

### III The first fascinations: The reception of psychoanalysis in Polish philosophy and the humanities

*Over the last few years, the development of psychoanalysis has gathered such impetus that you have to devote yourself to it exclusively in order to master it. Psychoanalysts, who besides an overwhelming number of physicians include representatives of diverse professions such as psychologists, philosophers, pedagogues, parsons, art historians, ethnologists, philologists, etc. form the International Psychoanalytical Society (Internationale psychoanalytische Vereinigung) with chapters in Vienna, Zürich, Berlin and New York.*

Ludwika Karpińska, *O psychoanalizie*

#### 1 Kazimierz Twardowski's *Ruch Filozoficzny* and psychoanalysis

Starting in 1912, the first signs of interest in psychoanalysis in Polish philosophical and literary circles appeared. This resulted, on the one hand, from the fact that the Freudian theory of mental life, emphasizing the crucial role of the unconscious, was a challenge for 19th- and 20th-century philosophical concepts, which operated exclusively on the concept of consciousness, and on the other hand, because therapy based on talking to the patient, where an important role was played by the interpretation of his dreams, slips, and symptoms by the analyst, was closer to the humanities. No wonder that a lot of space was devoted to psychoanalysis in the leading Polish philosophical journal *Ruch Filozoficzny*, edited and published in Lviv by Kazimierz Twardowski. This Lviv philosopher, a friend of Husserl and founder of the so-called Lviv-Warsaw School, very attentively followed everything that went on in psychology, a newly emerged discipline, in which not only philosophers, but also representatives of various sciences, placed their hope.<sup>219</sup>

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219 It is worth mentioning that Twardowski, with great commitment and passion, sought to create a separate psychological laboratory in Lviv and set it up as a university faculty. He was, as Teresa Rzepa and Bartłomiej Dobroczyński write in their book

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Moreover, in the early 20th century Freud's psychoanalytical theory found more and more followers, which did not escape Twardowski's attention. And although he was very skeptical of it, in his magazine he published articles, sometimes very enthusiastic ones, on this theory.

His student Stephen Baley later tried to explain this openness of Twardowski to psychoanalysis through some outstanding features of his personality. Baley, who in the interwar period was to write two interesting articles about Słowacki using elements of the psychoanalytical method, writes about his master:

[...] He also had an admirable tolerance for bold psychological theories and hypotheses. In this respect, the way he spoke about unconscious psychological phenomena seems significant to me. He pointed out that there were no compelling arguments which would force us to accept them. But he was not indignant at those who accepted their existence and built their psychological theories and systems on them. I remember very well that although after hearing Twardowski's lectures I came to the conclusion that the existence of unconscious mental phenomena was doubtful, thanks to the same lectures I realized the whole attractiveness and profundity of the hypotheses assuming their existence. [...] When at a certain stage of my interest I attempted to explain some views contained in the writings of Słowacki using the psychoanalytical method, Twardowski, although he was not an advocate of psychoanalysis, showed much interest in my work and helped me to publish it.<sup>220</sup>

In an interesting article about Baley, a Ukrainian researcher from Lviv, Stepan Ivanyk, tries to answer which elements of Freud's theory might have intrigued Twardowski. And he says that although in the epistemological sense he seemed to be located on the opposite pole of Freud, he must have valued in this theory the careful observation of mental phenomena and, if necessary, a readiness to change existing conceptual schemes. For Twardowski was a stranger to rigid, dogmatic adherence to established conceptual distinctions, which in his view had to be constantly modified in accordance with empirical findings.<sup>221</sup>

It seems that there is a lot of truth in this argumentation. It shows Twardowski as a mature scholar, open to concepts which ideologically were completely alien

*Historia polskiej myśli psychologicznej*, the creator of not only the philosophical, but also the psychological Lviv School. See Rzepa, Dobroczyński, *Historia polskiej myśli psychologicznej*, p. 128.

220 Stefan Baley, "Kazimierz Twardowski a kierunki filozofii współczesnej," *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, Vol. XLI (1938), p. 344.

221 Stepan Ivanyk, "Psychoanaliza w szkole lwowsko-warszawskiej: Stepan Baley o motywie endymiońskim w twórczości literackiej Tarasa Szewczenki i Juliusza Słowackiego," *Logos i Ethos*, Vol. 1, No. 32 (2012), pp. 43–62.

to him, but at the same time, almost intuitively, he perceived a huge cognitive potential in them. Therefore, as the Polish-Ukrainian psychologist Baley notes, when Twardowski presented the assumptions of Freud's theory in his lecture, he did it in such a way that, despite his critical approach, he aroused interest in this theory even in those listeners who had been total strangers to it before.

The most eloquent example of this extraordinary openness of Twardowski to psychoanalysis was, as we already said, his readiness to publish articles about it in *Ruch Filozoficzny*, written both by its supporters and scholars with a more skeptical approach.

In 1912, *Ruch Filozoficzny* published Stefan Błachowski's article entitled *Problem świadomości u Freuda* [The problem of consciousness in Freud's writings] with a significant editorial note: "We publish this article to welcome the Second Congress of Polish Neurologists, Psychiatrists and Psychologists, with Freud's theory being one of the main points on its agenda."<sup>222</sup>

Invoking Twardowski's distinction into the object and content of representation, the author of the article writes a critique of the Freudian approach to the relationship between consciousness and "subconsciousness," attempting to prove that it is based on a logical error. The alleged fallacy is that Freud treats the "unconscious processes" as "devoid of any qualities" if they belong to "subconsciousness," but possessing them when they are regarded as belonging to "pre-consciousness," concluding that they *can* become objects of consciousness. This means that some processes sometimes have qualities and sometimes not. So we are dealing with an evident contradiction here. But Błachowski admits that from the psychological point of view, "Freud is right in accepting pre-consciousness in which unconscious mental processes both with and without qualities occur; such processes may become and do become objects of consciousness. Translating it into the language of normal psychology, it means that all that we are conscious of is the object of our consciousness."<sup>223</sup> This argumentation clearly demonstrates that the author of the article firmly remains within the traditional bounds of the "philosophy of consciousness." In his view, we can speak about mental processes only if they can potentially become an object of consciousness. Therefore, he can accept Freud's view that if unconscious mental processes pass into pre-consciousness, they become an object of consciousness. But the claim that alongside it there might be some unconscious mental processes inaccessible

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222 Stefan Błachowski, "Problem świadomości u Freuda," *Ruch Filozoficzny*, Vol. II, No. 10 (1912), pp. 205–208.

223 Błachowski, "Problem świadomości...", p. 206.

to consciousness is not acceptable to him. Hence he treats them as identical and charges Freud with contradiction.

Of course, the problem is that, according to Freud, there is an irremovable difference between unconscious processes occurring in the “subconsciousness” (that is the unconscious) and those which have become an element of pre-consciousness. For it is only the latter which may become conscious. This distinction is crucial for his concept of the “subconscious,” which implies that there are processes in the human mind which remain outside the bounds of consciousness. And this is absolutely unacceptable to the author of the article, faithfully clinging to Twardowski’s distinctions.

This discussion allows us to demonstrate very clearly the sources of the criticism later targeted at Freud’s theory by the Lviv-Warsaw School. The main obstacle to its recognition was the impossibility of accepting the distinction we described. Also unacceptable was (and still is) the very thought that in the human mind there might exist some processes which for inherent reasons cannot become an object of consciousness.

However, this is not the most important thing in this case. What is striking in Błachowski’s approach is that in criticizing Freud’s theory he treats it with utmost seriousness. It is clear that his aim is a scholarly debate rather than ridiculing his antagonist at all costs (as would repeatedly happen later). Moreover, the very fact that the editors decided to publish this text with the note quoted above clearly demonstrated that they recognized this theory, and its domestic supporters, as serious partners in the debate.

More proof of this open approach was the publication in 1913 of an extensive report from the Second Congress, in which the author of the article – and one of the speakers in the psychoanalytical section – Bronisław Bandrowski briefly presented the issues taken up in particular papers and debates, focusing especially on speeches devoted to psychoanalysis.<sup>224</sup> And in 1914, just before the outbreak of the war, the magazine published an enthusiastic article about psychoanalysis written by Ludwika Karpińska.<sup>225</sup> She presents the development of psychoanalysis since the publication of Breuer’s and Freud’s *Studies on Hysteria*, lists psychoanalytical journals, and describes the most basic features that testified to the originality of this theory. Strikingly, she emphasizes the fact that the

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224 Bronisław Bandrowski, “Psychologia na II zjeździe neurologów, psychiatrów i psychologów polskich,” *Ruch Filozoficzny*, Vol. III, No. 2 (1913), pp. 25–31.

225 Ludwika Karpińska, “O psychoanalizie,” *Ruch Filozoficzny*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (1914), pp. 33–38.

psychoanalytical movement was formed by people from various professions, not just physicians, but also “psychologists, philosophers, pedagogues, parsons, art historians, ethnologists, philologists etc.” – in a word, humanists of all sorts.<sup>226</sup>

This demonstration of the openness of psychoanalysis to various academic and professional communities whose representatives could have successfully acquired the education and knowledge entitling them to professional practice goes hand in hand with the view which Freud himself proclaimed some dozen years later in his “The Question of Lay Analysis.”<sup>227</sup> This view was closely related to the “claim to universality” we already mentioned. For if psychoanalysis reveals universal truths underlying the human mind and what follows from that is a theory of the origins of culture and laws governing it, it “affects” everyone regardless of his profession. Its gates are open to all who want to fathom its mysteries. It is only a matter of sufficient enthusiasm, eagerness to discover oneself and others, and courage in reaching the most hidden corners of one’s mind.

Later in the article, Karpińska emphasizes that “the psychology of occultism, iconography, characterology, psychology of religion, psychology of scientific, philosophical and artistic work, psychology of aesthetic delight and ethical commandments, mythology and folklore, legal history, social psychology and ethnology, psychology of the child, pedagogy and so on owe to psychoanalysis numerous new insights and more profound takes on familiar positions.”<sup>228</sup>

Pointing at the presence of researchers representing various academic disciplines, especially humanists, in the psychoanalytical movement goes hand in hand with the impact of psychoanalysis on these disciplines, which allows them to reformulate many crucial issues. All these processes and phenomena have their source in the fact that “the psychoanalytical movement inherently strives to deepen our knowledge of ourselves, for honesty with ourselves and hence to trigger an internal revolution and create a new type of man. This will be a man more internally free, stronger, more persevering in enduring hardships, more indulgent of others, but more demanding of himself, because he will understand that both evil and good flow from the deepest layers of his essence rather than being dependent on hostile external powers.”<sup>229</sup> This is a concise summing up of all the hopes placed by the followers of the movement in the new vision of man underlying Freud’s theory. This new man will have a better knowledge of

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226 Karpińska, “O psychoanalizie,” p. 33.

227 Freud, “The Question of Lay Analysis.”

228 Karpińska, “O psychoanalizie,” p. 34.

229 Karpińska, “O psychoanalizie,” p. 37.

himself, that is his instinctive life. This knowledge will come from the fact that he will be ready to relentlessly confront himself with what was repressed by him into the unconscious and had its source in sexual drives and aggression. The new form of self-knowledge offered by psychoanalysis will be accompanied by a “freer” attitude towards himself and a more “indulgent” approach to others. He will abandon his restrictive attitude to his own sexual drives and attendant fantasies, and he will be much more tolerant of the behaviors of others.

His notions on the origins of the concepts of good and evil will undergo a fundamental change too. He will no longer see their sources in some external, transcendent powers inherent in being – for example, in some divine or demonic creatures – but in himself. He will be responsible for his deeds primarily to himself rather than to some outside force, such as God. This also means that he will not be able to shift responsibility for his evil acts on others or to some external power, such as Satan.

It can be clearly seen here that such a reading of the anthropology underlying Freud’s theory implied a radical change in the approach to the questions of morality and ethics. This approach was to combine a greater openness and tolerance towards various manifestations of human sexuality with a new type of moral rigor. This approach would assume that it is above all the individual himself who is responsible for his acts rather than some power external to him. Such a psychoanalytically enlightened ethical agent would no longer be mechanically guided by religious commandments (“because this is the right way”), but would act in accordance with internal imperatives. They would be rooted in his reflexive and critical attitude towards himself, they would result from discovering the instinctive powers within himself, from thinking about them and distancing himself from them.

This interpretation of Freud’s theory made his followers criticize common notions of morality and ethics. Emphasizing the individual’s responsibility to himself for all his faults, desires, and acts, they recognized a new type of ethical agent in this theory. This was a typically modern agent – deeply believing in his own cognitive capabilities, assuming an attitude of critical reflection towards himself and others, believing in the salutary power of rational insight, and of mastering the instinctive forces in himself.

From today’s point of view, we can say that this was a grossly one-sided reading, in its optimism concerning the possibility to develop a new type of rational attitude of man towards himself and his own drives and hence mastering them. For in Freud’s works the process of this “transformation” of the individual’s spiritual sphere due to analysis was much more complex and dramatic. According to Freud, it led to the emergence of a new type of “compromise” between the

individual and the destructive powers inherent in his sexual drives and aggression, rather than their complete subordination. And this “compromise” was fragile, constantly threatening to break down.

The basic trait of man’s social being in culture was his “discontent” (*das Unbehagen*), the constant rift between the objects of his drives and what culture imposes in the form of various constraints and norms.<sup>230</sup> In any case, in highlighting Freud’s appeal to develop man’s new attitude to his own sexual drives and aggression and hence attaining a new understanding of ethics, advocates of psychoanalysis inevitably came into conflict with the approach to morality and ethics proclaimed by the Catholic Church. In the interwar period, this led to frequent critical pronouncements by the clergy on the subject of psychoanalysis.

## 2 Irzykowski – the Polish forerunner of Freud?

If Twardowski, the most eminent Polish philosopher of this period, despite all his skepticism, maintained an admirable openness towards psychoanalysis, the leading literary critic of the time and later of the interwar period, Karol Irzykowski, was downright enthusiastic about it. This is clearly evidenced by his essays on Freud’s theory published in 1912–1913.<sup>231</sup> He preceded all other Polish literary scholars, as it was only in the interwar period that articles with psychoanalytical interpretations of literary texts would appear. At the same time, Irzykowski’s essays on Freud’s theory confirmed Baley’s claim that the growing popularity of psychoanalysis among psychiatrists also began to trigger interest among representatives of other scientific disciplines and make an impact on them.

In his essays, Irzykowski refers mostly to Freud’s theory of dreams expounded in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. This was not accidental, because, as the writer found to his amazement, some themes appearing in his experimental novel *Pałuba* from 1903 (especially in its prologue entitled “The dreams of Maria Dunin”) seem to go hand in hand with some of Freud’s claims presented in his book about dreams. Irzykowski was adamant that when writing *Pałuba*, which he started in 1890s, he did not know this book (it was published in 1900), and we

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230 Freud gave eloquent expression to these views in his well-known text *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, see Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, in: *SE*, Vol. 21, pp. 64–145.

231 Karol Irzykowski, “Teoria snów Freuda,” *Nowa Reforma*, No. 590 (1912), pp. 1–2; “Freudyzm i freudyści,” *Prawda* (1913), pp. 2–6, 8–9; “Acheron duszy,” *Świat*, No. 3 (1913), p. 1.

have no reason not to believe him. He said that he became familiar with Freud's books only some two or three years after *Pałuba* was published.<sup>232</sup>

In her article presenting Irzykowski's attitude towards Freud's theory, Lena Magnone shows some astonishing analogies and similarities between the "theory" of dreams implicitly contained in *Pałuba* and Freud's theory expounded in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.<sup>233</sup> She writes that the "name of one of the main characters in 'The Dreams of Maria Dunin' is Acheronta Movebo and originated from the same verse of *Aeneid* which Freud used as the epigraph for *The Interpretation of Dreams*. [...] The plot of the novella is practically a record of curing a hysterical patient through an analysis of her erotic dreams"<sup>234</sup>; and in *Pałuba* itself the role of infantile eroticism is emphasized, the meaning of self-delusion in mental life is analyzed, and the eponymous "hag" element is remindful of Freud's "uncanny."<sup>235</sup>

But if we take a closer look at the two books, we will perceive equally profound differences between them. For example, the dreams and deformations of the conscious depiction of reality within them are recorded in a completely different way; the status of the unconscious and its relation to consciousness is differently conceived; the symbolic aspect of dreams is not analyzed as a puzzle whose hidden meaning has nothing to do with a represented shape; the novel's plot is in fact happening between waking and sleeping, etc. Irzykowski uses various means to make the plot of dreams "look like" what could happen in the awakened state. Freud is much more restrictive in this matter, highlighting the raw absurdity of dreams told by himself and others, he does not "embellish" them and he does not bathe them in a metaphysical aura of wonder and melancholy.

These significant differences convincingly show that when writing *Pałuba*, Irzykowski could not know Freud's book about dreams. But be that as it may, the analogies and affinities with *The Interpretation of Dreams*, even if general, external and not legitimizing claims about Irzykowski being Freud's intellectual equal, are astounding.

Besides *Pałuba*, particularly notable in the early writings of Irzykowski, where he referred to psychoanalysis a number of times, is his essay *Freudyzm i freudyści*.

232 He makes such a claim, for example, in a letter to Koniński, quoted by Kazimierz Wyka; see Kazimierz Wyka, *Modernizm polski* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1987), p. 195.

233 Lena Magnone, "Karola Irzykowskiego lacanowska lektura Freuda," *Kronos*, No. 1 (2010), pp. 203–214.

234 Magnone, "Karola Irzykowskiego..." p. 205.

235 Magnone, "Karola Irzykowskiego..." p. 205.



Lena Magnone analyzes this work in detail in her article. She points out that Irzykowski's understanding of Freud's theory of dreams captures its very essence. But it seems that the article's main claim, namely that Irzykowski interpreted Freud in a "Lacanian" way and hence was also a pioneer of such interpretations of Freud's work, the like of which would appear in the 1950s in France, goes much too far.

To begin with, the reading of Freud's theory in Irzykowski's essay was from the perspective of a traditionally oriented literary scholar guided by the rules of philological interpretation which were common in the early 20th century. Therefore, we can hardly speak about a pioneering interpretation anticipating the "poststructuralist" reading of Freud by Lacan. But the author is right in one point: the reading of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* presented by Irzykowski is undoubtedly the most insightful of all native writings on this subject. One reason is that Irzykowski was the first to analyze Freud's work in a wider cultural context, pointing at the relations between his theory of dreams and literary and philosophical traditions. Although he is clearly fascinated with many themes in Freud's book and points to their originality, he tries to avoid writing about him from the position of a worshipper, assuming instead an attitude of critical distance. It allows him to show Freud's work in a comprehensive manner, pointing to its strengths and weaknesses. And so he avoids the evident simplifications which appear in all contemporary articles and books by Polish psychiatrists about Freud's theory of "explaining" dreams.

This does not mean that Irzykowski's interpretation, when confronted with the later history of the impact of Freud's work, does not raise several doubts from today's point of view. Let us take, for example, his charge that in his book Freud "takes into account the structure rather than the physiognomy of sleep, analysis rather than text."<sup>236</sup> What Irzykowski means is that by way of analysis Freud shows only the elements that build the dream, but not how it "looks." In other words, his analyses are too abstract and formalist, and consequently lose sight of the imagery present in the dream. For example, a precise analysis may allow us to perceive the structure of someone's face, but it will tell us nothing about its specific appearance. And we obviously cannot ignore it. Especially because, as Irzykowski notes, imagery is heterogeneous, for the "overt content of the dream" is composed not only of figures, things, and events, but also of "some mysterious fragments of images, splittings, shadings, and altogether they produce above all the problem of expression."<sup>237</sup>

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236 Irzykowski, "Freudyzm i freudyści," *Kronos*, p. 220.

237 Irzykowski, "Freudyzm i freudyści," *Kronos*, p. 221.

This charge is simply false. What Freud tries to do by way of precise analysis of the dream's narrative is to find out in what way these "mysterious fragments of images, splicings, shadings" are related to each other, what their function and sense are in the context of the dream. Which means that it is an analysis of the dream's *text*, only conducted from the perspective of its linguistic structure. In contrast, Irzykowski understands the dream's "physiognomy" or "text" in a more traditional way, that is, as its "appearance" or, to use Roman Ingarden's term, its "represented world." He emphasizes its imagery. We had to wait for authors inspired by the structuralist tradition – such as Lacan and Jacques Derrida – to show that these "abstract" Freudian linguistic analyses of dreams were actually philological analyses of their texts in the strict sense of this word. Only thanks to them can we attain reliable insight into the "physiognomy" of dreams. Of course, this approach to the text, which was characteristic for structuralism and became fashionable in literary studies several decades later, was alien to Irzykowski, and we may suspect that he did not read Lacan either. Therefore, he did not treat Freud's meticulous linguistic analysis of dreams, slips, and jokes as "philological." For him, they belonged to the psychology of the dream and were mostly a subject of interest for psychiatrists. Freud's book about dreams and his interpretations of slips and symptoms were commonly read in this way at the time.

This approach, today anachronistic, is perfectly illustrated by the hypothetical example – used by Irzykowski as an argument against Freud – of a female patient dreaming about a red-flowered bough planted in her garden by some man. According to Irzykowski, Freud would interpret this image as an allusion to male genitals and would be completely satisfied with this explanation. But this is by no means certain. The specific meaning of the flowered bough in the patient's dream could only be determined by a precise "linguistic" analysis of the whole dream, taking into account the whole biographical context. It could then turn out that it means something completely different than male genitals. In other words, the decisive role in Freud's approach to symbols appearing in dreams was played by their "grammatical" function in the narrative of the dream, rather than any predetermined dictionary meanings. This is the method from "dream-books," where explanation is mechanical, in accordance with a previously available pattern. Moreover, the symbol could have been treated as an element of a puzzle, where visual analogies between the signifying and the signified (flowered bough equals genitals) by definition do not matter, for the focus is on the morphological form of the signifying.

Freud's original way of interpreting dreams, going against conventional wisdom, is perfectly illustrated by an interpretation of the famous dream of Alexander the Great, who dreamt of a drunk, dancing Satyr during the siege of

Tire. When Alexander summoned his fortune-teller to explain the dream to him, the man said that Satyr means here Sa Tyr, that is Tire (will be) Yours. So the fortune-teller, the obvious forerunner of Freud, ignored in his explanation both the visual form of the dream (flowers) and its implied (hidden) meaning (genitals), but pointed to what the signifying itself said. In this sense it is not so much Irzykowski interpreting Freud in the Lacanian way, but Freud as a Lacanian, running ahead of himself by several decades.

In short, Irzykowski evidently means the purely visual form of the flowers when he says: “[...] This bough with red flowers is genitals, but still these are flowers!”<sup>238</sup> But for Freud the flowered bough would not necessarily have to mean genitals or flowers, but something completely different, to be reached by way of a painstaking linguistic analysis. In Freud’s book examples of such “Lacanian” interpretations of dreams, which have nothing to do with looking for the “underside” of the symbol’s meaning, are legion.

Particularly notable are Irzykowski’s remarks on the function played in Freud’s theory of dreams by the return to scenes from early childhood and on the innovative nature of his theory of sexuality. Magnone is right to say that Irzykowski perceives much more than other native commentators in these theories. He brings out the profound drama of these scenes and the dual nature of the sexual drive, which has something deeply traumatic in it. Therefore, it can never be completely mastered or used for building a new, sexually liberated ego. But also in this case we can hardly speak about Irzykowski as being a forerunner of Lacan. Melanie Klein noticed something similar in Freud’s theory of sexuality much earlier, developing this aspect of her concept of development stages in infantile psychology. In this context, Irzykowski is impressively insightful in his reading of Freud: this reading, free from any orthodox or worshipful overtones, puts to shame the interpretations of Polish Freudians.

Interestingly, Irzykowski points at the “egocentric” nature of dreams and tries to explain it by showing how the child shapes its image of itself in the early years of its life:

Let us realize that every young man is the protagonist of his own life drama, that in his childhood years he usually experiences the roles of Robinson or at least a pupil who is given marks, he defines goals and tasks for himself, and attached to his development and acts is a certain importance by his surroundings. [...] In the dream the curtain is lifted, the inner dramatic life nerve is uncovered, a ray from idyllic and innocent childhood pierces the drabness of commonplace events.<sup>239</sup>

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238 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” *Kronos*, p. 221.

239 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 222.

In a word, the dreamer is directly confronted with the genealogy of his own ego. Not only with traumatic scenes from childhood, but also with his will to power, which used to give him the “egocentric” sense of his infinite possibilities. According to Irzykowski, this constitutes the cathartic value of dreams discovered by Freud. But we should not forget that monsters also sometimes appear in dreams – we are haunted by nightmares from the past, often of sexual origin. In this context, Irzykowski points at the autonomous nature of the sexual drive captured by Freud in his *Three Treatises on Sexual Theory*. He discovers the innovative nature of this approach, which revolutionizes – and greatly complicates – existing views on humans and their sexual constitution. Irzykowski emphasizes that, according to Freud, “sexual pleasure is by no means only a spice or, as Schopenhauer claims, bait for the reproductive act, but something equally autonomous, having its own sources and goals.”<sup>240</sup> This discovery, says Irzykowski, is not particularly welcome by various species of moralists, but if we only speak more about such “sensitive” issues, we will learn something more about human sexuality. He thereby distances himself from Freud’s critics, mostly from the nationalist/right-wing circles, who took offense to his theory of sexuality. But soon after, interestingly, Irzykowski voices his criticism of those who came to the conclusion that people should live according to “laws of nature,” that is, to be free from any restrictions in their sexual life. He also criticizes those analysts who base their therapy on recommending an intense sexual life to their patients.

We can clearly see that Irzykowski is intellectually independent in his approach to Freud’s theory. He takes an intermediary position between its harsh critics who deny it any cognitive value and its advocates who perceive it as a kind of revealed knowledge which, if widely promoted, will bring humanity the desired liberation from all pathologies and constraints from various sexual pleasures. This is the context of his numerous objections and doubts concerning the alleged dangers resulting from an uncritical application of Freud’s theory in therapeutic practice. It should be emphasized that formulating these objections, Irzykowski by no means wants to condemn Freud’s theory wholesale or to show its “unscientific” character, as had been often done before (and after). He speaks only about the dangers which may be produced by this theory, that is, about such forms of its application which, if approached uncritically, may bring disastrous results. He claims, for example, that “in the hands of a bungler or a charlatan, the Freudian method may become a fraud, conscious or unconscious. Not every doctor has Freud’s psychological intuition, and what is more, being the founder

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240 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 222.

of this theory, Freud can constantly correct and modify it in line with certain unexpected observations.”<sup>241</sup>

Among these dangers, Irzykowski names “rummaging in someone else’s soul, forcing the patient to make a confession and suggesting ready-made conclusions to him,”<sup>242</sup> basing analysis on “punning” linguistic associations (which will later start playing a crucial role in Lacanian psychoanalysis!) or “hunting” for the Oedipal complex in the patients. In a word, the danger is that therapy will turn into a method based on “innuendo and prosecution” and that conclusions concerning the causes of the disorder will be based on clues rather than hard evidence. To prevent the analysis from becoming a mechanical construction of an image of the patient’s soul by the analyst on the basis of dogmatic assumptions, extraordinary care in formulating deductions and hypotheses is necessary, as well as openness to new experiences and, above all, the doctor’s intuition. The later history of psychoanalysis, especially in the United States, confirmed these fears, for there were numerous instances of flagrant mistakes in diagnosing the causes of disorders and of the despotic imposing of “solutions” to the patients’ existential problems, sometimes with disastrous consequences (Marilyn Monroe’s analysis is a classic example).

Having formulated his objections and critical remarks and having summed up his position on Freud’s theory, Irzykowski says that one of its most important achievements is seeing ethical issues in a new light. This was due to assuming the existence of the unconscious in human mental life, because “hidden, unconscious evil does the greatest damage. So the question is if people will be able to acquire instruments for making this evil conscious and thus for destroying it.”<sup>243</sup>

If man stops denying the unconscious motives of his acts and starts to gain access to them by way of analysis, there is a chance that he will cease committing the same “evil” acts in the future. Therefore, psychoanalysis may have an important impact on the ethical behavior of man. This is because “the question of ethics becomes a question of honesty, and furthermore the question of wisdom, that is strength.”<sup>244</sup> In other words, by assuming the existence of the unconscious in man, psychoanalysis offers him a new type of insight, in which he is confronted with the darkest corners of his ego, previously inaccessible to him. Therefore, as Irzykowski says in the conclusion of his essay, “Freudianism,

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241 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 223.

242 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 223.

243 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 229.

244 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 229.

although self-conceived, is embodied in, and flows into, the main currents underlying contemporary thought. We have debates on irrationalism and rationalism, intuition and analysis – they are now accompanied and perhaps can be to some extent explained by the question of the relation between consciousness and unconsciousness. Therefore, Freudianism has a future ahead of it.”<sup>245</sup>

Irzykowski’s interest in Freud’s theory and his favorable attitude to it was noted by Jekels. In his report on the Second Congress written for a Viennese journal, he invokes the article quoted above, in which the author “describes the most important works by Freud in a lucid way and points at the extraordinary importance of psychoanalysis. [...] He is full of admiration for Freud’s great honesty and theoretical genius.”<sup>246</sup>

And that was no exaggeration.

### 3 Otton Hewelke – the image of Kornelia Metella in Zygmunt Krasiński’s play *Irydion*

Irzykowski’s claim that Freud’s theory may be a good starting point for interpreting literary texts was an isolated judgment at the time. Polish literary scholars were not yet attempting to write criticism or literary theory inspired by the method of interpretation expounded by Freud in his book about dreams. It was only in the 1920s that the first articles written from a psychoanalytical perspective were published in Poland, usually concerning the works of Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, and Stanisław Wyspiański. But this does not mean that in the period between 1900 and 1919 we cannot find any works of literary theory showing affinities with later psychoanalytical approaches.

One of these articles was Otton Hewelke’s essay from 1903 on the figure of Kornelia Metella in Zygmunt Krasiński’s play *Irydion*.<sup>247</sup> Hewelke was a doctor who worked in the Wola Hospital in Warsaw and died in 1919 in the last year of the war. In his essay, he painted a psychological portrait of the female protagonist of the drama, whose behavior bears, in his opinion, all the hallmarks of hysteria. Interestingly, Hewelke never invokes Freud in his article, but he quotes other

245 Irzykowski, “Freudyzm i freudyści,” p. 229.

246 Ludwig Jekels, “Vom II. Polnischen Neurologen- und Psychiater-Kongreß in Krakau (20. Bis 23 Dezember 1912),” *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, No. 2 (1913), p. 192.

247 Otton Hewelke, “Kornelia Metella w Irydionie Krasińskiego,” *Krytyka lekarska*, No. 3 (1903), pp.1–7. Zygmunt Krasiński was, along with Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki, a leading writer of Polish Romanticism.

popular authors from that time who shared Freud's view that the greatest writers are usually brilliant psychologists with insight into the most hidden regions of the human mind. Hewelke invokes, for example, the Austrian neurologist Moritz Benedikt, who claimed that poets were capable of insightful analyses of the human soul: "Not content with external manifestations, poets enter the hidden depths of the soul, observe the state of its internal life and reveal its secrets – mysterious sources and motives of human deeds – in the monologues of their protagonists, so often misunderstood and hence so variously commented on by critics, who are insufficiently prepared psychologically."<sup>248</sup>

Another common point with Freud's psychoanalysis is Hewelke's admiration of Krasieński's brilliant psychological intuition when drawing the figure of Kornelia: "He noticed and presented in an artistic form the matter of mingling of religious feelings and representations with feelings of an erotic nature, he marked their mutual influence and the resultant confusion in the life of the soul. This phenomenon only recently has caught the attention of specialists, that is psychiatrists and psychologists, and is still not very popular."<sup>249</sup> According to Hewelke, the close relationship between the religious and the erotic in the behavior of Krasieński's Kornelia became visible only in the late 19th century, along with the spread of female hysteria, which was taken up scientifically by psychiatrists such as Charcot and Paul Richer. The "spirit" of the era, from which Freud's psychoanalysis grew, again makes itself felt.

According to Hewelke, this paradoxical relation between religious and erotic feelings is revealed in Krasieński's drama with particularly force. The deification of Irydion by Metella, with obvious sexual underpinnings, was confronted here with her orthodox religiosity, which told her to remain a faithful daughter of the Church, in her eyes the only warrant of the "legitimacy" of her faith in God.

Hewelke sees this conflict as the cause of the hallucinations and illusions in Metella's mind. Their source is her overwhelming sexual desire, which is particularly evident in the scene when she feels Irydion's body in a loving embrace. Fighting against this desire, she falls into a swoon, so similar to an attack of hysteria: "Irydion's grip shakes her being with the force of a mental trauma. Under this impact, Kornelia falls into a swoon and wakes up from it in a kind of somnambulant state, where her will and apperception are suppressed [...], and due to the simultaneous stimulation of sensory areas the impressions received are transformed into hallucinations and illusions."<sup>250</sup>

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248 Hewelke, "Kornelia Metella w Irydionie Krasieńskiego," p. 1.

249 Hewelke, "Kornelia Metella w Irydionie Krasieńskiego," p. 2.

250 Hewelke, "Kornelia Metella w Irydionie Krasieńskiego," p. 3.

Later in the article, Hewelke invokes contemporary scientific tradition, where the close relation between religious and erotic feelings was repeatedly invoked. He quotes the names of Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Ellis Havelock, Edwin Diller Starbuck, and others. Hewelke says that, thanks to his artistic genius, Krasiński noticed this relation much earlier. This is evidenced by the way in which he outlined the psychological picture of his heroine, who is defined by the conflict between erotic desire and religious emotions. Literature often anticipates what science discovers much later, says Hewelke.

Hewelke believes that the previous traditions of interpreting Krasiński's drama ignored the psychological nature of the conflict defining the heroine's behavior. Consequently, historians of literature such as Piotr Chmielowski and Stanisław Tarnowski had explained this work in a highly inadequate way.<sup>251</sup> Their comments trivialized the figure of Metella and her attitude to Irydion. Krasiński provided a portrait of a flesh-and-blood woman who experienced a genuine drama, torn between love and faith.

Hewelke's article is an interesting case of literary interpretation by a psychiatrist who uses contemporary psychological theories to look at this work from an unconventional perspective, perceiving an aspect of it which has been ignored by literary theorists. In the interwar period, there were more psychiatrists who took up the challenge of interpreting classic literary works from a psychological perspective. They included the psychoanalyst Gustaw Bychowski and the psychologist Stefan Baley, who was also no stranger to psychoanalysis.

Reading Hewelke's text, we see to what extent Freud's writings on the role of sexuality in human mental life invoked and developed certain ideas which had appeared in 19th-century psychology and psychiatry. The stylistic qualities of the text are also noteworthy, as it is written in a lucid and beautiful literary language permeated with the atmosphere of the era. Reading this text, we feel like a person looking at a bizarre, intricately carved artifact from the past, covered with a thin layer of patina. But this is exactly the reason it attracts our attention, and we set it on a prominent place on our bookshelf.

#### 4 Karol de Beaurain and the "lay analysis" of Staś

Just as it is tempting to look in *Pałuba* for analogies and affinities with *The Interpretation of Dreams* – for this novel was partly based on notes from

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251 Piotr Chmielowski and Stanisław Tarnowski were well-known Polish historians of literature with conservative views.



dreams – you can also point to the affinities of this book with those works by the writers of Young Poland (1890–1914) which were full of oneiric and visionary elements, especially in its early stage, which in the Polish tradition was called Modernism (1890–1900). We could name here such works as Stanisław Przybyszewski’s *Requiem aeternam* and his other essays, the early poetry of Bolesław Leśmian, the poems and dramas of Tadeusz Miciński and other Young Poland poets, Stanisław Wyspiański’s play *The Wedding*, and Waclaw Berent’s *Próchno* (Rotten Wood).<sup>252</sup>

Such a perspective is to some extent legitimate, but it inevitably must remain very general. We would be in a similar situation if we attempted to demonstrate that various psychological ideas appearing in the 19th-century tradition of Polish psychology and psychiatry – for example, the ideas of Bronisław Natanson (1821–1896) and Edward Józef Abramowski (1868–1918) – anticipated (or equaled) Freud’s theory just because they contained the concept of the unconscious (or the “sub-conscious”), and accorded it an important place in human mental life. Comparing these diverging ideas and indicating that they formed a fertile ground for the reception of Freud’s psychoanalysis – as Bartłomiej Dobroczyński does in his book<sup>253</sup> – is justified, but we should remain very cautious when seeking analogies and affinities with the latter. In both cases the devil is in the details. The fact that Polish literature from the turn of the century contained many visionary scenes and the plots of many novels, dramas, or poems seem to be set within a dream (or in some space in-between) allows us to say that it was expressive of the “spirit of the epoch,” the same spirit which defined the context for Freud’s book about dreams. Likewise, the hysterical behavior of the protagonists of Przybyszewski’s essays and novels in some measure partakes in the atmosphere of the times in which Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis was also born (after all, the latter supposedly said that he had written this book to cure himself from hysteria).

But this does not mean that we can speak about a far-reaching affinity between Przybyszewski’s work and Freud’s theory. If we take a closer look at the image of the “naked soul” emerging from Przybyszewski’s essays and novels, we will see that there is a real chasm separating him from the Freudian perspective.<sup>254</sup>

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252 These authors are leading representatives of Young Poland literature (1890–1914), which, invoking the visionary character of Romantic literature, remained in opposition to the literature of Realism and Naturalism.

253 Dobroczyński, *Idea nieświadomości w polskiej myśli psychologicznej przed Freudem*.

254 Karol Irzykowski captured this excellently in a review of *Moi współcześni*: “Freud spreads a net over the complications of life – while Przybyszewski in his dramas, if we treat them as an application of the theory of the naked soul, shows unambiguous,

Przybyszewski's concept of "naked soul," assuming its absolute transparency in its profoundest emotions and thoughts, has nothing in common with the "soul" of a dreaming person in Freud's approach, that is, with the unconscious. If only because there is no direct access to the unconscious and it has to be achieved through deciphering and interpreting the symbolic and visual layer of dreams, daydreams, or symptoms. Using this interpretation, the analyst aims to break the resistance of the dreaming person to recalling various events from his biography and also reach the meaning of the encoded form of this layer, which often takes the shape of a puzzle. Only then may he attempt to read the secrets of the dream. The "sense" of the dream so interpreted has little in common with its direct symbolic and visual layer.

Therefore, the structure of the human "soul" in Freud's writings is much more complex than Przybyszewski assumed. Przybyszewski believed that revealing all the soul's secrets requires only the "shameless" honesty of the writer. For Freud such an approach is sterile, because, contrary to appearances, it is to doomed to remain at the surface of the individual's mental life and ignore the indirect, veiled way in which the unconscious is present. When Przybyszewski says in *Moi współcześni* (My contemporaries) that in his early works he offered a picture of the human soul and sexuality equivalent to the Freudian one, and that it was due only to a whim of fortune that he did not enjoy similar fame, we can only see it as demonstrative of his megalomania.<sup>255</sup>

Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, later called Witkacy and in the 1960s recognized as a world-class writer alongside Bruno Schulz and Witold Gombrowicz, had completely different experiences with psychoanalysis. He was the first Polish writer to be analyzed (in late 1911 and early 1912). Although it was a so-called lay analysis, as we may deduce from the extant records,<sup>256</sup> we may presume that Witkacy learned a lot about the main assumptions of Freud's and Jung's theories, especially the theory of the dream proposed by the former. The therapy was conducted by Dr. Karol de Beaurain, a psychiatrist trained in Switzerland and Germany and who later worked as an assistant in Piltz's Institute at the

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uncomplicated people." Karol Irzykowski, "Pierwszy bilans Przybyszewskiego i jego autorehabilitacja," in: *Pisma rozproszone*, A. Lam, ed., Vol. 2 (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999), pp. 142–143.

255 Stanisław Przybyszewski, *Moi współcześni*, p. 81.

256 Sigmund Freud used this term to describe all forms of psychoanalytic therapy in which the doctor did not strictly adhere to its methodological requirements and freely "enriched" it with his own ideas. See Freud, *The Question of Lay Analysis*.

Jagiellonian University.<sup>257</sup> This physician from Zakopane was fascinated with Freud’s theory at the time and called himself a psychoanalyst, although he did not have any direct contact with the Viennese community (or at least we do not know anything about them).

Witkacy was sent to this new type of therapy by his father, a friend of de Beaurain, who was worried about the emotional distress of his son and his recurring depressive states. It seems that the therapy was not very helpful to the future writer. Witkacy himself was very skeptical of it and complained later that for some strange reason de Beaurain insinuated he suffered from the “embryo complex,” which allegedly prevented him from growing up. And even if de Beaurain did succeed, at least partially, in relieving his patient’s depression, the events which took place slightly later were definitely not conducive to his “recovery.”

They included the suicide of his fiancée, partly provoked by him, in February 1914, and the military service in the Tsarist Pavlovsky Guard Regiment. Serving in this unit, Witkacy fought on the front line (he was severely wounded in the Battle of Stokhod) and in 1917 was an eyewitness to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and the bloody events accompanying it. So he definitely “grew up” and became mentally independent from his father, but the price was that his tendency towards depression increased, which was reflected in his constant obsession with suicide, which he repeatedly mentioned in his letters.

But let us return to the diagnosis of the “embryo complex.” It must have been de Beaurain’s own idea, for this term does not appear in the writings of Freud or his students. And even if Witkacy laughed it away, there was undoubtedly a grain of truth in it. De Beaurain clearly wanted to make his patient aware that he had a complex of his authoritarian father, Stanisław Witkiewicz,<sup>258</sup> which prevented him from becoming fully independent mentally and artistically.

This is evidenced by Witkacy’s later desperate attempts to emphasize his separateness from his father. One such attempt was military service, when after the outbreak of the war, against the will of his father, as a supporter of Piłsudski (and automatically also of the Polish alliance with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy), he went to Saint Petersburg and joined the Tsarist regiment. This seemingly crazy idea was quite in the style of the future writer. Another eloquent gesture was

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257 So he had to know Nunberg, Nelken, and other young psychoanalytically oriented staff of this faculty. See my comment on this subject in this book, pp. 72–73.

258 Stanisław Witkiewicz (1851–1915) was an outstanding modernist art critic, painter, and architect, creator of the so-called Zakopane style. At the turn of the 20th century, several villas were built according to his designs in Zakopane, then a famous resort, and a meeting place for the Polish aristocracy and the intellectual and artistic elite.

assuming the pseudonym “Witkacy,” thus finding the “signifying” which clearly emphasized his separateness from his father on the symbolic level. Importantly, this “signifying” was suggested to him by no other than de Beaurain, who hoped that this would help the patient overcome his “embryo complex.” The aptness of this ingenious pseudonym consisted of the fact that it was composed of the initial part of the surname (“Witk” and final part of the second name “Ignacy” [“acy”]). So the “lay” Zakopane psychoanalyst willy-nilly became a symbolic father for the future writer, the guarantor of his mental and creative autonomy.

Psychoanalytical therapy with de Beaurain certainly influenced Witkacy’s later writings, although in an indirect way. We know that during the therapy “Boren” delivered a kind of lecture on the assumptions of Freud’s theory and obviously the sessions must have concentrated on interpreting Witkacy’s dreams. This interest in the world of dreams was certainly in tune with the atmosphere of the era (as I have already said), but at the same time the future writer must have been interested in the emphasis on the absurd form of dream imagery in Freud’s theory, the linguistic idiosyncrasies of their narratives and the technique of free association. This influence was later reflected in some assumptions of Witkacy’s theory of Pure Form in art and in the structure of the world of his dramas and novels.

In 1912, clearly under the influence of the therapy, Witkacy started to note down his dreams and tried to interpret them in his own way. This is evidenced in his letters to Helena Czerwijowska, the great love of his youth, to whom he writes about them directly. In one of them he says:

When de Beaurain à propos a dream asked me about my attitude to you, I told him something like this: She is the only woman with whom I would be happy in the deepest sense of this word. Why does fate persecute me by making this woman black, and even if everything looked different, if she reciprocated my feelings, I could at best make her the most unhappy of women. When walking (quite recently) through a forest I thought with certain bitterness, why am I unable to love anyone? And suddenly I thought about you, that you are the only one I could really love. And again I saw that black hair and those black eyes of yours and I thought that there was some terrible curse hovering above me. Some awful masquerade, confusion of souls and wigs. A problem both profound and also a hair-styling one. And your eyes seemed to me extremely close and cursed forever. These things were there from the very beginning. I allow you to burst out laughing here, for it is partly worth it.<sup>259</sup>

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259 Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, *Listy I*, Tomasz Pawlak, ed. (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 2013), p. 206.

This suggests that de Beaurain treated the dreams recounted by Staś during their therapeutic sessions – clearly trying to imitate Freud in this matter – as a starting point for asking questions about the attitude of the young patient to persons appearing in the dreams. Even when it meant talking about very intimate issues.

Another testimony, this time indirect, are notes from dreams made by Bronisław Malinowski in his *Dzienniki zakopiańskie* [Zakopane diaries], clearly under the influence of Staś, and frequent allusions to the figure of “Boren” in the comments to the dreams and to some social events in Zakopane.<sup>260</sup> But more about this below.

Although Witkacy ridiculed de Beaurain’s diagnosis for a long time (on the other hand, he proudly told the women who posed for portraits painted by him that he “went through analysis” in his youth, which inspired an almost religious awe in them), a true friendly bond must have developed between them. This is indicated in Witkacy’s letter in which, devastated by his fiancée’s suicide, he informs de Beaurain about his decision to go with Bronisław Malinowski on a research trip to Australia:

Every moment is an unbearable torment. I am worthless. As a human I discredited myself. As an artist I destroyed myself. Now I took up an obligation to cure myself through traveling. But this kills what has remained of me. Anything beautiful that I see is like the most terrible poison. Why can’t *she* see it, why did I waste her and the most beautiful love that has ever existed. I do not idealize it through death. I was unable to value myself. Because I was worthless. Now I have only love for her and only hate for myself. Death must come sooner or later, for it is impossible to bear this terrible torment for long.<sup>261</sup>

You write such words only to a close friend. Later, towards the end of the 1930s, Witkacy was to change his opinion about therapy with de Beaurain and in *Niemyte dusze* he expressed his gratitude for initiating him into the mysteries of psychoanalysis.<sup>262</sup>

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260 Bronisław Malinowski mentions this in his memoirs of his stay in Zakopane in October 1912. See: *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2002), pp. 143–292.

261 From a letter of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz to Karol de Beaurain, 18–24 June, 2014.

262 See Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, *Narkotyki - Niemyte dusze*, Anna Micińska, ed. (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1975). In this book, published after World War II, Witkacy makes a critical assessment of the cultural awareness of Polish society from a psychoanalytic perspective.

## 5 Exuberant libido in the Zakopane dreams of Bronisław Malinowski

Witkacy decided to go to Australia at Malinowski's behest, as Malinowski saw that his friend was devastated. Therefore, he recruited him as a photographer and draftsman in his research team traveling to New Guinea (and probably paying a lot of money for his company). Witkacy's friendship with Malinowski had started much earlier. In Malinowski's *Diary*, Staś is one of the main figures up to 1914.<sup>263</sup> Witkacy is particularly visible in Malinowski's *Zakopane Diaries*, which cover his life in Zakopane between September 1911 and January 1913, the time when "Staś" was undergoing psychoanalytical therapy with Dr. de Beaurain (September–October 1912). It is hard to imagine that Malinowski had no knowledge of it, especially because they both knew "Boren" well, being members of the Folklore Section of the Tatra Society founded in 1911.

In addition, Malinowski's notes clearly show that he adopted the "method" of taking down dreams from Staś, and this must have been connected with what de Beaurain suggested to his patient as an element of psychoanalytical therapy based on the recommendations of Freud himself. In an entry from August 11, 1912, Malinowski wrote: "Tonight I decided to recall the dreams according to Staś's recipe and I really dreamt a whole number of them."<sup>264</sup>

Other fragments suggest that their conversations revolved around Freud's book on dreams, or at least around some concepts from that book, which Staś probably borrowed from "Boren." Here is an example: "Staś about dreams: muffled, unpleasant complexes show up. *Muttterkomplex* [mother complex] [...] – And then a few words about dreams again. [...] – Tonight some immeasurably complicated dream. I dream that I wrote down a dream and I see the page in front of me; before that some long room; I dispose of something; some bald guy, the host, disturbs me in my writing...."<sup>265</sup>

In another letter Malinowski writes: "I tell a dream to Staś: does Irenka appear in it because I spent a lot of time with her and then *suddenly cut off?* [in English in the original] or substitution; did I like her?"<sup>266</sup> More generally, it is striking that since August 1912, or the period when Witkacy was analyzed by de Beaurain, numerous accounts of dreams suddenly appear in Malinowski's diary, some of them with strongly erotic content. For example: "Today: erotic dream,

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263 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*.

264 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, p. 160.

265 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, p. 232.

266 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, p. 229.

wet (with Borain's complex), I am lying; breasts and sexual organs à la Naosia; a jolly brunette. Some clouds in the shape of battle torpedoes, quick. Erekmán Shehm [?] having an affair where there is some awful tragedy with these cyclone winds. A huge museum, some stone idols. Borowiecki, who has been studying all this for an hour from an armchair and understands nothing, explains everything to me."<sup>267</sup> It could not be more clear: "wet dream (with Borain's complex)." Of course, he means de Beaurain and his obsessive search for complexes (of the embryo?) in his patients. What is more, the name of another well-known Polish psychiatrist appears here, namely Borowiecki, an ardent follower of Freudian psychoanalysis, who specialized in interpreting dreams. Here he is the person supposed to explain to Malinowski the sense of his dream.<sup>268</sup>

And to crown it all, a dream about Irena Solska: "At dawn (Tuesday) a dream about Solska: I am lying on her; realizing that I don't love her and don't like her; she says: never mind, I know you don't like me, but that's even better; I rub against her and I smell of a dog, from the outside (a memory of number 69 Hotel Royal?), I spurt; I have a sense that what I am doing is unethical, perfidious, and also that I don't like Solska – I don't even have the artificially induced lust stemming from disgust and perversion."<sup>269</sup>

Naturally, as it has been established (probably) beyond any doubt, in those years Malinowski did not know Freud's works; he began to study him intensely only in the 1920s. Information on his theory, on his book about dreams and on his method of therapy where records of dreams play a crucial role, probably came from "Boren" and Staś. And it was almost certainly a haphazard knowledge. But there is no doubt that what the later professor and world-famous anthropologist took down in *Dziennik zakopiański* from his dreams in the years when he was on the threshold of a great career, casts much light on the "corners" of his mental life: on the force of his exuberant libido, on his dramatic love experiences, sexual obsessions, profound dilemmas, and depressions. But above all, it perfectly fits the Young Poland atmosphere of the time, when alongside the works of Wundt

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267 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, p. 242.

268 The editor of the book mistakenly considers Borowiecki to be fictitious from the dream. But Borowiecki – Stefan Borowiecki – was a real-life person, a psychiatrist fascinated by psychoanalysis, working at that time as an assistant at Piltz's faculty the Jagiellonian University. Incidentally, it is also wrong to say that de Beaurain was the first Polish psychoanalyst. At the time there were at least several: Jekels, Nunberg, Sokolnicka, Baumgarten, Karpińska (who also spent some time in Zakopane), Radecki, and Nelken.

269 Malinowski, *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu*, p. 226.

and Simml the young future genius of world ethnology read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as well as Polish Modernism: Tadeusz Miciński (*Bazyliśsa z Teofanu*) and Jerzy Źuławski (the novel *Eros i Psyche*). But there was also Romantic literature, especially the visionary poems and dramas of Juliusz Słowacki. And looming somewhere on the horizon was the theory of dreams postulated by a mysterious Jew from Vienna about whom Staś and de Beaurain had told him.