period until 1914, it is particularly noteworthy that it shows the interest in psychoanalysis in this circle against the background of the origin and development of Polish psychiatry, richly documenting it with historical sources. This work eloquently demonstrates that the turn towards psychoanalysis as a method of therapy was not an accident and a question of individual preferences of particular researchers among Kraków psychiatrists. Without knowledge of this tradition in Kraków psychiatry, we could not fully understand the position and importance of the native advocates of psychoanalysis in Polish psychiatry of the interwar period.

## 6 Contribution of Polish psychiatrists to the international psychoanalytical movement. Foreign publications

The fact that virtually all Polish psychoanalysts were fluent in German meant that there were numerous publications in this language. In the case of Jekels, Nunberg, Deutsch, and Sokolnicka, it was understandable, because only thanks to regular publishing in prestigious psychoanalytical and psychiatric journals could they maintain their leading positions in the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society. But Jekels, partly because he was tasked by Freud with popularizing psychoanalysis in Scandinavian countries and with other kinds of work, did not publish much after 1914. His foreign writings are almost completely confined to a collection of essays published towards the end of his life in English.<sup>176</sup> Of particular note was the article about Napoleon Bonaparte and interpretations of literary works, for example, of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In these articles, he faithfully applied Freud's claims on laws governing history and those related to literature. At the same time, it is hard to find any references to Polish cultural tradition within them. As for Nunberg, he wrote a number of books, of which the *Allgemeine Neurosenlehre auf psychoanalytischer Grundlage* (see above), with Freud's introduction, brought him the greatest fame. It should also be noted that he was the editor of four volumes of *Protokolle der Wiener Psychoanalytischer Vereinigung*, which are now an invaluable source for studies on the history of psychoanalysis. In American exile he published several more books, partly composed of articles previously written by him in German (including *Practice and Theory of Psychoanalysis. A Collection of Essays*, 1948, and *Principles of Psychoanalysis. Their Application to Neurosis*, 1955). All these works were theoretical and constituted

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176 Ludwig Jekels, *Selected Papers* (London: International Universities Press, 1952).

an important contribution to the development of the psychoanalytical method. Eugenia Sokolnicka published very little, and her early work, a pioneering effort in children's psychoanalysis (more about it in the second part of the book), is regarded as her most important text. Finally, Helena Deutsch became famous for her aforementioned work, namely *The Psychology of Women* (vol. 1, 1943; vol. 2, 1945 London), and she published a number of treatises on neurosis.

All these works are important if we consider them from a historical perspective. They were written in German or English when their authors were in exile and are strictly theoretical, which makes them part of the history of psychoanalysis as a "supranational" tendency. It is difficult to consider them as belonging to the Polish tradition of psychoanalysis, especially because references to the Polish cultural tradition or even to some external Polish themes do not appear in them at all. Therefore, while signaling their importance in the context of the history of the movement – as well as expressing the hope that one day they will be translated into Polish – I do not discuss them in this book.

But articles in leading psychoanalytical periodicals published by psychoanalysts later associated with Polish academic or clinical institutions have a completely different status. In many cases they were translations or slightly modified versions of articles published or delivered as papers in Polish, which meant that they were available to a wider audience and often became the subject of lively discussions in the medical community. In this sense, they can be regarded as part of the history of the native psychoanalytical movement.

This is the case of Karol de Beaurain's article "Symbol. Rozbiór wartościologicznej symbolu. Symbol w pierwotnej formie myślenia" (The symbol. Dissecting the psychological value of the symbol. The symbol in primitive forms of thinking). This paper was delivered at the Second Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychiatrists, and Psychologists in 1912, and a year later was published in *Neurologia Polska* as well as in a German version entitled "Über das Symbol und die psychischen Bedingungen für sein Entstehen beim Kinde" on the pages of *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*.<sup>177</sup> De Beaurain invokes Freud's view that "the symbolic way of expressing oneself is proper to archaic thinking."<sup>178</sup> Then he presents his own theory, saying that he conceives the symbol as a "substitution of specific representations by different ones which are associated with them on the basis of similarity."<sup>179</sup> To make his view more

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177 de Beaurain, "Über das Symbol."

178 de Beaurain, "Über das Symbol," p. 131.

179 de Beaurain, "Über das Symbol," p. 1.

credible, he quotes Darwin's example of the child who saw a duck in the water and called it "quack," and then used this name for all flying animals, that is birds and insects, and for all fluids, like water and wine.

The child's behavior, concludes de Beaurain, is related to the fact that it still has a limited perception of the properties of the objects it sees. Therefore, both duck and wine are "quack." This association seems incomprehensible to an adult, as does the child's statement that "soda water tastes like numb feet." And the reason that the child forms associations in this way results from the fact that capturing similarities is much easier than perceiving differences, or separate properties of a given object. For example, in the language of primitive peoples there are many names for the same animal depending on the context it is encountered in.

De Beaurain concludes his remarks with the claim, this time inspired by Herbert Silberer, that the source of creating symbols is the perceptive ineptitude of the subject, that is, his inability to clearly perceive differences between objects. Therefore, the symbols dealt with by psychoanalysis result from necessary natural laws. For the subjects who create them display an inadequately developed capability for abstract thinking, that is, capturing specific properties of a given object and differentiating them from others.

The article was criticized in the same issue of the journal by Sándor Ferenczi, who in a short text entitled "Zur Ontogenese des Symbols" said that de Beaurain presented the "ontogenesis" of the symbol in a simplified way. Ferenczi did not question the credibility of de Beaurain's interpretation of the way children create symbols. His doubts concerned whether the author accurately captured the peculiar nature of symbols dealt with by psychoanalysis. According to Ferenczi, "psychoanalytical symbols are awarded in the consciousness a logically unjustified affective position, about which it has to be analytically said that they owe their affective overestimation to their unconscious identification with another thing (representation) which this affective surplus in fact relates to."<sup>180</sup>

In other words, the symbol is an overt substitution for something that remains hidden. Consequently, equating one thing with another (e.g., a duck with wine in the word "quack") is not a symbol in the psychoanalytical sense. Only when "[...]" as a result of cultural pressure one part of the equation is repressed and another part, hitherto less important, is endowed with an affective surplus of meaning and becomes a symbol of what has been repressed. Originally equated semantically were the penis and the tree, the penis and the church tower. Only when the

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180 Sándor Ferenczi, "Zur Ontogenese des Symbols," *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, Vol. I, No. 5 (1913), pp. 437–438.

interest in the penis had been repressed, the tree and the church tower became excessive objects of interest; they became symbols of the penis.”<sup>181</sup> In other words, for Ferenczi the concept of the symbol in psychoanalysis had a much more complex structure than the one suggested by de Beaurain. At the same time, however, the simplified approach of the Polish analyst allowed Ferenczi to clearly demonstrate the difference between the approach to the symbol in psychoanalysis and in other theories popular at the time. In any case, the very fact that de Beaurain published his work in one of the first issues of the journal that today enjoys an iconic status – and that it triggered a discussion in the community (Freud himself noted this text, although not without a hint of sarcasm) – was a great success for the young doctor. Unfortunately, the list of his major foreign publications ends with this text.

Incidentally, we may ask how much of these reflections on the creation of symbols by the child was generated by “Staś,” then a youngster brought by his father in Zakopane for a psychoanalytical session to de Beaurain?<sup>182</sup> For may we not suggest that something of the logic of “loose” infantile association can be found later in Witkacy’s theory of Pure Form? But more about that later.

Of incomparably greater importance were foreign publications by Jan Nelken, then a young adept of psychoanalysis, who in the interwar period would become a military doctor and in 1940 would be murdered by the Soviets in Katyń. Nelken was perhaps the most original, as well as a very promising, representative of the first generation of Polish psychoanalysts. Employed in Piltz’s clinic beginning in 1908, a year later he started working as an assistant in Burghölzli. He quickly gained the recognition of Bleuler and especially of Jung, taking part in the latter’s research on the relations between mythology and fantasy in schizophrenia. This work resulted in three articles by Nelken, one of them published in Polish (see below).

The first, “Über schizophrene Wortzerlegungen,” opened one of the first issues of *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*,<sup>183</sup> which was a significant mark of recognition for the young author from Kraków/Zürich. The short text was a brilliant

181 Ferenczi, “Zur Ontogenese des Symbols,” p. 438.

182 “Staś” is Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, a prominent writer of the interwar period, included today, along with Bruno Schulz and Witold Gombrowicz, in the trinity of its greatest classics. In the West, especially in the United States and France, his dramas were very popular in the 1970s. He was perceived as a playwright in many respects akin to Artaud.

183 Jan Nelken, “Über schizophrene Wortzerlegungen,” *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*, Vol. II, No. 1 (1912), pp. 2–5.

attempt at analyzing peculiar word games practiced by schizophrenic patients. The article was based on the same case to which Nelken had referred in an article from the previous year entitled “Psychologische Untersuchungen an dementia-praecox Kranken” and which was presented in Polish at the Second Congress in Kraków.<sup>184</sup>

Nelken’s main claim was that the absurd language created by schizophrenics was not just a manifestation of “language madness” (*Sprachverwirrtheit*), as Kraepelin maintained, or “verbal lettuce” (Forel). They should be seen instead as containing some sense, he said, you just need to unravel the peculiar “logic” of linguistic associations which guides the schizophrenic. Then you will be able to discover the main “problem” that has become the source of the disorder. Nelken also claims that the pattern followed by this “logic” of associations is similar to that which shapes the symbolism of dreams, jokes, and verbal slips, as presented by Freud in his works and demonstrated by Jung in his analysis of paranoid dementia. He also invokes the works of Hanns Sachs and Alphonse Maeder.

Further in the article, Nelken attempts to unravel the meaning of the peculiar verbal “games” of the schizophrenic, which are based on breaking down particular words into their constituent parts and endowing them with completely new meanings. He claims that this procedure is in its own way coherent and consistently reveals the peculiar structure of the patient’s world and the “problem” with which he struggles. This problem is of an Oedipal nature and is related to incestuous fantasies which have dominated the patient’s world of representations. To overcome these fantasies, the patient creates his own “theory of sperm,” which is an “apology of renouncing ejaculation in order to suppress incestuous feelings directed towards his mother and sister.”<sup>185</sup> Further fantasies feature God, his father as a goat with a bull’s head, the Mother of God, the Pope, the devil, and other figures or things forming the most peculiar configurations. Significantly, the patient himself simultaneously acts in them in diametrically opposed roles, which illustrates the split in his mind.

He is God and Satan, he serves Virgin Mary and is taken in bondage by the devil. Even single words are interpreted by him in an ambivalent way, for example

(II) Mor = Rom (a string of associations: Queen of Heavens, Virgin Mary, Catholicism, the Pope)

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184 Nelken, “Badania psychoanalityczne chorób nerwowych,” pp. 140–147. In its German version the article was entitled “Psychologische Untersuchungen an dementia-praecox Kranken” and was published in the *Journal für Psychologie und Neurologie*, No. 17 (1911), pp. 174–185.

185 Nelken, *Über schizophrene*, p. 2.

2. Mohr = devil (a string of associations: Queen of Heavens, Mother of God, the Pope, father)

(II) T = arrow = Amor = love and death

(IV) (Elisa)beth = bete (slut) or beten (the holy, to pray) (an ambivalent assessment of his mother)<sup>186</sup>

This ambivalence in the treatment of individual words reflects a deep split in the mind of the patient, who is unable to cope with his incestuous strivings. This prompts him to create a kind of schizophrenic myth, where this cleavage is revealed on the symbolic plane through endowing the same words and word fragments (and even letters) with oppositional meanings. Lacan would say that this case very clearly testifies to the lack of the ordering of symbolic functions of the name of the father in the patient's mental life. Therefore, the patient is unable to cope with his incestuous desires towards his mother and sister, and his desperate attempt to build a peculiar phantasmagorical mythology around this problem also fails. The world of schizophrenic myth he creates is as profoundly split as the ego of its creator. Seen from this perspective, Nelken's linguistic analysis seemed truly pioneering in relation to what Lacan was to propose 40 years later, equipped with all the instruments and concepts of the structuralist tradition.

The second article by Nelken was entitled "Analytische Beobachtungen über Phantasien eines Schizophrenen" and appeared in the *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschung*.<sup>187</sup> He presented an extensive case study, which he had described in the first article. It turned out that his patient went through several stages of the disorder, consisting of alternating paranoid stages and catatonic attacks. The exuberant schizophrenic fantasies recounted by the patient were full of divine figures, mythical monsters, half human, half animal, there were elements of sun worship closely resembling the Mithra cult, and so on. Based on clinical records, Nelken reproduced in great detail the peculiar world of schizophrenic hallucinations, attempting to uncover the mechanism which produced this world and diagnose the function it played in the patient's life. He says: "If the paranoid stage is still an unsuccessful attempt at sublimation, the catatonic attack means the complete replacement of reality by the unconscious. In this sense, the catatonic attack of the patient leads to

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186 Nelken, *Über schizophrene*, p. 3.

187 Jan Nelken, "Analytische Beobachtungen über Phantasien eines Schizophrenen," *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschung*, Vol. IV (1912), pp. 504–562.

far-reaching dissociation. [...] All the psychosis, and in particular the catatonic stage, appears as an attempt to cure all the mental conflict. Escaping into the disease, the patient begins to abreact.”<sup>188</sup> So the patient’s psychosis functions as a kind of compensation for desires which he could not satisfy in real life. Incestuous desires, finding their outlet in diverse schizophrenic fantasies regarding the patient’s relations with the figures of father, mother, or sister, come to the fore. In the patient’s fantasies, they are transformed into divine (or devilish) figures, with terrifying scenes of rape, castration, murder, and so on, sometimes including the patient himself. It is slightly reminiscent of the initial scenes of Greek mythology about the creation of gods and people, which Freud invoked in his interpretation of the Oedipus myth. But towards the end of his article, Nelken refers primarily to Jung’s view that “psychopathological symbolism is nothing other than the symbolism of prehistory and antiquity. According to Jung, the soul consists in this sense of historical layers, and the oldest layers correspond to the unconscious.”<sup>189</sup>

The most amazing thing here was that the schizophrenic mythology which the patient created for himself, his family, and the world was reminiscent in its symbolism and the events it narrated to mythical legends known from the histories of all cultures, although the patient had never heard of them (e.g., the Mithra cult). There is an inescapable analogy with another “great” schizophrenic immortalized by Freud – the famous case of President Daniel Paul Schreber. But comparing these two cases is a subject for a separate article.

In any case, Nelken’s text, in which he focused on the precise description of a case history and the recreation of the fantasy world of a schizophrenic, attempting to interpret this case in accordance with the assumptions of Jungian psychoanalysis, is today of more than just historical significance. It is one of the first texts of this type which appeared in psychoanalytical literature and immediately attracted the attention of the whole community, although critical opinions appeared too.

Most importantly, Jung valued the works of his “student” – as he called him – which he eloquently demonstrated, for example, in his letters to Freud and to Sabina Spielrein.<sup>190</sup> Moreover, when Viktor Tausk criticized Nelken’s article about

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188 Nelken, “Analytische Beobachtungen über Phantasien eines Schizophrenen,” p. 559.

189 Nelken, “Analytische Beobachtungen über Phantasien eines Schizophrenen,” p. 561.

190 See “The Letters of C. G. Jung to Sabina Spielrein,” in: *Sabina Spielrein, Forgotten Pioneer of Psychoanalysis*, C. Covington, B. Wharton, eds., (New York, 2003), pp. 33–60; and *Sigmund Freud, Carl G. Jung, Briefwechsel*, William McGuire, Wolfgang Sauerlander, eds., (Frankfurt am Main: T. Fischer Verlag, 1984).



schizophrenic fantasies in *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, Jung argued with this criticism and defended the article's claims.<sup>191</sup>

During his stay in Zürich, the young assistant from Kraków got involved in creating the *Internationale Psychoanalytische Vereinigung* (today it is primarily known under its English name, the International Psychoanalytical Association) and was the first Pole to become a member. He also took an active part in various psychoanalytical congresses organized in Switzerland in Germany. Particularly innovative – and attracting the attention of the whole of the psychoanalytical community – were his attempts at analyzing the language of schizophrenics, which we spoke about earlier, and at demonstrating the extraordinary analogies between the world of the representations and archaic cosmogonies. These efforts were noted by Freud himself. One proof is Freud's comment in the book *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement*, where he mentions Nelken's paper at one of the congresses and writes about him flatteringly, without naming him: "Further investigation into dream-symbolism led to the heart of the problems of mythology, folklore and the abstractions of religion. A deep impression was made on all hearers at one of the psycho-analytical Congresses when a follower of Jung's demonstrated the correspondence between schizophrenic phantasies and the cosmogonies of primitive times and races."<sup>192</sup>

It is also notable that Freud's famous text on Schreber's case, written slightly earlier in 1910–1911,<sup>193</sup> shows many analogies concerning the structure of a schizophrenic patient's world to Nelken's text published a year later.

It seems that the subsequent professional career of Nelken, who after World War I became a military doctor and settled in Warsaw, allowed him to avoid the entanglement in the later conflict between Freud and Jung. In addition, this change, to some extent enforced by historical circumstances (the outbreak of the war and Nelken's work in the garrison hospital in Lviv, and after the war in Warsaw), shifted his research interests in the direction of forensic psychiatry

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191 Carl G. Jung, "Eine Bemerkung zur Tauskschen Kritik der Nelkenschen Arbeit," *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, No. 3 (1913), pp. 285–288.

192 Sigmund Freud, "Zur Geschichte der psychoanalytischen Bewegung," in: *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. X, (Frankfurt am Main: T. Fischer Verlag, 1999), p. 76. English translation: S. Freud, "On the History of Psycho-Analytic Movement," in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 volumes, James Strachey et al., eds., trans. Joan Riviere (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953–1974) Vol. XIV, pp. 7–66.

193 See Sigmund Freud, "Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)," in: *Standard Edition*, James Strachey et al., eds. (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), Vol. XII, pp. 3–82.

and analyzing mental disorders of civilians triggered by the war. And the change probably was also conditioned by purely material considerations, for it would be difficult for Nelken to make a living from private psychoanalytical practice.<sup>194</sup> But it should be emphasized that his interest in psychoanalysis was still evident in his works published during the interwar period, and he often invoked Freud and Jung (more about this in the second part of the book). But he was not a prodigious writer then. His work in the military and other duties probably consumed too much of his time. If Nelken had managed to continue his professional career in Burghölzli and in Kraków, he would certainly have become one of the leading figures of the psychoanalytical movement. It does not mean that his texts written between 1919 and 1939 do not deserve attention. There are several real gems among them.

Ludwika Karpińska (1872–1937), an outstanding Polish psychologist, who in the interwar period continued her academic and professional career in Łódź, also has many foreign publications to her credit. She started in 1910 by publishing her doctoral thesis in experimental psychology, which she defended at the Zürich University and entitled *Experimentelle Beiträge zur Analyse der Tiefenwahrnehmung* (Leipzig 1910). The work was largely the result of her cooperation with Jung on association processes, and its supervisor was Friedrich Schumann, professor of philosophy in Zürich. Karpińska presented her own views on associations between representations (both before and after she lectured on that subject in Warsaw and Kraków).<sup>195</sup>

Karpińska was one of the first women who participated in the meetings of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, but she did not join it. What distinguished her from other members was that, besides a medical education (namely psychological), she also had philosophical schooling acquired in Berlin. She was a well-known figure in society, and in one of his letters to Ferenczi, Freud jokingly called her the “Polish lady philosopher.”<sup>196</sup>

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194 It does not mean that he did not practice it at all. There is, for example, a record of his psychoanalytical sessions with the Polish interwar poet Jan Lechoń. See: Bartłomiej Dobroczyński, “Pod słońcem Tanatosa,” in: *Przywracanie pamięci. Polscy psychiatrzy XX wieku orientacji psychoanalitycznej*, Paweł Dybel, ed. (Kraków: Universitas 2017), pp. 297–380.

195 Slightly later she published excerpts of her doctoral thesis in Polish: see Ludwika Karpińska, “Badania doświadczalne nad kojarzeniem wyobrażeń,” *Przegląd Lekarski*, No. 43–47 (1912), pp. 603–604, 617–619, 635–637, 647–649, 677–679.

196 Ernst Falzeder, Eva Brabant et al., eds., *Sigmund Freud – Sándor Ferenczi. Briefwechsel* (Wien: 1993), Vol. 1–2, 1912–1914.

In subsequent years, Karpińska published two articles in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Ärztliche Psychoanalyse*. The first was entitled “Ein Beitrag zur Analyse >>sinnloser<< Worte im Traume” and concerned Freud’s book on dreams. She presented her own interpretations of dreams using the Freudian method. Her intent was to demonstrate “that important questions of a personal nature hide behind seemingly meaningless words appearing in the dream, that our ways of reacting in life emerge from profound layers and that they to a huge extent correspond to forms shaped in childhood.”<sup>197</sup> The article drew the attention of Freud himself, who referred to one example of a dream quoted by Karpińska in his *Interpretation Of Dreams*.<sup>198</sup>

In 1913 she also published the short article “Beiträge zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens” in *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*. Karpińska described examples of her own slips (wrongly recorded names, forgetting names, destructive acts, and symbolic acts), subjecting them to her own psychoanalytical interpretation in the Freudian spirit. These examples were meant to confirm the theory presented by Freud in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* concerning the conditioning of these acts by content repressed into the unconscious.<sup>199</sup>

The third treatise published by Karpińska, perhaps the most significant, was entitled “Über die psychologischen Grundlagen des Freudianismus”<sup>200</sup> and was a German version of the paper *Psychologiczne podstawy freudyzmu* [Psychological foundations of Freudianism], which she had delivered at the Second Congress in Kraków and then published in *Przegląd Filozoficzny* in 1913.<sup>201</sup> The significance of this text was that in her comparison of Freud’s psychoanalytical theory to the psychology of Johann Friedrich Herbart, Karpińska was the first person to point out the psychological sources and foundations of the former.<sup>202</sup>

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197 Luise von Karpinska, “Ein Beitrag zur Analyse >>sinnloser<< Worte im Traume,” *Internationale Zeitschrift für Ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, No. 3 (1913), p. 170.

198 Sigmund Freud, “The Interpretation of Dreams,” in: *Standard Edition* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953), Vol. IV/V, p. 309. (Freud quotes here the example of the senseless verbal formation given by Karpińska in her article, namely *Svingum elvi*).

199 Luise von Karpinska, “Beiträge zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens,” *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*, No. 6 (1913), pp. 309–312.

200 Luise von Karpinska, “Über die psychologischen Grundlagen des Freudianismus,” *Internationale Zeitschrift für Ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, No. 4 (1914), pp. 305–326.

201 Luise von Karpinska, “Psychologiczne podstawy freudyzmu,” *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, No. 4 (1913), pp. 508–526.

202 In his monograph on Freud’s work, Ernest Jones assessed Karpińska’s article in a similar way; see *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work*, Vol. I, *The Young Freud 1856–1900* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1972), p. 124.

Karpińska starts her article with a claim that there is an essential affinity between psychoanalysis and experimental psychology, for both make use of objective material, such as facial expressions and the behavior of the persons studied, and draw conclusions about his mental processes from that. In both cases, an important role is also played by subjective material, meaning self-reports by the subject, who “[...] is asked to focus his attention, in the sense of being ready to accept what is revealed in his consciousness, and then describe to us the state of his consciousness induced by a given stimulus.”<sup>203</sup>

Further into the article, Karpińska states that there is a “profound analogy” between Herbart’s and Freud’s theories because “[...] they both emphasize the necessity of recognizing unconscious mental states as mental causal links for understanding the phenomena of consciousness and relations between them. States of consciousness are for both of them a kind of sum result of mental forces struggling under the threshold of consciousness, ensconcing themselves or mutually fuelling each other.”<sup>204</sup>

The main difference between Freud and Herbart is that for the latter the fundamental mental units are representations, while “affective mental elements” play that role for the former. Consequently, if “*Herbart* created the dynamics of representations, *Freud* creates the dynamics of affects.”<sup>205</sup>

Starting from this assumption, Karpińska attempts to describe subsequent parts of Freud’s theory – his theories of the mental apparatus, of hysteria, of art, of dreams, and of culture. She says towards the end that for Freud determinism in fact means a teleological explanation of mental phenomena, that is the result is for him the achieved goal and the condition is the motive. The article ends with the following conclusion: “Freud’s psychology is of little importance for explaining purely intellectual acts [...] Psychoanalysis turned out to be the best method to study living expressions of emotions.”<sup>206</sup>

In fact, none of Karpińska’s claims have withstood the test of time. The relationship between psychoanalysis and experimental psychology is illusory and based on a very superficial interpretation of Freud’s approach (e.g., Karpińska completely ignores the role of linguistic interpretations of the patient’s statements during psychoanalytical therapy). It is also difficult to agree today with her claim that the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious in Freud’s

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203 Karpińska, “Psychologiczne podstawy freudyizmu,” p. 509.

204 Karpińska, “Psychologiczne podstawy freudyizmu,” p. 511.

205 Karpińska, “Psychologiczne podstawy freudyizmu,” p. 512.

206 Karpińska, “Psychologiczne podstawy freudyizmu,” p. 526

theory is similar to that promoted by Herbart; Herbartian functionalism as interpreted by Karpińska's was alien to Freud. As for treating Freud's psychoanalysis as a theory of affects and maintaining that it was of little importance in explaining intellectual processes, this testifies to complete incomprehension on her part.

But it has to be said that Karpińska was not alone in this approach. Many researchers looked at Freud's work in a similar way, starting from a very narrow understanding of language and of the "mental." In these readings, dreams, slips, and symptoms appeared as a kind of game of affects rather than linguistic or quasi-linguistic phenomena in various relations with the patient's cogito.

Ultimately, perhaps the most interesting idea contained in Karpińska's article appears in its final section: "And if now, returning to the symbolic language of Freud, we imagined our soul torn in its depth into two parts, as Freud presents it – into a bright and dark one, recognized and condemned, good and evil – into Ormuzd and Aryman, we could capture the content of this psychology through the title of one of Żeromski's most beautiful novellas: 'Aryman Gets His Revenge.'<sup>207</sup> Well, yes, it is the revenge of the unconscious, the dark realm of the repressed, stirred in its unfathomed depth during analysis by the words of the analyst. *Acheronta movebo*. But we should add that this sentence appears only in the Polish text; it would be vain to look for it in the German version. But who in Austria and Germany had heard of Stefan Żeromski then...<sup>208</sup>

## 7 Psychoanalysis and the emancipation of women

When you follow the beginnings of the psychoanalytical movement, it is striking that although in the first years of the existence of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society (founded in 1908) it consisted exclusively of men, women gradually started to play an important role. The percentage of female psychoanalysts, authors of major theoretical works and patients in the 1920s, significantly exceeded their number in other medical specialties, not to mention other professions. Reconstructing the role of women in the psychoanalytical movement, Lena Magnone writes: "Although psychoanalysis only offered them the role of hysterics, that is as an object of research, it very soon became also a real and accessible career path. [...] No other profession was as feminized as psychoanalysis in its beginnings, although [...] as late as 1907 the participation of women

207 Karpińska, "Psychologiczne podstawy freudyizmu," p. 526.

208 Stefan Żeromski (1864–1925) was a leading writer of Polish Modernism, the Polish intelligentsia of this era was raised on his books on historical and cultural-social topics.

in the Wednesday meetings [...] was not taken for granted by everyone [...].”<sup>209</sup> This phenomenon is confirmed today by numerous historical and theoretical works on this subject. But we should also add that it partly resulted from the fact that from the very beginning women – and generally all patients – were by no means treated as “objects of research.” This was excluded by the very dialogical nature of psychoanalytical therapy, where a central role was played by conversation, engaging the whole personality of the patient. Coming to the fore during this process were both his (or her) repressed recollections of scenes from childhood and traumas in their relations with others, and his (or her) views shaped by the culture and social environment in which he (or she) had been raised. Consequently, already during the first analytic sessions conducted by Freud – which is eloquently shown by Lisa Appignanesi and John Forrester in their book *Freud’s Women* – the patient was not an “object of research,” but a talking agent whose statements and behaviors were interpreted by the analyst from the perspective of the sense contained within them or the sense towards which they pointed in a veiled way.<sup>210</sup> One condition of successful therapy was the change of the patient’s attitude towards his/her sexuality and aggression, recognizing the actual shape of his/her usually repressed desires and hence eliminating their negative influence on his/her personality and relations with others. This implied a radical change of the attitude of the patient towards himself/herself, his/her own past, and other people. The patient was expected to rework, and thus liberate himself/herself from the traumas of his/her past which had paralyzed him/her internally and made him/her dependent on others. Only then could he/she to some extent become a “free” agent, at the same time capable of criticizing his/her own behavior towards others. Ultimately, what happened during therapy was indirectly or directly related to the patient’s self-understanding, which by its very nature could not be objectified, but was constantly interacting with the analyst’s interpretations.

Moreover, precisely because the patient engaged his/her entire mental life in therapy, reworking everything that he/she spoke about to the psychoanalyst, it automatically placed him/her in the position of an agent relative to the analyst, rather than someone treated as an object of research or experiment, which would

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209 Lena Magnone, “Emancypantki, socjalistki, psychoanalityczki. Kobiety w ruchu freudowskim na początku XX wieku,” in: *Kobiety i historia. Od niewidzialności do sprawczości*, K. Bałżewska, D. Korczyńska-Partyka, A. Wódkowska, eds., (Gdańsk: Uniwersytet Gdański, 2015), p. 44.

210 See Lisa Appignanesi, John Forrester, *Freud’s Women* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1992).

reduce the therapy to diagnosing the type of disorder from which the patient suffered. On the basis of this diagnosis, supported by a laboratory analysis of the composition of his physiological fluids and an interview concerning his bodily and mental ailments, the patient would be given the right medicines. In contrast to this objectifying approach psychoanalytical therapy was an event where the patient, consciously or unconsciously resisting the interpretations or diagnoses of the analyst, usually concerning his attitude towards himself/herself and his/her relations with others, indirectly influenced the course of therapy. His/her resistance was not just an obstacle, but it forced the analyst to ask the question about its actual sources, which were usually located in the social space of his/her relations with others. And this opened up the prospect of achieving progress in therapy. This peculiar analyst-patient relation in psychoanalytical therapy was, and still is, its essential distinguishing feature. Consequently, this type of therapy has a circular structure, with both participants of the session influencing each other through their statements and behaviors.

At the same time, the analysis of the patient influenced psychoanalysis as a theory, often forcing the analyst to modify and transform it in accordance with his experiences during therapy. This was how Freud's psychoanalysis was born, as it was difficult to separate what was his own idea and what he owed to the resistance and ingenuity of his patients.

This was evidenced by the later history of psychoanalysis. A large percentage of psychoanalysts started their professional careers as patients, with women dominating among them, especially in the early years. Freud realized relatively soon to what extent analysis could serve as a good introduction for the patient to his future as an analyst. Of course, this was only if he had the gift of analytical thinking and if he wanted to become an analyst. Partly because of this, Freud said in *The Question of Lay Analysis* that an analyst did not necessarily have to be a person with a medical education.<sup>211</sup> The important condition was having gone through therapy with an experienced analyst. Gender was not important, Freud said. This was how Sabina Spielrein and Lou Salome, and among Polish representatives of the movement Helena Deutsch, Eugenia Sokolnicka, Mira Gincburg, and Beata (Tola) Rank became psychoanalysts.

The openness of psychoanalysis concerning gender was accompanied by the fact that as a young scientific discipline it had not yet produced permanent and rigid hierarchical structures, as in the majority of medical disciplines, not to

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211 Sigmund Freud, "The Question of Lay Analysis," in: *SE*, Vol. XX, pp. 177–258.

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mention philosophy, mathematics, physics, or the humanities. For it belonged to the so-called free professions, as it was a private activity.

The fact that psychoanalysis had developed within the medical sciences was conducive to a large number of female graduates of the medical sciences (and these studies were particularly sought by women) later becoming psychoanalysts. One reason was that it was not easy for them to find jobs as doctors. In fact, completing these studies was for them an additional safeguard in case they did not succeed in psychoanalytical practice. Should this happen, they could always try to find a job in a hospital or a clinic. Analysts without a medical diploma were in a much worse situation. Eugenia Sokolnicka realized this in a particularly painful way when she was in exile in France, where the lack of a medical diploma prevented her from getting a job in a hospital.

Of some significance was also the fact that the years of the emergence of the psychoanalytical movement coincided with a period when the doors of universities, hospitals, and clinics were opened to women in successive European countries. Universities and clinics in Switzerland were in the vanguard of this process, and consequently training with Bleuler and Jung was undertaken by dozens of women, including a particularly large number of Jewesses from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, at least a dozen of them born in the Polish lands. Studying and getting a profession was for them the only chance of getting away from their provincial surroundings and gaining independence. Helena Deutsch pointed this out in her memoirs, writing that her escape from home in a way forced her father to finance her studies. She wrote that thanks to her escape she became a pioneer of modernity in the eyes of other girls in her native Przemyśl: “There were other girls who felt the same impulse that I had, yet didn’t know how to carry it out, and my leaving home became a signal and an encouragement. Following my ‘demoralizing’ example, six brave girls from good families brought themselves to the point of leaving their comfortable homes in the course of the next year.”<sup>212</sup>

However, if we look from a social and cultural perspective, women who decided to become analysts largely came from very similar milieus as men (the Jewish middle class with liberal views and usually leftist leanings, partly or completely assimilated with their cultural and social surroundings), but their existential and professional paths certainly seem much more dramatic, if only because of the law which was in force in Germany and Austria that stated if the husband was a working man, the woman should resign from her job. Generally

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212 Deutsch, *Confrontations with Myself*, p. 28.



speaking, the professional situation of women in European societies of the time was much more difficult, subject to various discriminatory regulations, which often directly influenced the fate of female analysts. All this despite the fact that in the psychoanalytical movement itself there was full equality in this matter, and on top of that, it was a genuine breeding ground for left-wing female revolutionaries and feminists.

Freud's theory, some of his dubious claims about female sexuality (the image of the woman as a castrated man with the resultant contention that penis envy formed the foundations of her mental structure) notwithstanding, closely related her sexuality to the different anatomic structure of the female body. Consequently, her sexuality turned out to be fundamentally different from the male one. If we add the fact that Freud criticized various forms of cultural repression of sexuality, emphasizing that it concerned mostly women, we will see that all elements of his theory promoted the process of female sexual emancipation. As Magnone writes, "the first Freudians were without exception *new women* [in English in the original], liberated women enjoying a much greater personal independence and sexual freedom than most contemporary representatives of the middle class."<sup>213</sup> However, if we look at their biographies, their personal life was often very complicated, full of romantic disappointments, break-ups, divorces, bouts of depression, suicides, and so on. A good illustration of this is the biography of Sokolnicka, who after an uncompleted analysis with Jung and Freud was evidently unable to cope with her personal relations, as her assertive behavior created constant conflict.

The requirement introduced in the 1920s that each candidate had to go through precisely defined professional training in which the decisive role was played by an experienced training analyst, and the fact that the psychoanalytical community in Vienna and in other countries was not very numerous, resulted in a situation where family ties often had a great influence on one's professional career. Consequently, this community gradually became self-enclosed, looking at themselves as new types of intellectuals and academic elite, with access for "outsiders" becoming increasingly difficult. In addition, the discourse developed in this community, full of idiosyncratic terms and concepts, made issues discussed there largely incomprehensible to laypeople. And not just for the wider petty-bourgeois public, which usually associated Freud's theory with "shocking" claims about human sexuality, but also for the academic psychiatric and psychotherapeutic community. On the other hand, the gradual institutionalization

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213 Magnone, "Emancypantki," p. 47.

of the movement, especially once it embraced most European countries and invaded other continents, seemed inevitable. The special role of the “family” factor resulting from the esoteric character of the movement consisted not only in the fact that to a much larger degree than other professions the movement was formed by dozens of “psychoanalytical” couples, for example, Helena Rosenbach and Felix Deutsch or Beata Minzer and Otton Rank. Psychoanalytical work was also often continued by the younger generations of daughters, sisters, cousins, and so on; their later career within the movement often made possible by the knowledge transmitted by their father or mother. But usually it was fathers who played the role of “supervisors” for their spouses, daughters, or relatives. Their position within the movement was dominant in the first decades of its existence. An obvious and classic example is the later career of Anna Freud. It was not an exception; it rather confirmed the rule.

## 8 Polish Jewesses in the international psychoanalytical movement

If we take a closer look at the biographies of female psychoanalysts born during the partitions in the “Polish lands,” it will turn out that practically all of them – with one exception (more about that below) – chose emigration and joined psychoanalytical communities in other countries. Neither Deutsch nor Sokolnicka, although they emphasized their Polish identity, wrote a single psychoanalytical text in Polish. The former had only sporadic contact with her home country after leaving for Vienna, and her contribution to the movement in Poland after it regained independence was practically nil. As for the latter, her efforts aimed at founding a Polish psychoanalytical society between 1917 and 1919 was a significant, but unfortunately unsuccessful, episode. Sokolnicka played a much greater role in promoting psychoanalysis in France and establishing a psychoanalytical society there. If we look at her work from this perspective, it would be more legitimate to call her a French rather than Polish psychoanalyst.

Beata (Tola) Rank (Minzer) went down in the history of Polish psychoanalysis for her translation of Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams*,<sup>214</sup> was later active as a psychoanalyst in Vienna, and then emigrated to the United States. It is worth emphasizing that although she had gained extensive knowledge about the psychoanalytical theory much earlier (partly at the side of her husband and through participation in the VPS meetings), she decided to become a psychoanalyst only

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214 Sigmund Freud, *Omarzeniu sennym*, trans. Beata Rank (Leipzig–Vienna–Zurich: 1923).

after she underwent analysis with another Polish Jewess – Mira Gincburg (later Oberholzer) – during her stay in Switzerland. The sessions were held in Polish.

Much more impressive in this respect is the output of the female psychoanalyst who was much less famous internationally, namely Franciszka Baumgarten, a Polish Jewess born in Łódź as the daughter of a textile manufacturer. As a young girl, she was fascinated with socialist ideas and became involved politically. In 1905, she studied literature, philosophy, and psychology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, continued her studies in Paris, and in 1911 she defended her doctoral thesis on *Die Erkenntnislehre von Maine de Biran. Eine historische Studie* in Zürich.<sup>215</sup> Still later, during her stay in Germany, she became interested in experimental psychology and in 1911 she became a pupil of Hugon Münsterberg, the founder of psychotechnics.

Between 1911 and 1914, Baumgarten gave lectures on psychotechnics in Łódź. In 1912, she published an extensive article on Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* in *Neurologia Polska* (see above). This publication was particularly significant, because at that time it was one of the most important commentaries on this work and also an attempt at defining her own critical position towards it. And it was impressively long (about fifty pages).

In 1914, after the outbreak of the war, Baumgarten returned to Berlin and until 1924 was active in the field of applied psychology. Later she moved to Switzerland, where she married Moritz Tramer and carried out scientific research until the end of her life. She died in 1970. It should be emphasized that during her stay in Germany and Switzerland, Baumgarten remained in regular contact with her home country, in the 1920s and 1930s publishing articles in *Kwartalnik psychologiczny*. She also published three books in Polish, translations of works originally written in German.<sup>216</sup> After the war she wrote a book about Janusz Korczak in German, entitled *Janusz Korczak – der polnische Pestalozzi*.<sup>217</sup>

Although her numerous articles and books written in Polish and published in Poland distinguished Baumgarten's work from the achievements of other female psychoanalysts with Polish roots, except for her early article on Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* it would be hard to define her writings as psychoanalysis

215 Franziska Baumgarten, *Die Erkenntnislehre von Maine de Biran. Eine historische Studie* (Zürich–Krakau: Buchdruckerei von A.Kozianski, 1911).

216 See Franciszka Baumgarten, *Kłamstwo dzieci i młodzieży* (Warsaw: Nasza Księgarnia, 1927); *Badania uzdolnienia zawodowego* (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica Atlas, 1930); "O charakterze i jego kształceniu," *Kwartalnik Psychologiczny*, No. 3 (1937).

217 Franziska Baumgarten-Tramer, *Janusz Korczak – der polnische Pestalozzi* (Düsseldorf: Rochus Verlag, 1965).

in the strict sense of the word. Admittedly, some elements of thinking, acting, and interpreting proper to psychoanalysis would appear in her later works. However, in her professional and academic work she was much more strongly connected with Switzerland and Germany than with Poland.

Strong connections with the Polish psychoanalytical tradition can be also observed in the case of the Polish-born (in Płock) Salomea Kempner, who after completing her medical studies in Switzerland and a short stay in Vienna, in 1923 joined the German psychoanalytical community in Berlin. Only in 1935, when as a “foreign Jewess” she was ousted from the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft (German Psychoanalytical Society) and prohibited from practicing psychoanalysis, she moved – after failed attempts to emigrate to Switzerland – to Warsaw. But she kept shuttling between Warsaw and Berlin, where until 1938 she conducted secret training analyses in Wilhelmsdorf. In 1939, after the German army entered Warsaw, she was resettled to the ghetto, where she died in January 1943 of pneumonia. There are suggestions that between 1939 and 1943 she conducted therapeutic work in the ghetto, but they have yet to be confirmed.

Salomea Kempner went down in the history of Polish psychoanalysis primarily thanks to her translation – with Witold Zaniewicki – of Freud’s masterwork *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, which she translated as “An introduction to psychoanalysis.” This book, edited by Gustaw Bychowski, was used by several generations of Polish students, and until late 20th century it was the best-known of Freud’s works in Poland and ran into several editions.

The Kraków-born Bornstein sisters, Stefania and Berta, who as little girls moved with their parents to Berlin, were also connected with the community of German psychoanalysts. After acquiring psychoanalytical training, they trained in special needs education and infantile psychoanalysis. Later, after being excluded from the German Society, they joined the VPS. In subsequent years, Stefania went to Prague and organized a psychoanalytical group there, while Berta settled in Vienna in 1929, where she worked with Anna Freud, and later she emigrated to the United States. Considering her publications and work, in this case the connection with Polish psychoanalysis was purely symbolic.

The same applies to Salomea Isakower (née Rettich), who graduated in medical studies in Kraków and then moved to Vienna, where she worked in psychiatric clinics. Later she emigrated with her husband to Great Britain and then to the United States.

Another female psychoanalyst from the “Polish lands” later connected with the German psychoanalytical community is Michalina Fabian Roth (née Endelman). She was born into a Jewish family in Warsaw in 1900. After a failed relationship with Polish painter Marcel Słodki, she married the dentist Ewald

Fabian and settled in Berlin, where she studied psychiatry. In 1935 she emigrated with her husband to Prague, where she received psychoanalytical training with Otto Fenichel. When the Germans entered Prague, she fled with her husband to France, and from there to the United States.

We should also mention Sophie Morgenstern, who was connected with French psychoanalysis; this Polish Jewess from Grodno had been analyzed by Sokolnicka and specialized in infantile psychoanalysis. Although her analysis presumably was conducted in Polish (and Morgenstern herself probably analyzed Polish exiles and their children in Polish), it would be difficult to indicate any significant Polish elements in her psychoanalytical work. She was active primarily in Paris and published her texts in French.

We should also mention the numerous group of Polish Jewesses who acquired their psychoanalytical training mainly in Switzerland. There were about a dozen of them altogether. Most of them were born in the Congress Kingdom (or in the Jewish communities functioning among Poles in Russia, Lithuania, and Belarus), and as young girls they usually went to Swiss universities, practiced in local hospitals and clinics, and were professionally active in this country.

One such Polish Jewess was the aforementioned Mira Oberholzer (Gincburg), born in Łódź, where she attended a secondary school for girls. In 1901, at the age of seventeen, she went to Switzerland to study medicine. In 1905, she came back, and due to her left-wing leanings became engaged in politics in Silesia. She was fascinated with the ideas of socialist revolution and was active in the Polish national liberation movement. After the failure of the 1905 revolution she returned to Zürich, where she continued her medical studies and took part in meetings of the Freudian society run by Eugen Bleuler and Carl Gustav Jung, listening to their lectures. In 1911, encouraged by Max Eitingon, she went to Berlin and became the first woman to be admitted to the Berliner Psychoanalytische Vereinigung. Later, however, she associated her professional and academic career with the Swiss psychoanalytical community, from which her husband came, and in 1938 they emigrated together to the United States, where they opened a private practice.

Mira Oberholzer-Gincburg throughout her life maintained a very strong emotional attachment to Poland, repeatedly visiting her home country in the interwar period. It is possible that she published some works in Polish, but confirming that today would require a laborious sifting through the archives.

We often know little or nothing about the relationships of other female analysts with Poland, except that they were born on Polish soil. Their total number in all countries of Western Europe was as high as thirty. But this is still a very preliminary estimate. Getting reliable information about them would require

separate studies, finding various types of documents and still-living members of their families or people who knew them. For obvious reasons, this is a difficult task today.

## 9 Doctor-sergeant Karpińska – a paramedic in the Legions

From the whole first generation of Polish female psychoanalysts, only Ludwika Karpińska, always signed as Luise von Karpinska in foreign publications, would return to her home country for good. Interestingly, unlike Sokolnicka and Deutsch, she did not become a member of the VPS, although she took part in its meetings and published a number of papers in its journal, which was edited by Freud. Between 1909 and 1912 she wrote several enthusiastic texts about psychoanalysis in Polish, and was one of the leading promoters of the movement in Galicia.

Karpińska studied psychology at the philosophy department in Berlin and in Zürich. Zürich was also the place where in 1910 her doctoral thesis *Experimentelle Beiträge zur Analyse der Tiefenwahrnehmungen* (see above) was published. This work was the result of her cooperation with Jung and Bleuler. Karpińska was virtually the only woman who, in this early period, regularly collaborated with the Polish psychoanalytical community and, in addition to her foreign publications, also wrote a number of texts in Polish. It is worth noting that during the partitions Karpińska was active in Polish national liberation organizations. When the war broke out, in 1914 she joined Piłsudski's Legions and was a paramedic in the Carpathian Brigade, and later she took part in the defense of Lviv. In recognition of her prowess and merits, she was raised to the rank of sergeant in the First Infantry Regiment of the Legions.

As in the case of Nelken, the outbreak of the war interrupted Karpińska's promising academic career. It should be emphasized, however, that her decision to join the Legions was a particularly heroic act. On the one hand, it was in line with the 19th-century tradition of Polish patriotism, when women from the intelligentsia started spreading the idea of independence and engaged in conspiratorial work. They also took over many educational duties for men, who often died in uprisings or were exiled to Siberia or imprisoned. This process intensified at the turn of the 20th century, when various underground independence organizations sprang up in the Congress Kingdom and Galicia (Mira Gincburg from Łódź – see above – joined one of them).

On the other hand, Karpińska's decision was unusual inasmuch as she made it of her own free will as a more than forty-year-old woman standing at the threshold of an academic career. She was, after all, an excellently educated "Polish

lady philosopher” with a doctoral degree, which at the time was extremely rare. Not to mention her significant academic achievements of international renown. And yet she decided to sacrifice all that for the sake of active struggle for independence. She was ready to become an “ordinary” paramedic and bear all the hardships and dangers of front line fights, inspired by the hope that this time they would bring about the long-desired independence of Poland. She was later awarded with the Independence Cross and the Cross of Valor for her pro-independence activities. Her husband, Marcin I. Woyczyński, also a legionnaire, was Józef Piłsudski’s adjutant doctor.

It is a bit ironic that, once she took a job in the psychotherapy center in Łódź after the war, Karpińska turned to classical psychology and became head of the Municipal Psychological Laboratory. She conducted research on mentally and physically disabled children, developing questionnaires for schools for children with special needs. She also supported psychotechnical research, a branch of the psychology of labor (testing intelligence from the point of view of being fit for a given profession), organizing a research team in Łódź. It is very likely that she maintained regular contact with Franciszka Baumgarten, whose research preferences evolved in a similar direction. Her interest in psychoanalysis seemed to be a closed chapter in her life. In a short posthumous review of Dr. Ludwika Karpińska-Woyczyńska’s private and professional life, Maria Więckowska, a close collaborator of the deceased, does not mention the early period of her psychoanalytical fascinations at all.<sup>218</sup>

Presenting the achievements and the striking biography of Karpińska, it is impossible not to mention a dramatic event two years before her death, when she already was seriously ill. The authors of the two articles mentioned above write about it extensively. In 1935, Karpińska was unexpectedly arrested under the suspicion of spying for the Soviet Union and spent several weeks in the Pawiak prison. The pretext for her arrest was her contact with Soviet psychiatrists and her participation in the 7th Psychotechnical Congress in Moscow in 1931 – a number of other psychiatrists from Poland also took part. Piłsudski (and his

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218 Detailed information about the life and psychiatric activity of Ludwika Karpińska we can find in the articles of: Edyta Dembińska, Krzysztof Rutkowski, “Ludwika Karpińska, ‘Polish Lady Philosopher’ – a forgotten forerunner of Polish psychoanalysis,” *Psychiatria polska*, No. 27 (2015), pp. 1–12 (online: [www.psychiatriapolska.pl](http://www.psychiatriapolska.pl)) and Jarosław Groth, “Na pograniczu psychologii i pedagogiki – czyli życie i działalność Ludwiki Karpińskiej-Woyczyńskiej,” *Studia Edukacyjne*, No. 33 (2014), pp. 279–303. See also: Maria Więckowska, “Dr. Ludwika Karpińska-Woyczyńska. Wspomnienie pośmiertne,” *Polskie Archiwum Psychologii*, No. 93 (1936–1937), pp. 170–173.

right-wing colleagues), with whom Karpińska and particularly her husband had maintained close and friendly relations, probably did not like her contact with left-wing educational activists (Stefania Sempołowska) and defenders of political prisoners (Wanda Wasilewska). But the search of her home and cross-examinations in the court did not produce any evidence against her, so after a few weeks she was released. This episode must have been a great personal and professional tragedy for Karpińska and her husband. First, it meant the breakup of their long friendship with Piłsudski and the loss of his trust. This was mainly due to the fact that in the 1930s the Marshal became increasingly suspicious towards the political left and all representatives of the democratic opposition, employing more and more drastic forms of repression against them. Perhaps his consent for Karpińska's arrest resulted from the carefully planned intrigue of his military colleagues, who wanted to remove Woyczyński from his position as the Marshal's adjutant doctor. And Woyczyński did resign on the day of his wife's arrest. Second, the charge of spying for the Soviet Union cast a shadow on all of the previous patriotic activity of Karpińska and her husband, which was quite admirable. Third, this episode eloquently shows how far Piłsudski had become removed from the ideas of the Polish Socialist Party, of which he was once a member, and how the Second Republic ruled by him became in the 1930s a police state with many hallmarks of a dictatorship. And fourth, when Karpińska was charged, she was already seriously ill and had practically abandoned professional work. In any case, this episode is still to be more precisely explained by historians, because now we have to make do with conjectures, hypotheses, and speculations.

This review of the first generation of female psychoanalysts born in the "Polish lands" shows that regardless of how much they felt attached to the Polish cultural tradition, which some of them knew very well thanks to studying at Polish universities, schools, or elitist boarding schools for girls (B. Rank, S. Kempner, H. Deutsch), their professional life – except for Karpińska – was mainly connected with the medical circles in the countries they emigrated to. Hence their contribution to the history of Polish psychoanalysis, that is their work and publications in their home country, was negligible. All in all, there are two translations and a few texts in Polish... nothing more.

Of course, from the historical point of view the existence of such large group of female Polish Jewish-psychoanalysts in the countries of Western Europe is an interesting social and cultural phenomenon worthy of further study. In addition, it defines an important context for the history of Polish psychoanalysis in the period of the partitions and between the wars. Especially because we can speak about similar groups of Jewish female psychoanalysts with Russian, Czech, or



Hungarian roots. The countries they emigrated to, that is Switzerland, Germany, Austro-Hungary (later Austria), France, and Great Britain, being more advanced and industrially developed, at the time provided much better prospects for social advancement for young people than the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It was a natural social process, which, by the way, had a lot of common features with today's emigration of millions of young people from Poland to Western countries.

Here their involvement in psychoanalysis was distinguished primarily by the strong desire of these young, ambitious girls to take up medical studies. But it was also conditioned by the limited possibilities (see above) for women to work in many professions, especially Jewish women. Being a physician or a therapist provided a much better prospect for an independent professional life than other professions. Moreover, it was a highly prestigious occupation. And it gave these women financial and existential independence. But it obviously was also very risky, for everything depended on finding a sufficient number of patients ready to pay for treatment.

At the same time, the examples of the private and professional lives of these women very clearly shows some distinguishing features of the psychoanalyst's "lifestyle," which we already spoke about when following the origins and development of the "male" psychoanalytical movement in Vienna around Freud. First, the women who became psychoanalysts were usually Jewesses studying medical sciences, which were particularly attractive for them. Second, coming mostly from assimilated and emancipated Jewish families in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, they often moved to other cities and other countries, which meant that they often had a dual or even triple national and cultural identity, which was subject to various reconfigurations. So identity was in a way flexible, changing with the cultural surroundings of these women. In the 1920s in Austria, Jekels was no longer a Polish, but rather an Austrian psychoanalyst, and once he emigrated to the United States, he became an American psychoanalyst, publishing a selection of his most important essays in English. Third, if we look at their work and achievements in national terms, we will see that they contributed primarily to psychoanalytical traditions in those countries where they were professionally active and with which they inevitably identified.

And fourth, all these identity transformations were helped along by history. Or to be more precise, by the political changes going on in the 1930s in Germany and Austria, where, partly thanks to anti-Semitic slogans, the Nazis took power with the almost 100 percent support of their societies. Consequently, virtually all Jewish female psychoanalysts – and males too – previously active in these

countries were forced to emigrate, either to other European countries or to the United States. And thus they became British or American psychoanalysts.

As for the specializations they chose, it is striking how many of them went for infantile psychoanalysis, making a huge theoretical and clinical contribution to that area. Others tried to combine the psychoanalytical approach with those trends in psychology which had a social aspect (e.g., psychotechnics) and with social work as such. At this juncture, the biographical path of Polish-Jewish female psychoanalysts crosses with the path of the paramedic in the Legions, Dr. Ludwika Karpińska-Woyczyńska. And this was not a coincidence.

This multiple or heterogeneous form of cultural and national identity also marked the male representatives of the movement. This is related to the fact that psychoanalysis was treated by them as much more than just another scientific theory. It was their fundamental distinguishing mark, a kind of new scientific religion of a universal nature, with whose help they wanted to radically transform the human race and the world. Psychoanalysis was a brand burnt into their foreheads. All national or cultural forms of identity merged with this brand, so they were in a sense secondary, but also closely intertwined with it, either as “equals” or forming identity configurations with various “layerings” and structures. As psychoanalysts, they essentially functioned in the space between various cultures, identifying with them, but also moving between them and maintaining an adequate distance towards them. Who was Freud? A Jew? An Austrian? A citizen of the world? Each of these terms certainly fit him, although they mean different things. But they also narrow down what he is for us today. He was – is – primarily the Psychoanalyst, maker of the theory which in many ways changed our thinking about man, about the disorders of his mental life, about social mechanisms, and about culture.