

# Apolitical Science?

Wilhelm Reich  
and Psychoanalysis  
in National  
Socialism

An abridged ver-  
sion (2023)

*by Andreas Peglau*

Please cite as: Peglau, Andreas (2023): **Apolitical Science? Wilhelm Reich and Psychoanalysis in National Socialism. *An abridged version*** (<https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/apolitical-science-wilhelm-reich-and-psychoanalysis-in-national-socialism-an-abridged-version-2023>)

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## Introduction

In 2013, my dissertation "[Unpolitische Wissenschaft? Wilhelm Reich und die Psychoanalyse im Nationalsozialismus](#)" was first published as a book. In 2015, the second edition followed and in 2017, the Psychosozial-Verlag Gießen brought it out in a third and expanded edition.

In a review, philosopher Werner Abel described it as "one of the most important books on the history of psychoanalysis, making its decline from a socially critical theory and practice to a medicalised, *supposedly* 'apolitical' science comprehensible in detail for the first time.". The psychoanalyst Bernd Nitzschke stated: "The interweaving between the fate of psychoanalysis in the Nazi state and the history of Wilhelm Reich's exclusion, persecution and emigration, which Peglau meticulously reconstructs, is the lynchpin of the book, which is an indispensable reference point for anyone who wants to deal with the Nazi history of psychoanalysts without blinkers in the future."

I then compiled some of the most important results of my years of research in 2019 - with the kind permission of Psychosozial Verlag - in an abridged version in the original German. It has since been downloaded several thousand times from my website.

In order to make this information even more widely available, I have now supplemented and updated the text and translated it into English with the help of [DeepL](#).

I am very grateful to *Philip Bennett*, who spent a great deal of time not only reading the entire text, making numerous corrections, and providing me with additional information, to *Jairus Banaji*, who also carefully read my translation and gave me important notes, and to *Loren Balhorn*, who corrected an essential passage.

If the text still contains translation errors, I am the one responsible - and would like to have such errors pointed out. For this purpose (and for other feedbacks) please use: [info@andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de](mailto:info@andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de)

This abridged version cannot replace reading the nearly 700 pages of the book. In particular, the voluminous information on the life and work of Wilhelm Reich<sup>1</sup> could only be integrated here to a very limited extent. But it offers a good introduction to some of the main contents of the book.

I hope this text will stimulate further research. This is urgently needed to revive the original potential of psychoanalysis as a critical social science. Not only was this potential displaced during the Nazi era: This displacement continues to a large extent - until today.

*Andreas Peglau*, Pasewalk, April 2023

### P.S.

Here you find the [table of contents](#), [preface](#) and [index of persons](#) of the book "Unpolitische Wissenschaft?" (2017).

Its complete list of sources and references can be read here: <https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Quellen-und-Literatur-Peglau-Unpolitische-Wissenschaft-Wilhelm-Reich-und-die-Psychoanalyse-im-Nationalsozialismus-Psychosozial-Verlag-Gie%C3%9Fen-2017.pdf>

The bulk of the literature included in the abridged version is noted there. Insofar as I have consulted *additional* sources for the abridged version, these are listed at the end of it.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/category/english-section-translated-articles-and-other/>; <https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/category/geschichte-reich/>

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# 1. Collaboration instead of "liquidation": A summary



Figure 1. Berlin, 1937: "Freud's picture now hung on the wall of the Institute again; however, next to the picture of the Führer" (quotation: Otto Fenichel, photo composition: A.P.)

## Long-standing myths

To this day, the opinion is still widely held, even in professional circles, that Freud's name, his findings, and the terms he created were only allowed to be mentioned publicly in a disparaging manner in Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945.

In 2010, for example, the prominent French psychoanalyst and historian Elisabeth Roudinesco wrote that the analytical vocabulary was "eradicated in the *Third Reich*: The words of psychoanalysis are in a sense 'annihilated' even before the application of the programme of the Final Solution" (Roudinesco 2011, p. 29, fn 26). Six years earlier, in the *Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, she and Michel Plon had claimed that National Socialism "in its programme" - it remains unclear what is meant - "envisaged the radical annihilation of psychoanalysis or its concepts, works, institutions, movement and therapists", an "extermination programme of psychoanalysis" had been carried out (Roudinesco/Plon 2004, p. 712). Lothar Bayer and Hans-Martin Lohmann (2006, p. 277), in the *Freud Handbook*, wrote that Freud's reception in Germany had "effectively come to a standstill since 1933 as a result of the 'cultural break' that the victory of National Socialism signified". Tilmann J. Elliger (1986, p. 145) referred to a "practical ban on all psychoanalytic publishing". "Henceforth" it was no longer possible,

"to quote psychoanalytical works - except in a critical and rejecting sense. Accordingly, reviews of Freudian works in German journals abruptly ceased in 1933, and psychoanalytic works disappeared from the German book market".

Regine Lockot (2002, p. 8) claimed in 1985 in the standard work - reprinted in 2002 - *Erinnern und Durcharbeiten. Zur Geschichte der Psychoanalyse und Psychotherapie im Nationalsozialismus* (Remembering and Working Through. On the History of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy under National Socialism): "Psychoanalytic terminology was no longer allowed to be used".

In 1976, the influential French analyst Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel and her colleague Béla Grunberger expressed the view that "in totalitarian systems, be they right-wing or left-wing", "the practice and dissemination of psychoanalysis is forbidden" (Grunberger/Chasseguet-Smirgel 1979, p. 60f.).

As early as 1963, Helmut Thomä (1963a, p. 44f.) had written that "psychoanalytic publications ceased in 1933" and "authors [...] who remained in Berlin [...] could no longer publicly represent Freud's views. Psychoanalytic terminology was frowned upon".

The starting point for such views, of which many other examples can be found, are probably the accounts of analysts who had themselves been involved in the events of the *Third Reich*.

Felix Boehm, who was elected president of the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft (DPG) in 1933, reported in retrospect: "Since Freud was only allowed to be quoted critically - if at all", he had to make do with the phrase "as a friend of mine once said" (quoted in Lockot 2002, p. 117). And another major player of the time, the long-time president of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA), Ernest Jones, described "the 'liquidation' of psychoanalysis in the German Reich" in 1957 as

"one of the few deeds that Hitler completely succeeded in doing. In retrospect, one must marvel at how it was possible to so completely erase the knowledge of Freud and his work that was so widespread in Germany" (Jones 1984, vol. 3, p. 222).

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, in fact all the cited generalizations about the suppression of analysis make it difficult to look at the Nazi period. The reason is: They all are mistaken.

Bernd Nitzschke (2013, p. 117) notes:

"If Jones was right in his account, it would no longer be necessary to ask about the policy towards the Nazi regime pursued by the representatives of psychoanalysis *after* 1934. For there would no longer have been any psychoanalysis at all."<sup>2</sup>

Elisabeth Brainin and Isidor J. Kaminer also argued that "the denial in some accounts" went so far as "to declare psychoanalysis dead during the Nazi period in order not to have to see how much it had put itself at the service of the ruling ideology" (Brainin/Kaminer 1982, p. 1001).

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<sup>2</sup> The contemporary witness and analyst Franz Baumeier has already contradicted Jones' statement and pointed out that psychoanalysis was hindered in its application, but not liquidated (Baumeier 1971, pp. 205ff.). Käthe Dräger (1994, pp. 43, 52), another contemporary witness, first formulates that psychoanalysis was "destroyed", then that it was "buried, but [...] not completely dead". Michael Schröter (2023, pp. 571-717) essentially confirms my findings, also adds the knowledge in many ways, but comes to a less critical assessment overall (ibid., p. 667, fn. 493).

## What was the reality?

During the Berlin book burning on 10 May 1933, the Freudian „School“ was given its own "Fire slogan" – banishing spells proclaimed while the books were thrown into the fire. Freud and his teachings were also subjected to verbal attacks, some of which seemed hateful (Brecht et al. 1985, pp. 86-90, 103).<sup>3</sup>

There is also evidence that the continued existence of the analytical organization DPG was threatened in the first year of the Nazi dictatorship (Brecht et al. 1985, pp. 103ff.) and that [the well-known Swiss analyst C. G. Jung](#) hastened to publish a vigorous attack on the allegedly Jewish, "un-Germanic" psychoanalysis (*Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, 1933, vol. 6, p. 139, 1934, vol. 7, p. 9).

The psychiatrist and declared opponent of psychoanalysis, Oswald Bumke, continued his fundamental, yet matter-of-fact criticism of Freud, C. G. Jung and Alfred Adler after 1933 (e.g. Bumke 1938; 1941, pp. 205-221).

Other doctors do not seem to have given up hope of consigning Freud's work, or at least its allegedly Jewish components, to oblivion (Brecht et al. 1985, p. 172).

Considering that we are dealing here with a period of *twelve years* and that psychoanalysis, according to general understanding, belonged to the enemy images of National Socialism, only a relatively small number of public attacks on psychoanalysis have been cited in accounts of the history of psychoanalysis, mostly from the early years of the *Third Reich*.<sup>4</sup>

None of these slanderings were written by a higher Nazi functionary.

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<sup>3</sup> Thus on 14.5.1933, i.e. four days after the Berlin book burning, in detail in the journal *Berliner Börsenzeitung*. Under the headline "Wider die Psychoanalyse" (Against Psychoanalysis) it argued, among other things, that the "poor" Freudian view was expressed in particular in its false, disparaging "attitude towards religious experience". In the *Deutsche Volksgesundheit aus Blut und Boden* (German public health from blood and soil) of August/September 1933, one could read on page 15 about *The Psychoanalysis of the Jew Freud* that it took away the last ethical support of the patients and pushed them down "into the Asian world view 'Enjoy, because tomorrow you will be dead'". Freud, it went on, was worthy of joining "the other Jewish efforts to strike the Nordic race at its most sensitive point, the sexual life", he had a "dirty fantasy", interpreted sexuality "already in the child's soul", had only invented the concept of the unconscious "in order to kill the voice of conscience that stirs in Nordic man at onanism and extramarital intercourse".

Also in 1933, the Nazi pathologist Martin Staemmler, later a consultant in the "Rassenpolitisches Amt" (Essner 2002, p. 74), claimed that psychoanalysis drew "every spiritual impulse, every naughtiness of the child into the sexual sphere". He approvingly quoted the Chemnitz paediatrician Kurt Oxenius (personal information from Thomas Lennert, 20.5.2014) with the assertion that for psychoanalysts the human being "consists only of a sexual organ [...] around which the body vegetates" (Staemmler 1933, p. 207).

In *Deutsche Volksgesundheit aus Blut und Boden* of July 1934 (pp. 10-11), a Dr. Horst W. Raensch defamed in the article "Die Rolle des Juden in der Medizin. Jude und Onanie" (The role of the Jew in medicine. Jew and onanism), he extensively defamed Magnus Hirschfeld and Max Hodann, then also listed Freud ("who considers onanism in infants possible, even natural"), Stefan Zweig, Otto Weininger, Ernst Toller, Leonard Frank, Georg Manes, who "contribute to corrupting the youth of our people".

For Heinz Hunger, a theologian and expert on youth sexuality who was respected in the *Third Reich* (and later in the Federal Republic of Germany too), psychoanalysis in 1938 was "nothing other than the rape of Western culture" (quoted in Herzog 2005, p. 30). "Psychoanalysts and doctors - 'mostly of Jewish origin' - who stood up for the rights of homosexuals were called 'pimps under scientific cover'; experts in sex education influenced by psychoanalysis were declared 'Jewish sex criminals'", adds historian Dagmar Herzog (ibid.).

<sup>4</sup> This finding is also in line with the additional evidence published by Michael Schröter (2023, pp. 667-715) in the meantime. In order to substantiate the treatment of psychoanalysis in the Nazi state with original sources, reference is often made to the documents (some of which were already mentioned in Zapp 1980) reproduced in Brecht et al. (1985, especially pp. 86-90), for example in Cocks (1997); Goggin/Goggin (2001); Lockot (2002, pp. 138ff.); Roudinesco/Plon (2004, pp. 712f.); Herzog (2005, p. 30); Zaretsky (2006, p. 323). The study *Die Rezeption der Psychoanalyse im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Reception of Psychoanalysis in the German Language Area), published by Johannes Creme-rius in 1981, essentially ends for Germany in 1933, for Austria in 1938.



## New sources



*Figure 2. One of the storage boxes for Wilhelm Reich's estate in the Boston Archives (photo A. Peglau 2012)*

In order to arrive at more comprehensive findings, I have included a large number of documents, primarily from German archives.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, in 2012 I was one of the first European researchers to examine Wilhelm Reich's sealed archive, which was opened to scholars in 2007. It is part of the materials of the Archives of the Orgone Institute and was until recently stored at the Countway Library of Medicine at the Harvard Medical School.<sup>6</sup>

[In January 2012, I looked through all the documents there that were recognisably related to Reich's time in Berlin, to psychoanalysis, and to his publications critical of fascism up to 1946.](#)

In addition, I particularly accessed contemporary psychotherapeutic literature, various biographies and historiographical research literature. A large part of these sources had not been evaluated at all before, or at least not in connection with the history of psychoanalysis.

## Necessary corrections to the image of psychoanalysis

One of the most important findings that emerged from my research is that psychoanalysis, psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic literature were far more integrated into the Nazi system than psychoanalysts of the time were inclined to admit in retrospect or still mostly assume or claim today. The measures directed against psychoanalysis and its writings were accordingly also far less severe.

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<sup>5</sup> Thus, among others, from the Federal Archives Berlin and the Archives on the History of Psychoanalysis stored in the Federal Archives Koblenz. Other documents used in my work come from the Berlin State Archive, the political archive of the Foreign Office in Berlin, the house archive of the German Library in Leipzig, the Willy Brandt Archive in Bonn, the archive of the Socialist Workers' Party SAP, the archive of the Memorial to German Resistance, the Bertolt Brecht Archive in Berlin, the Brandenburg State Archive, the Russian State Archive for Socio-Political History (RGASPI) in Moscow and several private archives.

<sup>6</sup> Since 2021, the [Wilhelm Reich Museum has regained physical control over this archive stock.](#)

Only a very small part of psychoanalysis (and also of [Alfred Adler's individual psychology](#)) was consistently suppressed, namely its openly socially critical, especially "left-wing" orientation. In contrast, substantial parts of *therapeutic* analytic knowledge were tolerated by Nazi officials and even used pragmatically - especially at the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy (DIPFP), the so-called "Göring Institute" (Peglau 2017a, pp. 468-484).

Not only in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, the decisive journal for psychotherapists working within Germany, did it remain possible to speak appreciatively of "psychoanalysis" - of "depth psychology" anyway - and to use central analytical terms such as "transference", "projection" and "libido" without distancing oneself from them (ibid. pp. 351-410). The fact that it was not taboo to mention analysis in a positive way outside of the professional media is even documented by the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the leading organ of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP).

If psychoanalysts became victims of the Nazi system, it was never because they were psychoanalysts, but because of their Jewish origins or in a very few cases, because of resistant, especially politically "left-wing" statements or activities. At least 23 of them died as a direct or indirect result of Nazi terror (Brecht et al. 1985, pp. 76-85; Th. Mueller 2000, p. 6; Hermanns 2001, p. 46; Kaufhold 2001, p. 268; [Peglau 2011](#); Kaufhold/ Hristeva 2021<sup>7</sup>).

Direct acts of resistance were admittedly just as rare among analysts as among other professional groups: Eight psychoanalysts or persons in training to become psychoanalysts were shown to be involved (Peglau 2017a, pp. 451-455).

[Between 1933 and 1941, in the thousands of articles, reviews, communications, books, and other publications by psychoanalysts that appeared worldwide, there was no critical-analytical treatment of fascism whatsoever; indeed, even brief mentions of Hitler or the Nazi system remained extremely rare.](#) (ibid., pp. 246-266). The *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*, published in 1933 by Wilhelm Reich, and several articles he wrote for his exile journal remained the only exception until 1941.<sup>8</sup> Already in 1933 Reich was expelled from the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) not least *because* of his openly anti-fascist commitment (ibid., pp. 295-299).

The institutions of psychoanalysis, which had once emphasized their enlightening function, failed for years to deal with the phenomenon of "fascism" in any way.

The Nazi system, on the other hand, benefited from the IPA's course of adaptation accommodation might be better as well as from several German "Freudians," some of them prominent, and from various Freudian insights.<sup>9</sup>

As the story of John Rittmeister, executed for high treason in 1943, shows, resistance and collaboration could coincide in one and the same person: Rittmeister's name was also under the "diagnosis scheme" created by the DIPFP, which stigmatised up to 15 percent of patients, through which they could become victims of sterilization and that mass murder for which the Nazis used the misleading term "euthanasia."

<sup>7</sup> Here one can find numerous, previously unpublished biographical information, also on lesser-known Jewish Nazi victims from the circle of analysts, especially pp. 9, 33-53.

<sup>8</sup> It was not until 1941 that Erich Fromm (1989a, pp. 338-357) became the first analyst after Reich to take a more detailed public stand: he devoted a chapter of his book *Escape from Freedom* to the "Psychology of Nazism". But Fromm, too, had long since become a "dissident" who could no longer be counted among the mainstream of psychoanalysis.

<sup>9</sup> Colin Kaggel (2020) found only "isolated" openly anti-Semitic clichés in the analytic publications of the time (ibid., p. 107), but attests that the analysts who remained in Germany "adopted concepts of the German Volksgemeinschaft," (German People's Community) the Nazi concept of "work," and "sexist as well as racial hygienic postulates" (ibid., p. 109). Psychoanalysis was no longer seen primarily as a "healing of social suffering" by means of therapeutic relationship, but above all as a "re-education or post-education method in the sense of the Third Reich" (ibid., p. 104). The neuroses opposing this, but also the neurotics themselves, were therefore often perceived as a kind of "enemies of the people" (ibid., p. 109f.).



So with this „diagnosis scheme“, the analysts involved abetted Nazi atrocities. At least from the later co-founder of the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Vereinigung (DPV), Ingeborg Kath and the "wild analyst" J. H. Schultz, there are also self-testimonies that prove a direct participation in the "euthanasia" crimes (ibid., pp. 478-480).

Why, then, should the concerned Nazi officials have consistently outlawed the findings, written material or vocabulary of a scientific discipline that (albeit deprived of essential content) turned out to be quite usable for the purposes of the Hitler state?

### Exception and bearer of hope: Wilhelm Reich



The only psychoanalyst who was expelled from Prussia in 1933, then also from Germany, and expatriated in 1939 because of his political involvement was Wilhelm Reich (ibid., pp. 328-338). He was also the only psychoanalyst who publicly warned his colleagues - albeit in vain - not to get involved with the Nazi system.

[At the end of 1930 he had moved from Vienna to Berlin.](#) Here he immediately joined the KPD and soon [moved up to the governing body of a mass sexual-political organisation close to the KPD.](#) At the beginning of March 1933, a few weeks after Hitler came to power, Reich had to flee Germany. The published reports on his activities in the intervening two and a half years are decidedly incomplete and often erroneous. The additions I have been able to make to them force a re-evaluation of Wilhelm Reich: as one of the most important representatives, users and further developers of Freudian teachings - both with regard their social-critical and to [their therapeutic aspects.](#)

Figure 3: Wilhelm Reich. (Photo: Ludwig Gutman, murdered on 18.4.1943 in the Theresienstadt ghetto.)

With his public anti-fascist commitment and his social analysis, as formulated in *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*, Reich occupied a positive special position among Freud's followers. If psychoanalysts had dealt constructively with Reich's insights and questions instead of marginalising and slandering him, this would have considerably increased the chances of continuing to pursue an enlightened psychoanalysis - also a psychoanalysis *against* fascism.

What I have summarized so far I will further explain in more detail.

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## 2. Burnt psychoanalysis: blanket ban, four directly affected authors

### 10 May 1933, Berlin

Shortly after the National Socialists came to power, there were indeed increasing signs of an expected threat to psychoanalysis in Germany. The most dramatic event in this respect occurred in Berlin at the beginning of May.

More or less spontaneous book burnings, mostly as a side effect of SA (Sturmabteilung = Storm Department) and SS (Schutzstaffel = Protection squadron) terror, took place as early as March 1933. By October of that year, there is evidence of more than 100 acts of burning in 85 German cities (Treß 2011, p. 40f.). Most of these were organised by the Hitler Youth and were directed against undesirable stocks of school libraries (Treß 2008a, pp. 14ff., 2008b, pp. 52-58). But the Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur, led by [Nazi "chief ideologist" Alfred Rosenberg](#), various Nazi organizations as well as local groups of the NSDAP also appeared as sponsors of the extermination actions (Treß 2008a, p. 24).

From April 1933, National Socialist students too participated with a defamation and destruction concept: the action "Wider den undeutschen Geist!" (Against the Un-German Spirit!). The German Student Body (DSt), which was closely linked to the SA, apparently also wanted to demonstrate its own significance in a spectacular way (Treß 2008a, p. 53, 2003, p. 61ff.). The DSt leadership named 10 May 1933 as the date for the main act and climax of the four-week campaign, and Berlin as the venue.

Before the central action of the book burning began that evening, the philosopher and educator [Alfred Baeumler](#) held his inaugural lecture as newly appointed professor of political education at Berlin University (Treß 2003, p. 117). The sentences he addressed to the students at the end may also have referred to Sigmund Freud:

"You are now going out to burn books in which a spirit foreign to us has used the German word to fight us [...]. What we dismiss from ourselves today are toxins that have accumulated in the time of a false toleration. It is our task to let the German spirit in us become so powerful that such substances can no longer accumulate" (ibid., p. 118).



Soon after, thousands of onlookers, professors in gowns, Nazi students and delegations from the SA, SS, „Burschenschaften“ and Hitler Youth gathered on Berlin's Opernplatz, brightly lit by spotlights and framed by the buildings of Berlin University, the Royal Library, Hedwigskirche and the Berlin Opera.

*Figure 4. Today's (August-)Bebel-, former Opernplace, site of the Berlin book burning (photo: Gudrun Peters 2007).*

## „Fire slogans“

Against this background, which is as rich in history as it is in culture, the main act began around 11:30 pm, and the Fire slogans („Feuersprüche“) were declaimed. These spells had been prescribed the day before by the DSt leadership in a circular letter.

All the Feuersprüche were divided into two parts. In the first line, one learned what the slogan was directed against: "class struggle", "betrayal", "mindless loutishness", etc. In the fourth line, dedicated to psychoanalysis, it said: "Against soul-sucking overestimation of instinctual life". If one looks at the slogans as a whole, in which quite different fields as well as 15 journalists, scientists, writers and publishers, some of whom were little known, are listed, the impression is reinforced: knowledge was required for these formulations that must have exceeded the normal level of (Nazi-) student general education.

The second line in each case added what one had to be for instead. This had "national" references throughout - "Volksgemeinschaft", "deutscher Volksggeist" (national community, German national spirit) and the like were named - with the exception of slogan four. For here the second line read: "For the nobility of the human soul". In contrast to the other enemies, psychoanalysis was thus assessed as a *global* risk: namely, as a risk to the human soul itself. Its insights, it seems to have been known here, did not stop at (German) national or language borders; the "decomposition" potential of analysis threatened fundamental - patriarchal, authoritarian, emotionally suppressive - norms on which National Socialism was also based.

The assessment of psychoanalysis as a risk could actually conceal an indirect recognition of its enlightening and therapeutic possibilities. For the fact that the National Socialists, who were responsible for the burning of books, demanded for human nobility of soul can perhaps be understood in this way: The destructive personality structures of those who created a social framework that suited them in the form of the *Third Reich*, Italian fascism and similar regimes were not to be unmasked - or even cured - by analytical insights.

Eight of the nine slogans referred to specific persons whose works were to be burned: from "Marx, Kautsky" (slogan one) to Heinrich Mann, Erich Kästner and others to "Tucholsky, Osietzky" (slogan nine). Accompanied by *slogan four*, however, according to the DSt circular, the following was to be thrown into the fire: "Freudian school, *Imago* journal".

This meant that, for once, no individual author was condemned to symbolic death by fire. Rather, the *entire Freudian school* of science and therapy, including its publications - books as well as journals - was targeted.

This is all the more remarkable because at least Marx and Kautsky also had "schools" and organisations behind them: the Marxist and socialist movements respectively. But here a corresponding expansion was omitted when naming writings to be destroyed.

Was it to avoid frustrating the more socialist-oriented supporters in their own ranks? This could point to "Fire slogan" authors who not only had a high degree of political consciousness in the sense of the Nazi state, but perhaps also belonged to the "left" NSDAP wing themselves.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that it was the journal *Imago* that had been chosen now certainly proves a certain competence in matters of analysis: Since this *Journal for the application of psychoanalysis to the humanities and natural sciences* had the widest range of topics among the analytical periodicals, it could also be assumed that it had the greatest public impact beyond the medical profession.

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<sup>10</sup> It is possible to identify the four people who come into question as the decisive initiators of the formulation of the "fire slogans": Peglau 2017a, pp. 193-196.

As can still be traced today on the basis of a preserved audio document,<sup>11</sup> on 10.5.1933 it was then said in fourth place in the "Fire slogans":

"Against soul-destroying overestimation of the instinctual life!  
For the nobility of the human soul!  
I consign to the fire the writings of the school of Sigmund Freud!"

On this evening in Berlin, as planned, the condemnation of the *whole* of psychoanalysis was broadcast throughout Germany. A fact that usually does not appear in the literature that I know of, since the Berlin psychoanalysis slogan - when it is specifically mentioned - is usually presented as follows: "I hand over the writings of Sigmund Freud to the fire!"<sup>12</sup>

Merely cursing Freud by name was probably also deemed insufficient because it would have excluded Wilhelm Reich - who was obviously much more hated by National Socialists than Freud. Reich had meanwhile become - after Freud - the most successful analytical author in the German-speaking world (Peglau 2017a, p. 92f.).

As late as 1935, the Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei = Secret State Police) was to inform the Foreign Office that Reich had "flooded Germany with a great deal of filthy literature in the fight for communism before the National Socialist revolution" (AAA R 99578). The DPG chairman Felix Boehm reported that in the spring of 1933 "tens of thousands of slips of paper were distributed and pasted in public places and streets [...] with the content: 'Protect our youth from Reich's cultural disgrace!'" (Schröter 2005, p. 162).

It was only logical that Reich's writings were soon the target of more Nazi measures than those of all his colleagues, including Sigmund Freud.



Figure 5. „In this place, Nazi evil spirit destroyed German and world literature.“  
The memorial plaque inaugurated in East-Berlin, Bebelplatz in 1983 (photo A. Peglau 2015).

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.dhm.de/archiv/ausstellungen/holocaust/audios/r2/11.mp3>

<sup>12</sup> With the additional deviation of "the flame" instead of "the fire", Mark Edmundson, for example, quotes it this way in his 2009 book *Sigmund Freud. Das Vermächtnis der letzten Jahre* (The legacy of recent years). He also claims that "the presiding party official" made this "charge in a loud voice" (Edmundson 2009, p. 18). In fact, only several Nazi students apparently acted as criers (Treß 2009, p. 46). Among those who correctly reproduce the slogan in the decisive points are Elisabeth Brainin and Isidor J. Kaminer (1982, p. 991).

## Not only books

In Berlin alone, about 20,000 books burned on 10 May 1933. At the same time, at least 21 other burnings took place in other cities, including Bonn, Dresden, Göttingen, Hanover, Frankfurt am Main and Munich, and later Hamburg, Heidelberg and Cologne, among others (Treß 2003, pp. 116-208).

The fact that psychoanalytic writings were still affected after May 1933 is evidenced by a leaflet distributed in Bretten, near Karlsruhe. There too, in June 1933, the Hitler Youth organised a "week of struggle against filth and trash". On the list of books to be collected, Freud was among those listed under the heading "Political and Scientific Works" (Wild 2003, p. 185).

The total number of books destroyed in 1933 can scarcely be estimated. On 20.5.1933, the Berlin police informed the press that they had confiscated "about 10000 hundredweight of books and periodicals". According to historian Werner Treß, this "probably corresponds to about one million volumes" (Treß 2008b, p. 126f.).

The question of *which* books were destroyed will also never be answered exactly, since the titles recorded on the "black lists" of undesirable literature only formed the core stock of burned books. Not only were many additional "indexes" used (Treß 2003, p. 104f.), creativity was also demanded of those involved. The DSt circular of 9 May 1933 suggestively stated that the fact that individual books were specified as particularly worthy of destruction did not rule out "that a large number of books will nevertheless be burned. The local organisers have every freedom in this" (ibid.).

In the public perception, the main thing that seems ultimately to have been remembered from these events is that novels, poems and other kinds of fictional literature ("Belletristik") was burned. However, the "fire slogans" were by no means limited to writers of the fine arts: publicists as well as political and scientific authors played at least as important a role here. In total, the following were named:

[Karl Marx](#), [Karl Kautsky](#), [Heinrich Mann](#), [Ernst Glaeser](#), [Erich Kästner](#), [Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster](#), [Sigmund Freud](#), [Emil Ludwig](#), [Werner Hegemann](#), [Theodor Wolff](#), [Georg Bernhard](#), [Erich Maria Remarque](#), [Alfred Kerr](#), [Kurt Tucholsky](#), [Carl von Ossietzky](#).

And even the term "*book* burning" is misleading because it is far too narrow. The preparatory letter of the DSt already spoke of "books and writings" (Treß 2009, p. 43). The *Imago* is then only an example of the fact that one also had other printed products in mind - such as "programme publications and periodicals" (ibid., p. 630). Records and other sound carriers as well as music scores had also been thought of by some actors (Treß 2008b, p. 79).

In other acts of incineration, election banners and flags additionally ended up in the fire, also a "doll in the uniform of the red front fighters" as, as the newspaper *Weser-Zeitung* wrote, a "symbolic figure of Bolshevism, the life-destroyer condemned to death" (quoted in Rohdenburg 2008, p. 181). In Berlin, two gymnastics students threw a bust of sexologist [Magnus Hirschfeld](#) into the flames after a "choreographically rehearsed run-up" (Treß 2008b, p. 121).

So it was about much more than books. Walter Schlevogt, leader of the Bonn student body, put it in a nutshell: the goal was "the eradication of all un-German intellectual production" (Bodsch 2008, p. 152). At the funeral pyre on 10 May, [Joseph Goebbels](#), [Head of the Propaganda Ministry](#), also invoked the need to "entrust the unspirit of the past to the flames" (Treß 2003, p. 127).



In an almost magical ritual, it seems, the ideas themselves were to be made to disappear with the materialisations or symbols of these ideas, their work, psychoanalytically speaking, "undone".

## Which psychoanalysts were affected?

In view of the comprehensive claim to destruction that the DSt had formulated with regard to psychoanalysis - "I hand over to the fire the writings of the school of Sigmund Freud!" - one would think that *quite a few* analytical authors would have been affected when the books burned in May 1933.

However, according to the information available, among the approximately 400 authors affected by the destruction of books - including Einstein, Fallada, Feuchtwanger, Gorky, Heinrich Heine, Hemingway, Kästner, Kafka, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, B. Traven and Tucholsky but also Josef Stalin - there were only *four* psychoanalysts:<sup>13</sup> Sigmund Freud, Anna Freud, Wilhelm Reich and Siegfried Bernfeld.

Sigmund Freud's inclusion in the Berlin ritual of 10 May 1933 is attested to by the evidence of the tape. On all the lists of burned authors that I know of, Reich and Bernfeld appear alongside Freud. Most often, but not always, Anna Freud is also named.<sup>14</sup>

Were they selected specifically? If so, why them in particular? And: Why only them?

The answer could be: In the ritual of the burnings, it was enough to destroy the most important representatives of what National Socialists feared and hated most about psychoanalysis in 1933. The two Freuds, Bernfeld and Reich could certainly be considered such representatives.

## Reich's possible burnt writings

In their book pogrom, the German student body tied in with the German "Schund- und Schmutz" legislation - thus with an index on which Wilhelm Reich's *Sexualerregung und Sexualbefriedigung* (Sexual arousal and sexual satisfaction) had also been listed since 1930 (Peglau 2017a, pp. 78-84). This writing could therefore have been burned on 10 May. Likewise, *Der sexuelle Kampf der Jugend* (The Sexual Struggle of Youth) which was attacked in the *Völkischer Beobachter* on March 2, 1933 and *Geschlechtsreife, Enthaltsamkeit, Ehemoral* (Sexual Maturity, Abstinence, Marital Morality), reviled in 1932 in the *Handbuch der Judenfrage* (Handbook of the Jewish Question) (p. 178f.), could have been victims of the flames.

Also most books of Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science were burned. And already due to Reich's cooperation with the doctor and sexual reformer Max Hodann, Reich's books may have been there. It is also possible that the *Charakteranalyse* (Reich 1933a) was burned. The book was published in Vienna soon after Reich's arrival in Copenhagen on 1.5.1933 (Reich 1995, p. 206) and may have been distributed in Germany promptly.

Since the book burnings continued at least until October 1933, it cannot be excluded that one book by Reich which must have been most hated by the German rulers anyway ended up on a Nazi funeral pyre: this was the *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Also affected: writings by the individual psychologists Alfred Adler, Alice Rühle-Gerstel, Otto Rühle, Gina Kaus.

<sup>14</sup> I have not yet succeeded in finding the *original* source in which Anna Freud, Bernfeld and Reich were named as affected by the book burning.

<sup>15</sup> The book appeared in August or September 1933 in Scandinavian exile and was smuggled into Germany in "camouflage editions" (Reich 1986, p. 17; [Peglau 2013](#)).



### 3. „Psychoanalysis endeavours (...) to transform incapable wimps into people who are fit for live". The 1933 "memorandum"

Soon after the National Socialist takeover, driven also by the threat of book burning, functionaries of the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft (German Psychoanalytic Society, DPG) endeavoured to offer analysis to the new regime.

At the request of Felix Boehm, the designated "Aryan" chairman of the DPG, Carl Müller-Braunschweig (soon after also a DPG board member) wrote a "memorandum" in the summer of 1933, according to Boehm, to "describe the previous merits of our institute, to clearly depart from [Wilhelm] Reich's views that had become known in Berlin and to show how Ps[ych]o.A.[nalysis] promotes the valuable sides of every human being" (Brecht et al. 1985, p. 105). Essential passages of this memorandum were then found almost verbatim under the heading "Psychoanalyse und Weltanschauung" (Psychoanalysis and World view) on 22.10.1933 in an article by Müller-Braunschweig in the National Socialist weekly *Der Reichswart*.

But the memorandum already contained - albeit only at the end of a factual eight-page account of the history, present and possible perspectives of the DPG and the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute - formulations about how psychoanalysis could be used under National Socialism (Schröter 2009, p. 9ff.):<sup>16</sup>

"Psychoanalysis endeavours not only - in the physical sphere - to turn sexually incapable people into sexually capable ones, but in general to turn incapable weaklings into viable people in all spheres of the human being, instinct-inhibited people into instinct-secure people, phantasists who are alien to life into people who are able to look reality in the eye, people who are at the mercy of their impulses into people who are able to control their impulses, people who are incapable of love and egoistic into people who are capable of love and sacrifice, and people who are uninterested in the whole of life into servants of the whole."<sup>17</sup>

It is all the more disconcerting to learn the following from Felix Boehm:

"Now I asked [Ernest] Jones as president of the I.P.A. for a meeting. Jones, [IPA board member] van Ophuijsen, Müller-Br.[aunschweig] and I took part in this in The Hague on 1.10.33. [...] the conversation lasted about 6 hours. *Müller-Br. and I told everything we knew so far about the fate of the PsA, including Müller-Br. reading out the memorandum he had written; the conversation led to complete agreement.*

All the steps we had taken up to then were approved by Jones. He promised us<sup>18</sup> the greatest possible encouragement and support and immediately wrote to Anna Freud to this effect. I then received *a letter from Anna Freud dated 17 October*, from which I quote: "[...] *Jones has also already written to me and reported on the very pleasing course of the meeting.* I don't need to tell you that I wish you to overcome all difficulties in the near future" (documented in Brecht et al. 1985, p. 106f.; emphasis A.P.).

Since Boehm's text,<sup>19</sup> from which this quotation comes, is a report written as early as 1934 and probably passed on to the IPA leadership, which the persons named there are also likely to have

<sup>16</sup> A Freud quote from his article „*Psychoanalyse*“ und „*Libidotheorie*“ used in the *Reichswart* was not yet used in the memorandum. Michael Schröter has given me the opportunity to see the original text of the memorandum.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted and translated from the German original published in Lockot 2002, p. 141ff. (See also figure 6 below).

<sup>18</sup> In the original "and" instead of "us" (see Brecht et al. 1985, p. 107).

<sup>19</sup> Archived in the London archives of the British Psychoanalytic Society (see stamp *ibid.*, p. 99)

received, he will have stuck to the truth. This means that IPA President Jones also knew and approved of the sentences quoted above from the memorandum.<sup>20</sup>

To what extent the IPA secretary Anna Freud - and through her or Jones also Sigmund Freud - was informed about the memorandum must remain an open question. However, I consider it unlikely that Jones could have "reported the very pleasant course of the meeting" to her without mentioning the memorandum.

Müller-Braunschweig was not only apparently not reprimanded by any member of the IPA leadership because of these sentences in the memorandum; in 1950 he even became chairman of the newly founded German Psychoanalytic Association (DPV), which was accredited one year later by the IPA. "The psychoanalytic world saw Müller-Braunschweig as the representative of psychoanalysis in Germany," reports Helmut Thomä (1963a, p. 77).<sup>21</sup>

In 1933, both the memorandum and the *Reichswart* articles were only made known to the other DPG members after the fact and triggered different reactions from them, ranging from understanding to outrage (Schröter 2009, p. 1100f.).<sup>22</sup>

Müller-Braunschweig's formulation that not all analytical publications displayed the "positive and creative basic attitude" that suited the Nazi state is likely to have been aimed at Wilhelm Reich in particular.

Reich discovered the *Reichswart* article and printed it in 1934 in the first issue of his exile *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* (Journal for Political Psychology and Sexual Economy) under the heading "'Unpolitische' Psychoanalyse" ("Apolitical" psychoanalysis, ZPPS, vol. 1, 1934, pp. 74ff.).<sup>23</sup>

He wrote a commentary<sup>24</sup> for another issue of his journal:

"The burning of Freud's books in the 'Third Reich' had apparently not demonstrated the incompatibility of psychoanalysis and fascism clearly enough to the aforementioned board member [meaning Müller-Braunschweig - A.P.]. As a member of the German Psa. Vereinigung [DPG], I hereby declare that the aforementioned article by Müller-Braunschweig is a disgrace to the entire psychoanalytic science and movement. The psychoanalytic research results [...] contradict [...] National Socialism as well as every reactionary moral and world view.

<sup>20</sup> This is also the view of Bernd Nitzschke (1997, p. 97ff.).

<sup>21</sup> Bernd Nitzschke has already presented and criticised this in detail (Nitzschke 1997, pp. 85, 104-111). As late as 1935, Jones, Max Eitingon and Anna Freud "did not see Müller-Braunschweig as a disinterested, trustworthy representative of psychoanalysis. Jones now thought that Müller-Braunschweig was flirting with a connection of psychoanalytic philosophy with the quasi-theological concept of National Socialist ideology and was anti-Semitic" (Lockot 1994, p. 37). It was claimed about both Felix Böhm and Müller-Braunschweig - presumably initially by themselves - that they had been banned from publishing in 1938 (Brecht et al. 1985, p. 160; Lockot 2002, p. 117). However, this is refuted by articles published by Müller-Braunschweig in 1939 and 1940, and Böhm in 1940 and 1942 (Peglau 2017a, pp. 357, 368f.). Communications on Müller-Braunschweig and Böhm nevertheless continue to refer to the alleged publication ban: [https://dpg-psa.de/Chronik\\_1907-1958.html](https://dpg-psa.de/Chronik_1907-1958.html); [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_M%C3%BCller-Braunschweig](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_M%C3%BCller-Braunschweig) (reviewed at 19.3.2023).

<sup>22</sup> In 2017 the "Memorandum" was printed in full in *Werkblatt. Psychoanalyse & Gesellschaftskritik*, issue 79, pp. 92-98. A copy of *Reichswart*'s article "Psychoanalyse und Weltanschauung" reproduced from the original can be found in Peglau 2017a, pp. 588-590.

<sup>23</sup> In 1983, Helmut Dahmer used this publication by Reich to expose the course of adaptation of the psychoanalytic mainstream to the Nazi system in the journal *Psyche* (Lohmann 1984, pp. 120-136). This triggered the first examination of the role of psychoanalysis in National Socialism and a controversy that continues to this day (Dahmer 2017; Nitzschke 2017).

<sup>24</sup> Perhaps Reich agreed with Fenichel's opinion that the *Reichswart* article spoke for itself (Fenichel 1998, vol. 1, p. 104). In any case, he then shortened his text for publication as a prefatory note to *Ein Widerspruch der Freud'schen Verdrängungslehre* (A contradiction of the Freudian theory of repression, ZPPS vol. 1, H. 2 1934, p. 115): <https://archive.org/details/ZeitschriftFuumlrPolitischePsychologieUndSexualoumlkonomie1934Heft/page/n27>.

As a cultural-political movement, it [psychoanalysis - A.P.] must declare itself the mortal enemy of National Socialism on the occasion of the book burning etc.

The present Chancellor of the German Reich acted, it should be emphasised here most emphatically, *from his point of view*, quite logically, when he had the books of the 'subhuman' Freud burnt.<sup>25</sup>

All the greater is the disgrace of the efforts of leading analysts to be brought into line" (quoted in Fenichel 1998, vol. 1, p. 103f.).

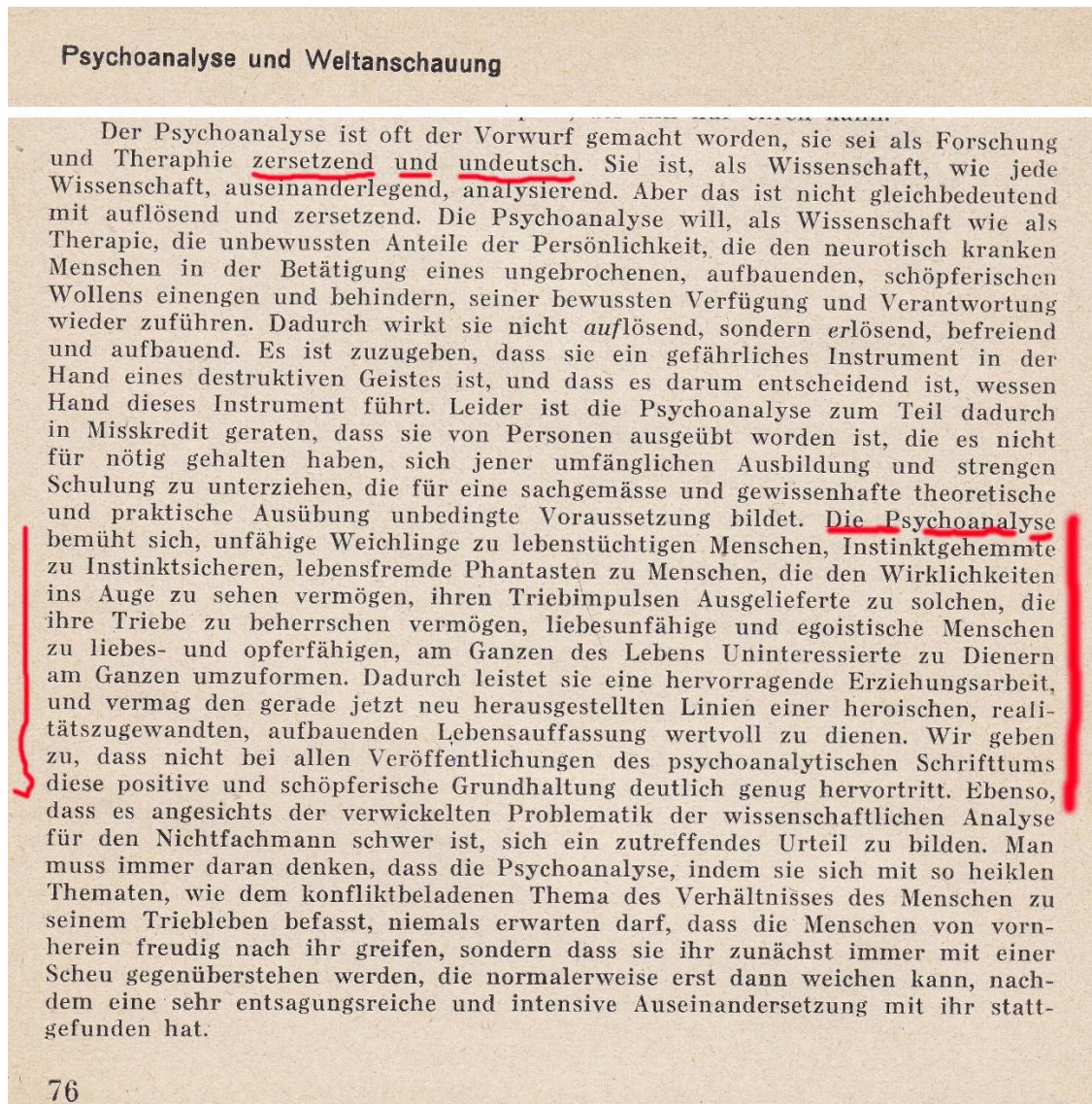


Figure 6. Detail from Reich's second print of the Reichswart article (archive A.P.)

At the latest through this second printing, Müller-Braunschweig's *Reichswart* article became known in its wording to other, non-German analysts. This is shown by a review of Reich's exile journal in *Imago* (1934, vol. 20, pp. 504-507).

<sup>25</sup> Hitler's direct influence on the book burning has not been proven. That Reich himself was also affected seems not to have been known to him at that time. In 1956 he was to experience the burning of his books again - this time in the USA (Peglau 2017a, pp. 424f.)

There Robert Wälde claims that the

"scientific endeavours' [Reich's] no longer have anything to do with psychoanalysis, that no one who follows Reich on his path has any more right to refer to psychoanalysis than any other authors who use a piece of psychoanalytic thought, modified and with the elimination of other motives, for their own purposes".

Simultaneously, Wälde complained that Reich had reproduced a quotation from the analyst Richard Sterba under the heading "'Unpolitische' Wissenschaft" (Apolitical Science). However, Wälde concealed the fact that this quotation only formed the introduction to the reprint of Reich's contribution that began afterwards.<sup>26</sup>

Since *Imago*, in which Wälde's review appeared, was published by Freud himself, Freud must also have taken note of this review and thus of the existence of the *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie*. Reich, however, may have sent Freud his journal anyway, as he did with other writings he published from 1933 onwards, such as the *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Bernd Nitzschke (1997, p. 92ff.) already refers to this.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Davis/Fichtner 2006.



## 4. Forbidden psychoanalysis? From "shall remain untouched" to "is to be eradicated"

"Fire slogan" number four proclaimed during the Berlin book burning on 10 May 1933 was clearly directed at the *entire* analytic doctrine and its writings. But already two months later, in July 1933, criteria were used for the *banning of analytical writings* that - by Nazi standards - can only be described as astonishingly tolerant. After the fanatical Nazi students who had initiated the book burning, bureaucrats now had their turn. And also: scientists, especially psychologists.



Figure 7: One of the original card index boxes used to censor psychoanalysis in the German Library in Leipzig in 1933 (photo A. Peglau 2012).

### The 1933 Kampfbund Lists

On behalf of the Berlin magistrate, Berlin librarians drew up "black lists" of "fine literature" and the "instructional section" in April 1933. They emphasised several times that a list of "sexual science" was also needed (Treß 2011, p. 151f.). This was about the spectrum of sexual education publications, which the reactionary "trash and filth" legislation had previously been quite powerless against.

In mid-May, under the leadership of the *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur*, a "working committee" was founded to prepare Germany-wide banning regulations. The executive director of the Kampfbund "Reichsleitung" and "later chief of staff of the 'Rosenberg Office' Gotthard Urban" was entrusted with the chairmanship (ibid., p. 278). The philosopher and educator Alfred Baeumler, who was involved in the Berlin book burning, again played an important role here. On behalf of the Kampfbund, he had taken responsibility for the lists of scientific publications (ibid., p. 163).

On Friday, 16 June 1933, at 11 a.m., the first meeting began in the German Library building in Leipzig.



Figure 8. The building of the German Library Leipzig (now German National Library), founded in 1916<sup>28</sup>

## Censors

Baeumler first demanded "clear justifications for each individual work, since they are to be carried out into the whole world" (LA A Pr.Br.Rep. 030 No. 16939, p. 1). In the afternoon, among other things, decisions were made on the list of "sexual literature", from which the Leipzig psychology professor Hans Volkelt was given "a number of individual works" "for further examination" (ibid., p. 3).

The minutes of the meeting now also reveal what task was intended for the commission initiated by Baeumler and headed by Volkelt: it was to "edit the writings of psychoanalysis for the Black Lists" (ibid., p. 5).

This also included Alfred Adler's individual psychology: Even if the abbreviated form "Psychoanalysis list" was used several times, the section "Psychoanalysis and Individual Psychology" was always meant.

Since psychoanalytic writings had not been mentioned at all before Baeumler's intervention, he could have been the one who first drew attention to them - as possibly also in the case of the book burning. In addition to Hans Volkelt, the commission he headed included "the following gentlemen: Professor Dr. [Otto] Klemm, Dr. [Adolf] Erhardt and Dr. Helmuth Burkhardt (all from the Psychological Institute of the University of Leipzig) as well as Privatdozent Dr. med. Hans Bürger-Prinz from the Psychiatric Nervous Clinic of the University of Leipzig" (ibid.).

Considering that the Leipzig Institute had a total of only nine scientific staff in the summer of 1933 and that four of them were involved in the commission - Burkhardt, Erhardt, Klemm and Volkelt - it is not an exaggeration to say: The Leipzig Psychological Institute had a decisive influence on the banning of psychoanalytic works (Peglau 2017a, pp. 207-210).

<sup>28</sup> Source: [http://www.dnb.de/SharedDocs/Bilder/DE/DNB/ArchitekturLeipzig/Fototour100JahreDeutscheBuechereiGebaeude/Gruendungsbaudb.jpg?\\_\\_blob=zoom](http://www.dnb.de/SharedDocs/Bilder/DE/DNB/ArchitekturLeipzig/Fototour100JahreDeutscheBuechereiGebaeude/Gruendungsbaudb.jpg?__blob=zoom) (Internet query 2019)



But it also influenced which analytical writings were *not* banned. For under no circumstances was there to be an all-out attack - either against analysis or against individual psychology.

## Criteria

This can be demonstrated by a document from the archives of the German National Library in Leipzig (HADB 840/4/1), in which the Leipzig Commission explains its principles:

- "1. The writings in which psychoanalysis and individual psychology are presented by their founders and by those who have developed them scientifically should remain untouched. No essential feature of the intellectual image of this kind of thinking and research is to be eradicated.
2. Those writings are to be eradicated which - without being affected by Principle 1 - are incompatible with the meaning and spirit of the National Socialist Movement."

The application of the second principle, it went on to say, leads to the following five main aspects on the basis of which the "erasure" of a writing is to be demanded:

- "a. mere propagation of the doctrine, often in a popularising way and at a cheap price,
- b. exploitation of the doctrine for Marxist, Communist or pacifist propaganda,
- c. inroads into the individual fields of spiritual life which shake the national and state consciousness of values,
- d. encroachments into the field of education and religious life,
- e. unnecessary accumulation and collection of individual cases of sexual pathological experience which often touch on the pornographic."

Psychoanalysis (and individual psychology) were thus considered worthy of preservation in principle - even for National Socialism. They were considered to have a scientific character and refrained from defamation.

However, one apparently did not want to deny that they had also produced writings that were incompatible with the Nazi regime. If, however, they corresponded to the fundamental significance demanded in point 1, they were nevertheless to be preserved.

Only what ran counter to National Socialism *and* had no scientific significance was to be "weeded out". So there were definitely no censors at work here who wanted to hit psychoanalysis as widely as possible.

## Victims

Bans were applied mainly in the category "Psychoanalysis and Individual Psychology", but in three cases also in "Sexual Literature", for the following 41 psychoanalytical authors or authors close to analysis:<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> The term "close to" cannot be unambiguously defined and, if interpreted differently, leads to a different number of authors concerned. For example, I have included Bronislaw Malinowski here because - although not an analyst - he published with the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House. I have also included Wilhelm Stekel and Fritz Giese, although it is debatable whether they should (still) be considered analysts in 1933.

Siegfried Bernfeld, Felix Boehm,<sup>30</sup> Marie Bonaparte, Claude D. Daly, Helene Deutsch, Paul Federn, Sergei Feitelberg,<sup>31</sup> Otto Fenichel, Sándor Ferenczi, Anna Freud, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, Fritz Giese, G.H. Graber, Georg Groddeck, Imre Hermann, Eduard Hitschmann, Istvan Hollos, Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, Hellmuth Kaiser, Leo Kaplan, Melanie Klein, Aurel Kolnai, René Laforgue, Georg Langer, Ruth Mack Brunswick, Bronislaw Malinowski, Heinrich Meng, Carl Müller-Braunschweig, Oskar Pfister, Annie Reich,<sup>32</sup> Wilhelm Reich, Theodor Reik, Alfred Robitsek, Philipp Sarasin, Wilhelm Stekel, Adolf Storfer, Georg Wanke,<sup>33</sup> Fritz Wittels, Nelly Wolffheim, Hans Zulliger.

A total of 64 writings by these authors were named with titles.

In dealing with Sigmund Freud as well as with Alfred Adler, one seems to have adhered to leaving "those writings" largely untouched "in which psychoanalysis and individual psychology are presented by their founders [...]". With Adler it turned out that only his book *Individualpsychologie in der Schule* (Individual psychology in school) was considered worthy of indexing.

In Freud's case, only the special edition of *Die Traumdeutung* (The interpretation of dreams) - i.e. not this work itself - was considered not worth preserving (BA NS 8/288, Bl. 167) as well as *Zur Geschichte der psychoanalytischen Bewegung* (On the history of the psychoanalytic movement). All other individual editions of his writings, however, were spared. Neither *Totem und Tabu* nor *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (The unease in culture), with which he clearly ventured into "areas of spiritual life that shake the national and state consciousness of values", were listed. And wasn't Freud's writing *Die Zukunft einer Illusion* (The future of an illusion), in which he described religion as a collective obsessive neurosis, an "incursion" into the field of religious life worth mentioning? Nevertheless, the proposal for a ban did not come about here either.

Since in 1933 there were many times more analytical publications in the German language alone - Freud already had over 130 publications to his name at that time<sup>34</sup> - this means that only a very small proportion of analytical publications were banned.

In doing so, the rule was - to the greatest possible extent - to take action against publications and not against authors: many of those listed had published more than those items to be banned.

If one takes the cited principles of the commission at their word, numerous publications were thus indirectly granted to have "scientifically advanced" psychoanalysis and individual psychology.

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<sup>30</sup> Boehm, like Otto Fenichel, may have been struck by the fact that they contributed to the anthology *Über den Ödipuskomplex* (About the Oedipus Complex) together with Wilhelm Reich. In any case, neither of them appears again, unlike Reich. However, the subject of early childhood sexuality - for which the Oedipus complex stood - was often seen as particularly offensive. This could also have led to the ban.

<sup>31</sup> The engineer and doctor Sergei Feitelberg only appeared as a co-author of one of Bernfeld's indexed writings. For his biography see Fallend/Reichmayr (1992, p. 183). Whether he had already completed his medical studies in 1933 is not noted there. He never became a psychoanalyst.

<sup>32</sup> She is not mentioned here by name, but she was one of the authors of *Das Kreidedreieck* (Mühlleitner 1992, p. 255f.), written together with or at least inspired by Wilhelm Reich. This book was proposed for indexation under "sex literature".

<sup>33</sup> The fact that Georg Wanke, who worked in Friedrichroda in Thuringia, had already died in 1928 proves that even in psychoanalysis, access was not restricted to authors who were still alive.

<sup>34</sup> This does not include Freud's numerous prefaces and commemorative words.

## Wilhelm Reich - the only one completely banned

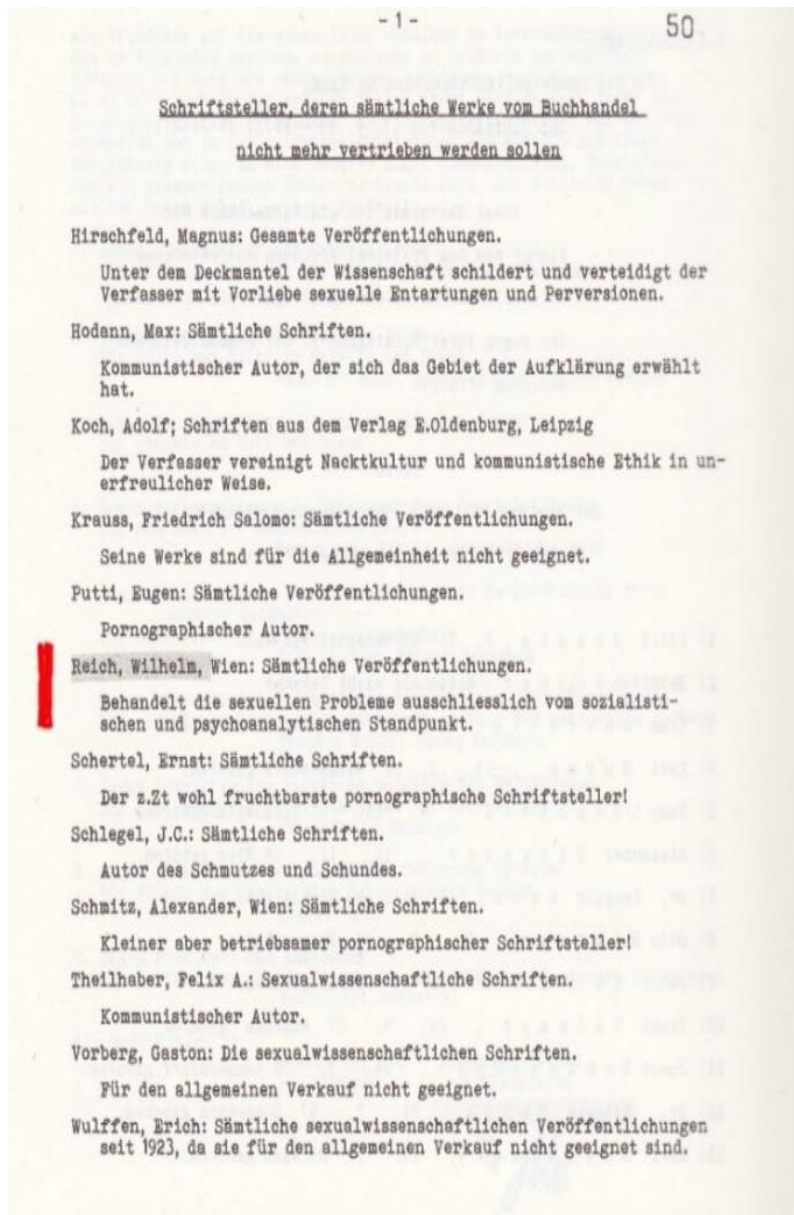


Figure 9: May 1933, the first ban for Reich's complete work (facsimile)

Only in the case of one psychoanalyst was total indexation deemed necessary in 1933: Wilhelm Reich. He was already included in the first "draft" for the banned list "Sexualliteratur", which was presumably drawn up in May 1933 - with the note: "Sämtliche Veröffentlichungen" (All publications) (BA R 56 V/70 a, sheet 61).

The Leipzig committee agreed to this on 16.6.1933 (LA A Pr.Br.Rep. 030 no. 16939, sheet 50). That means: There was already a consensus to ban Reich completely when the list "Psychoanalysis", on which Freud was to appear with only two writings, was commissioned.

Then in the Leipzig Index, under "Psychoanalysis and Individual Psychology", Reich's writing *Die Funktion des Orgasmus* (The Function of the Orgasm) was highlighted as "impure".

In "Sexualliteratur", the titles *Der Einbruch der Sexualmoral* (The collapse of sexual morality), *Der sexuelle Kampf der Jugend* (The sexual struggle of y-

outh) as well as *Geschlechtsreife*, *Enthaltsamkeit*, *Ehemoral* (Sexual maturity, abstinence, marital morality) were named and the banning of all his writings was again demanded.

The reason given was that he treated "sexual problems exclusively from a socialist and psychoanalytical point of view" (BA NS 8/288, Bl. 143).

At that time, the ban affected seven already published books as well as various articles. In total, at least 45 analytical publications by Reich had appeared by the summer of 1933 (Laska 2008, pp. 142f., 145).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> For the whole of Reich's publications see: <http://www.orgonomic.net/hdobiblio.htm#english>

## Secret bans

On 11 August 1933, the Leipzig censors were able to send the Kampfbund 250 copies of the "Psychoanalysis and Individual Psychology" list, which had in the meantime been confirmed by the Ministry of Propaganda. But even after the ministry had given its blessing, the lists of the Kampfbund not only had no legal force: they even remained *permanently* secret. Nevertheless, they were used.

However, instead of, as originally intended, "spreading the grounds for the ban throughout the world", they were now passed on "in strict confidence" under threat of punishment: presumably a reaction to the international outrage over the book burning and the resulting loss of prestige for the Nazi state, which, after all, had wanted to present itself as the new German bearer of culture (Barbian 1994, p. 525).

This had far-reaching consequences, also for the treatment of analytical literature.

Apart from the censors, only those responsible at the Börsenverein (German Publishers and Booksellers Association), the publishers and libraries concerned knew the banned lists, but were not allowed to pass on this knowledge, not even to the book wholesalers or the owners of the bookshops. The journal *Der Buchhändler im neuen Reich* (The bookseller in the new empire), for example, complained that Thomas Mann's books were "being hawked and sold unhindered" even after his expatriation in 1936, and derived from this the demand: "[T]here is an opportunity for the German bookseller to prove that he knows - without bans - what to do."

"Prohibition lists [...] did not exist," a bookseller of the time recalled accordingly: "For reasons of self-preservation alone, we should have known of such a thing. The bookseller's 'healthy popular feeling' had to speak and decide here" (quoted in Schäfer 1983, p. 14). As a result, "forbidden literature always circulated in the book trade, which then had to be confiscated through elaborate raids by the Gestapo or the SD [[Security Service](#)]" (Barbian 2008, p. 23).

As a rule, the analytical authors concerned may have learned at most indirectly - through the confiscation of their books or the forced termination of publishing contracts - that they were on the banned lists. They were never officially informed.

This may also have been one of the decisive reasons why, throughout the Nazi period, banned publications appeared in specialist literature such as the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* (*Central Journal of Psychotherapy*) among the analytical publications that were often mentioned in a positive light anyway.

## The "list of harmful and undesirable literature"

The Propaganda Ministry was only able to complete a - still secret - "reineinheitlichen" index, (an index for the whole German empire), at the end of 1935 due to various disputes over authority.

It was called the "list of harmful and undesirable literature" and became the most important and comprehensive instrument of the prohibition policy.

In the 1935 edition of the list<sup>36</sup> Sigmund Freud was for the first time subject to a total ban - thus targeting the heart of psychoanalytic literature after all. "All writings" of Anna Freud were now also indexed. However, it was only with regard to the two Freuds that a tougher stance prevailed than the Leipzig Volkelt Commission had had in mind. For only Heinrich Körber and Alexander

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<sup>36</sup> Werner Treß made these available to me on 24.11.2010. Lydia Marinelli points out that according to Dietrich Strothmann's book *Nationalsozialistische Literaturpolitik* (1963), the Bavarian political police had already issued a regional total ban on Freud's works in 1934 (Marinelli 2009, p. 82). I have not been able to verify this.

Mette were added as further psychoanalytic authors - with one book each. Also "Ernst Parell" - that is, Wilhelm Reich, who wrote under a previously unrecognised pseudonym.

From 1936 onwards, banning conferences with representatives from the Ministry of Propaganda and Education, the Gestapo, the Security Service and the Party Official Examination Commission, among others, went on to update the list (Barbian 1993, p. 526). At the end of 1938, this index contained 4,175 banned individual titles and 565 further entries marked "Sämtliche Schriften" (All publications) (ibid., p. 528).

Compared to the 1933 Kampfbund lists, the number of affected writings probably increased at least three to fourfold. Now a much larger number of foreign publishers (for example, from Warsaw, Oslo, London, New York, Toronto, Moscow, Paris) were included as well as foreign-language writings, for example, in Serbian, Polish, Czech, French, Norwegian, Dutch, English and Russian. Furthermore, there was a separate section of banned "series and periodicals" as well as one of publishers "whose entire production is banned" (see: reprint of the "list of harmful and undesirable literature").

Accordingly, psychoanalytic writings published in Germany as well as worldwide, in both German and foreign languages, in both book and journal or article form, could have been banned, plus, of course, the complete repertoire of the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House: several thousand publications in all.<sup>37</sup>

With regard to psychoanalysis, however, after the two Freuds were issued a total ban, hardly any use was made of the extended indexing possibilities.

If one compares the 1935 and 1938 lists, only two more names appear from the circle of analytical or analysis-related authors, but their indexed books had nothing to do with psychoanalysis: Eckard von Sydow and Kristian Schjelderup. Books by other authors who had already been considered (Malinowski, Annie Reich, Reik, Stekel, Wittels) were added (in Stekel's case "All Publications"). As one of the co-authors of the *Studies on authority and family* edited by Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm was also affected.

By far the largest number of psychoanalytic and psychoanalysis-related authors continued to remain unchallenged by indexing. Whoever was responsible for this now seems - apart from the treatment of Sigmund Freud and his daughter - to have still adhered to the criteria proposed by the Volkelt Commission.

## 1940: Blanket ban and two amendments

On 15 April 1940, an order placed all "fully and half-Jewish" authors under a total ban - including many analysts. Also individual authors and writings were added to the "list of harmful and undesirable literature".

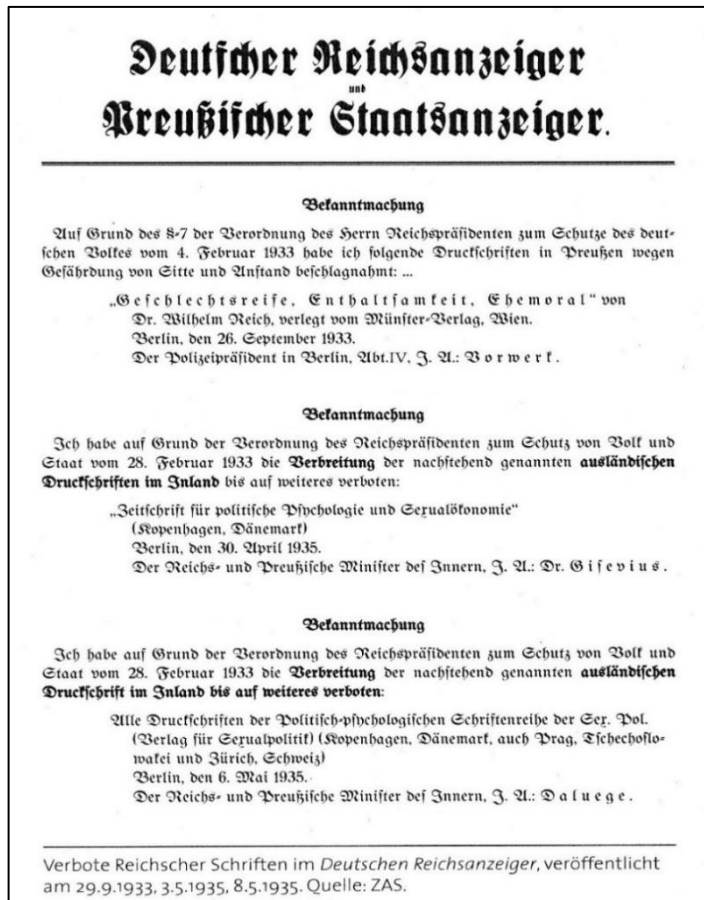
As far as publications of analytical content were concerned, there were only two additions. Firstly, the ban on Reich's first wife, [Annie Reich](#) was extended to "All publications" - which seems to be directed at the educational writings *Ist Abtreibung schädlich?*, *Das Kreidedreieck* and *Wenn dein Kind dich fragt*, (Is abortion harmful?, The chalk triangle and When your child asks you), published between 1930 and 1932, with which she had contributed to Wilhelm Reich's sexual-political activities.

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<sup>37</sup> Fallend et al. (1985, p. 125) mention "about 250 to 300 individual publications" for the entire period of the existence of the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House - in addition to Freud's publications. Grinstein 1956-1960 proves that the number of international analytic book and article publications up to 1938 was many times higher.

The other was [Karl Motesiczky](#), who had begun training as a psychoanalyst with Reich. Under the name "Karl Teschitz" he had participated intensively in Reich's exile publications critical of fascism in the *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* from 1934 to 1937. He was punished in 1941 with the banning of all his publications written under this pseudonym. Both additional bans were thus closely linked to Wilhelm Reich's political involvement.

Reich's journalistic activity continued to be monitored from Germany in the years after his emigration, and the list of his writings that endangered the state was updated several times. Different authorities sometimes banned one and the same book.



Since bans on Reich's writings were published in the "[Deutsche Reichsanzeiger und Preussische \(prussian\) Staatsanzeiger](#)", the official press organ of the German Reich and Prussia, he was the only psychoanalyst in whose case indexing was made public.

This once again underlines his outstanding importance among the group of analysts - as an enemy of the Hitler state.

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Figure 10: Reich's writings in the Reichsanzeiger (facsimile)



## 5. "Do not forget the unconscious!" The (new)<sup>38</sup> German soul medicine

### The "Reichsführer" of psychotherapy

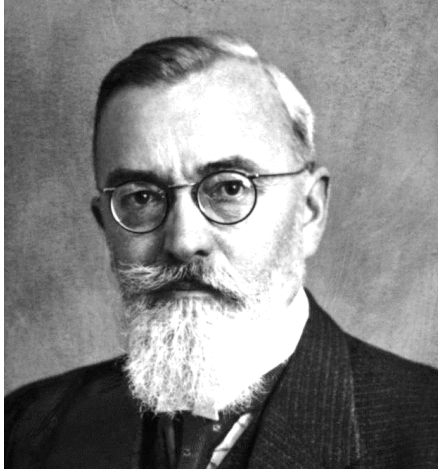


Figure 11: M. H. Göring

[Matthias Heinrich Göring](#) (1879-1945)<sup>39</sup> was one of those who came to unexpected power after the Nazi takeover. There was probably no one in the *Third Reich* who had more direct influence on the handling of psychoanalysis than he did. Göring, a neurologist and "Adlerian", had become chairman of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy in the summer of 1933 - not least because the doctors who were influential here placed their hopes in Göring's family connections. He also activated these immediately by "discussing the situation of psychotherapy with [my] cousin Hermann" at a meeting in autumn 1933, where [Hermann Göring, at that time Prussian Prime Minister](#) among other things, allegedly "was very much in favour of psychotherapy" (BA Koblenz, Kleine Erwerbungen, no. 762-2).

M. H. Göring also kept in touch with his powerful relative in other ways, both privately and professionally (Locket 2002, p. 85).

Two years later, the founding of the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy (DIPFP), later often referred to as the "Göring Institute", provided M. H. Göring with the basis for moving closer to the "German soul medicine" he was striving for.

### The "Göring Institute"

Members of the Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft (DPG) assumed important functions here from the beginning, with DPG head Felix Boehm becoming a board member (Schröter 2010, pp. 1144-1150; Boehm 1978, p. 304). "Without the psychoanalysts", Dierk Juelich (1991, p. 91) states, "psychotherapy would not have received the eminent importance during National Socialism in the 'German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy' as it did".

The official founding of the DIPFP took place on 14.6.1936 (Boehm 1978, p. 303f.). Michael Schröter (2001, p. 734) describes how conspicuously the Institute

"continued the Freudian tradition in organisational terms. It took over from the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute not only the rooms and library, the polyclinic and the triad of lectures/seminars, teaching analysis and supervision, but also the principle of psychotherapist training outside the university".

According to Otto Fenichel (1998, vol. 1, p. 552), Felix Boehm was able to announce internally as early as 1937: "Freud's picture now hung on the wall of the Institute again; however, next to the picture of the Führer, which he was forced to hang up".

In the same year, the DPG had also obtained Sigmund Freud's subsequent approval for joining the DIPFP (Hermanns 1982, p. 165). In the psychoanalytic department of the institute, analysts were trained and analyses carried out, at times under cover names, until the end of the Second

<sup>38</sup> As to Schröter 2023, p. 664, fn. 379, the usual designation was just „German soul medicine“ – without "new."

<sup>39</sup> Source of the picture: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Matthias\\_Heinrich\\_G%C3%B6ring.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Matthias_Heinrich_G%C3%B6ring.jpg)

World War (Brecht et al. 1985, pp. 164ff.; Hermanns 1989, pp. 28-33; Bräutigam 1984). Freud's works remained accessible to the candidates for training, but they had to sign for them when they borrowed these writings (Dräger 1994, p. 49).

Michael Schröter, after looking through the DIPFP's membership file, informs us that "the practice of psychoanalysis" was hidden behind expressions such as "great depth psychological treatment", "depth psychology (developmental psychology)" and "real psychotherapeutic treatment of long duration". But "psychoanalysis" had also been entered occasionally, though not by (former) DPG members, but by the therapists Gebattel and Muthmann (Schröter 2000a, p. 19 and fn 6). Dietfried Müller-Hegemann, who had begun his analytic training at the DIPFP in 1936, later spoke of the "very lively interest of the fascist rulers [...] in depth psychology", which had led to the establishment of the institute (quoted in Bernhardt 2000, p. 186).

Geoffrey Cocks writes: The National Socialists "could not ignore the need for psychological care and help, both within and outside their own ranks". And Freud was, after all, "an indispensable common source for all psychotherapeutic schools of thought, however great the differences between them" (Cocks 1983, pp. 1072, 1076). To put it another way: The work of the DIPFP was essentially based on depth psychological therapy - and depth psychological therapy was essentially based on Freud.

Ernest Jones told the IPV congress in Marienbad in August 1936 that psychoanalysis was accepted in the *Third Reich* "'alongside other directions of psychotherapy'. It had also still 'preserved its independence with regard to scientific work and teaching'" (quoted in Nitzschke 1997a, p. 75). However, this was a whitewashing view of reality.

## Rotten compromises

As early as the beginning of 1934, the DPG had forbidden its members to treat people who might have been involved in "highly treasonable" activities as communists or in some other way - and who might therefore tell the analysts "things which we must report" (Schröter 2005b, p. 164f.).<sup>40</sup> Truly free association on the part of the patients must thus have become just as impossible as free action as a therapist - which must have had a negative impact on any scientific work based on the evaluation of these treatments.

At the DIPFP, requirements such as this were added: "The members of the institute have to keep records of both polyclinic and private patients [...]. Often 10 years [of archiving] is not enough, because later enquiries about former patients often come from authorities and other offices" (ZfP, 1942, 1/2, p. 66).

The ideas M.H. Göring had developed in 1936 on the integration of psychoanalysis can be seen from his lecture at the first members' meeting of the DIPFP, published in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*. Here he first agreed with the view that it was not a question of "whether the National Socialist idea could also be found in psychotherapy", but only of "whether psychotherapy could be made serviceable to the National Socialist idea". Then he said:

"Unfortunately, no one before *Freud* had made practical use of the insights of the unconscious. *Freud's* merit is to show us the possibility of application. His method has become common property of all psychotherapists. But much more important than the method is the *Weltanschauung*."

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<sup>40</sup> This approach also proves how precisely one was aware of the social framework conditions, including their threatening aspects.

In other words: Whoever professes National Socialism may also continue to use Sigmund Freud, if that is useful to National Socialism. Göring continued: "The world begins as soon as we ask about the content of the unconscious." And here one must learn to distinguish between "Aryan" and Jewish content. (ZfP, vol. 9, issue 5, pp. 290-296).

This was supposed to mean that one had a purely "Aryan" unconscious, for the healing of which one had to fall back on the method that the Jew Freud had first found.

## The integration of analysis

In 1940, the desired integration had already progressed considerably. At the third conference of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy, which took place in Vienna, M. H. Göring explained in his opening address that the aim was to deal with "depth psychology in general" and to show that "depth psychology reaches into the whole of human life". The wholeness also includes "the unconscious in the human being". Therefore, the Medical Society sees it as

"one of their noblest tasks to call out to the doctors, the pedagogues, and in general to all the people who are concerned with human leadership, not least also in the Wehrmacht and in the economy: Do not forget the unconscious! Don't think you are grasping the human being as a whole if you close your eyes to the unconscious!" (Bilz 1941, p. 8).

The extent to which the "German soul medicine" ultimately adopted the content and concepts of psychoanalysis becomes clear not only in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*. Also noteworthy in this respect is a lecture by the non-analyst Fritz Mohr on *Die Behandlung der Neurosen durch Psychotherapie* (*The Treatment of Neuroses through Psychotherapy*), held at the second conference of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy in Düsseldorf in September 1938. In the conference proceedings, published in 1939, the following can be read (emphasis: A.P.):

"Modern psychotherapy is based on the fact that unconscious memories, exercises or images belonging to *instinctual life*, which lie in personal *childhood* or in the primeval times of mankind, also play a decisive role in the life of adult cultural man, that the instinct *for recognition*, the *hunger for power*,<sup>41</sup> *sexuality* and everything connected with the processes of reproduction, that the need for connection and other community phenomena and social instincts determine our lives down to the smallest detail, but also that *inner conflicts* between religious or world-view ideals and these instincts play a decisive role. world-view ideals and these instincts divide us more than we know. [...]

The *concept of the unconscious itself* has been criticised [...] as being an auxiliary concept, [...] that we only know its effects. But that these effects are *there*, that we have to deal with them in some way [...] must be admitted from all sides. People have taken offence at the term *repression*. But can anyone deny that thousands of times in life we forget or push aside things that are unpleasant to us? [...]

All psychotherapeutic schools affirm that inner *resistance* arises wherever people are supposed to recognise connections that are embarrassing to them. [...]

The *importance of dreams* as a means of recognising unconscious desires and impulses is admitted by all [...].

What has been analytically called the *repetition compulsion* [...] also arises from a general human tendency [...].

The *fact of the transmission of the* affects to the attending physician is also not seriously disputed by any school and finds its analogy in other life in all interpersonal relationships [...].

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<sup>41</sup> These last two terms, as well as the later "need for connection and other community phenomena", point to the adoptions of Alfred Adler. Hans-Peter Heekerens (2016, pp. 124-126) points out that the "birth" of child and youth psychotherapy and psychagogy also took place "in the Nazi state".

As is well known, the memory of the *father's and mother's bond* plays a strong role in the transmission. [...]

Forms of Willenstherapie<sup>42</sup> are also [...] present in the *practice of free association*, which is often extraordinarily difficult for cultivated, i.e. reflected people [...].

From all that has been said so far, I would like to emphasise this once again in conclusion: The common foundations and points of contact of all mental treatment methods are so great that, in comparison, the differences for the effect come into very little consideration" (Curtius o.J., pp. 53ff., 60, 66).

Sigmund Freud defined "psychoanalysis" several times and in quite different ways. In 1914 he wrote: Every "direction of research" which

"recognises the fact of transference and that of resistance [...] and takes it as the starting point of its work, may be called psychoanalysis, even if it arrives at different results from mine" (Freud 1914d, p. 54).

If one takes him at his word, the "German soul medicine" was also „psychoanalysis.“ In any case, the "German soul medicine" could never be fundamentally contrary to the content of psychoanalysis or fight it across the board: it would have fought against itself to a considerable extent.

## Good luck wishes from Adolf Hitler ...

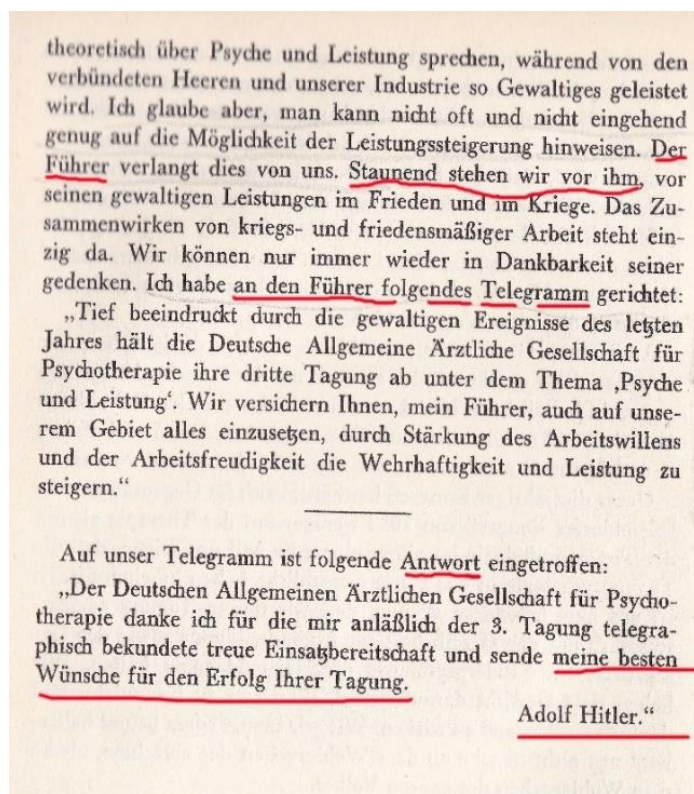


Figure 12: Correspondence with the „Führer“ in 1940 (archive A.P.)

Against this background it is all the more remarkable that on 27 September 1938 Hitler sent the following reply to a telegram of thanks and greetings sent to him by M. H. Göring at the beginning of a symposium:

"I thank the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy for its pledge of allegiance and for the news of the establishment of a German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy. I wish your work good success" (quoted in Curtius o.J., p. 4).

In 1940, on the occasion of another conference, M. H. Göring announced that the Reichsorganisationsleiter der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, Robert Ley, had also recognised "how important depth psychology is not only for medicine but for all branches of life, above all also for the economy" (Bilz 1941, pp. 7, 9).

<sup>42</sup> The term „Willenstherapie“ (will therapy) refers to the special approach of the psychoanalyst and Freud disciples Otto Rank.

Again Hitler received a telegram. This time he replied:

"I thank the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy for the loyal commitment expressed to me by telegraph on the occasion of the 3rd conference and send my best wishes for the success of your conference" (documented in Bilz 1941, p. 10).

Whether Hitler himself had dealt with what he was advocating there by telegraph is unclear. At least someone close to him, perhaps in his secretariat, must have decided which incoming telegrams were answered and in what manner. Indiscriminately, "best wishes for success" were certainly not expressed here.

### **... and Hermann Göring goes to the analyst**

Incidentally, in the final phase of the *Third Reich*, Hitler's comrade-in-arms Hermann Göring (as well as other Nazi civil servants - Lockot 2002, p. 226f.) also sought out an analyst. More precisely, he secretly consulted Harald Schultz-Hencke - presumably on the recommendation of his cousin M. H. Göring - several times in the latter's flat during the last year of the war. The psychoanalyst Otto Haselhoff, who was staying in Schultz-Hencke's flat at the time, reports that the main topic was Göring's drug addiction (Lockot 1994, footnote p. 240). So Reichsmarschall Göring also attributed a healing effect to psychoanalysis.

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## 6. Much appreciation, little condemnation. Psychoanalysis in the German professional literature

### Publications by (former) DPG members

Between 1930 and 1938 - the year of its dissolution - the German Psychoanalytical Society (DPG) had a total of 89 members. While in 1932 there were still 56 members, by 1934 32 of them had already turned their backs on Germany. 27 non-Jewish DPG members joined the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy from 1936 (Lockot 2002, p. 149f.). According to the Grinstein Index and other sources I have used, there were 48 first publications by twelve DPG members in the *Third Reich*: Felix Boehm, G.H. Graber, Martin Grotjahn, Karen Horney, Werner Kemper, Hans March, Alexander Mette, Carl Müller-Braunschweig, Gerhart Scheunert, Felix Schottlaender, Harald Schultz-Hencke and Margarethe Seiff.<sup>43</sup>

### The *Central Journal of Psychotherapy*

This publication, fully titled *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie und ihre Grenzgebiete einschließlich der medizinischen Psychologie und psychischen Hygiene* (Central Journal of Psychotherapy and its Border Areas, including Medical Psychology and Mental Hygiene), was the organ of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy, founded in 1927. Consisting mainly of German members from the beginning, this society continued to be dominated after 1933 by its German, increasingly "Aryanised" national group, the newly founded German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy. This, led by M.H. Göring, was also the only official representation of the interests of German psychotherapists in the *Third Reich* (ZfP, vol. 7, pp. 140-144).

In the first two *Zentralblatt* issues of 1933, psychoanalysis was in any case still discussed often, extensively and appreciatively. Thus Felix Mayer wrote an article *Zur Frage der Sublimierung* (On the Question of Sublimation), Dorian Feigenbaum published his "Vortrag, gehalten zu Ehren von Professor Freuds 75. Geburtstag" (Lecture held in honour of Professor Freud's 75th birthday), and courses for the summer semester of the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute were advertised (ibid., vol. 6, pp. 18ff., p. 26ff., p. 65).

In issue 3, published in autumn 1933, the political turn came to bear. C.G. Jung announced in the "Foreword" that from now on the "long known differences between Germanic and Jewish psychology [...] should no longer be blurred" (ibid., p. 139). But in the subsequent contribution, the Dutch analyst Johannes Hermanus van der Hoop wrote:

"The new psychoanalytic methods which do not identify themselves with Freudian psychoanalysis (*Adler, Stekel, Jung, Maeder*) are nevertheless derived from the latter [...]. It is therefore necessary first to look more closely at the essence of psychoanalysis" (ibid., p. 147f.).

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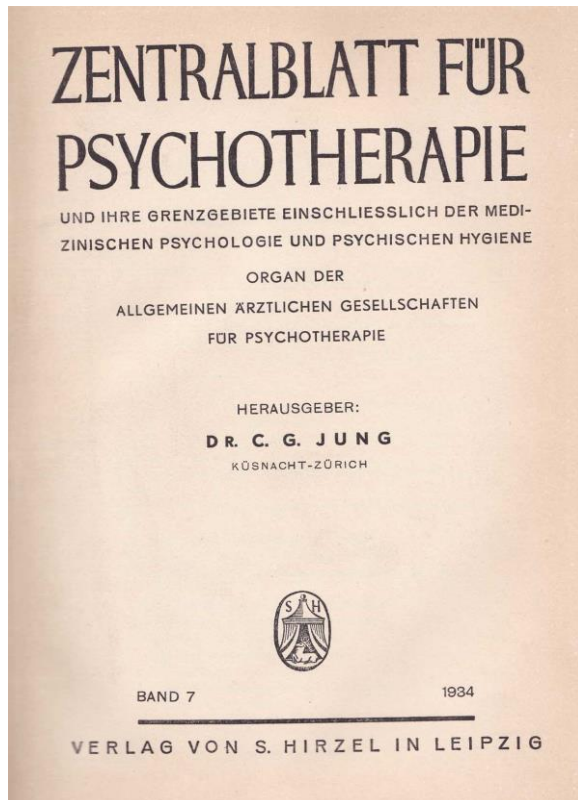
<sup>43</sup> This refers only to writings which, in terms of time and space, were published within the *Third Reich*. Therefore, for example, all publications of the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House in Vienna are not included. Also excluded are those authors who were close to analysis in some respects and also referred to it in their writings, but who never belonged to the DPG. An example of this is J. H. Schultz: he was occasionally classified as a "wild analyst" (Lockot 2002, p. 147). Nor do I consider the articles published between 1934 and 1937 in Wilhelm Stekel's journal *Psychotherapeutische Praxis*. Stekel moved the place of publication from Germany to Vienna after the Nazi takeover; he discontinued the journal in 1937. On the analysts who remained in Germany and those who emigrated see Schröter 2023, pp. 572-576. He also evaluates, with many additional documents the contemporary reception (including the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*). However, as he writes, he sets other accents (ibid., pp. 674-715).



This was followed by a detailed, appreciative discussion of psychoanalysis including factual criticism of some details (ibid., pp. 148-161).

## "Dustbin of unfulfillable children's wishes".

In 1934, C. G. Jung escalated his accusations to explicit racism:



"The Jew as a relative nomad has never and will probably never create his own form of culture, since all his instincts and talents presuppose a more or less civilised host people. The Jewish race as a whole therefore possesses, in my experience, an unconscious which can be compared with the Aryan only to a limited extent. [...] The Aryan unconscious has a higher potential than the Jewish [...]. In my opinion, it has been a serious mistake of medical psychology up to now that it applied Jewish categories [...] unseen to the Christian Germanic or Slav [...]. Freud [...] did not know the Germanic soul, just as little as all his Germanic followers knew it. Did the enormous phenomenon of National Socialism [...] prove them wrong? Where was the unheard-of tension and force when there was no National Socialism? It lay hidden in the Germanic soul, in that deep bottom which is anything but the dustbin of unfulfilled children's wishes and unresolved family resentments" (ibid., vol.7, p. 9).

Figure 13: Central Journal of Psychotherapy (archive A. P.)

The "Jungian" G.R. Heyer subsequently wrote that Freud's and Adler's formulations were "often aberrant, their systematising attempts untenable, their exaggerations downright delusional, the 'Jewishness' in their psyche and psychology alien to our nature". But behind the "time- and race-determined view", Heyer continues, "the 'good' also becomes clear" - in Freud's case especially the valuable achievement of having explored the unconscious (ibid., p. 21f.). W. M. Kranefeldt, also a "Jungian", claimed in the next contribution: the hidden basis of psychoanalysis was Freud's "passionate monotheism, his Yahweism" (ibid., p. 35).

Nevertheless, one of Freud's "Germanic followers", Georg Groddeck (DPG member and affected by the book bans), and his book *Der Mensch als Symbol* (Man as Symbol), published in 1933 by the International Psychoanalytic Publishing House, was given a positive review in the same issue (ibid., p. 109).

Even a therapist like Kurt Gauger, who explicitly appeared as a National Socialist, did not condemn Freud wholesale. A lecture by Gauger reproduced in 1934 began with the announcement "that the meaning of my remarks is a political one, just as I stand before you in the uniform of the soldier of politics, the SA man". He then criticised psychoanalysis as "taking an unequivocal stand for the materialistic world view", therefore depriving the "realm of the soul of its intrinsic value" (ibid., p. 159). But a little later he said: "We do not dispute [...] the value of some of the theses of Freudian psychoanalysis, which were formulated on the basis of [...] scientific observation of human soul life" (ibid., p. 165).

Hans von Hattingberg, formerly associated with psychoanalysis, in the same annual volume made the criticism that Freud only saw the individual and thereby lost sight of the "relationship to the greater supra-individual whole" (ibid., p. 99). Nevertheless, doctors could not ignore Freud's works,

"which a politically enthusiastic youth (from their point of view quite rightly) burnt. We must and may profess what we owe to his work, no matter that we reject his errors because, standing on his shoulders, we have progressed" (ibid., p. 103).

With only 17 mentions in the register - in reality there were far more - Freud continued to be in first place in mentions by name in the 1934 volume - ahead of Jung with 15 mentions.

## Reich criticized and Freud praised

And even Wilhelm Reich was mentioned three times. The Swede Ivan Bratt professed his "agreement with Reich's conception" of the neurotic character (ibid., p. 287). The Dutchman E.A.D.E. Carp first criticised the whole of psychoanalysis which, by means of free association, eliminated the patient's "discipline of thought" and thus ensured that the patient "surrendered his individual independence for the benefit of the analyst". Then he continued:

"I am aware that leading (!) psychoanalysts (including *Wilhelm Reich* in his recent work on character analysis [...]) recommend systematically breaking off [...] resistances [sic] at the beginning of every psychoanalytic treatment and consider this 'resistance analysis' of utmost importance" (ibid., p. 318f.).

Finally, J. H. van der Hoop criticised "individual analysts" who "equate their moral principles [...] with psychoanalysis" and added in the footnote: "This can be seen in the example of Reich, who equates psychoanalysis with certain communist and sexual principles" (ibid., p. 337). On the other hand, van der Hoop published a laudatory speech on Freud in 1935:

"I see in psychoanalysis the most objective psychotherapy we now possess and I strive to practise it as best I can. I admire in Freud not only the genius of his method and his insights and the masterly precision with which he and his students explore this immense new field, but above all his moral courage for truth, which many a researcher can envy" (ZfP, vol. 8, p. 171).

The main criticism of the analysis, he added, was that too little attention was paid to holistic contexts, ideals, influences of family, profession, nationality, race, religion (ibid., p. 172f.).

Until this journal was discontinued in 1944 due to the war, it was always possible to speak appreciatively of "psychoanalysis" - of "depth psychology" anyway - and to use central analytical terms such as "transference", "projection" and "libido" without distancing oneself from them. This was done both in the journal's "scientific contributions" and in the book and article reviews that were often detailed.

## Unofficially banned - officially reviewed

From 1940 onwards, however, this *Zentralblatt* only occasionally referred directly to publications written by psychoanalysts, but more often to authors who *also* acknowledged the importance of Freud - alongside, above all, Jung and Adler.

The reviews were usually accompanied by details of the publisher, number of pages and price: "Freud, Sigm., *Selbstdarstellung*, Zweite, durchgesehene und erweiterte Auflage. Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, Vienna 1936, 107 p., geh., RM 3,50, geb. RM 5,-" (Freud, Sigm., Self-Representation, Second, revised and enlarged edition. International Psychoanalytic Publishing House, Vienna 1936, 107 pages, stapled, RM [Reichsmark] 3.50, hardcover RM 5,-") (ibid., vol. 9/1936, p. 375). And in all issues, the reviews were introduced by the notice: "All books reviewed in this issue or indicated by the publisher are available in all German bookshops."

In other words, all the analytical literature mentioned here was considered legally saleable in Germany. And of course, a review in the *Zentralblatt* was always an *advertisement* - and that even if it was a critical review.

Since Freud and other analytical authors reviewed in the *Zentralblatt* were at the same time subject to Nazi book bans, this means that often banned literature was advertised. At least insofar as psychoanalytical findings were also evaluated positively here, these findings were *propagated* at the same time.

I have discovered only very few cases in which defamations of psychoanalysis clearly followed the National Socialist spirit by attacking analysis in a racist way because of its supposed Jewish character.<sup>44</sup> However, most accusations did not go beyond what had already been made against Freud's creation before 1933.<sup>45</sup> A concentration of aggressiveness, anti-Semitism and fundamental disparagement, extending over entire pages, such as characterised C. G. Jung's omissions in 1934, remained unique in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*. Laudatory, approving or neutral mentions of psychoanalysis far outweighed detailed criticisms presented in a matter-of-fact tone.

Another contemporary journal, also essential for the field of psychotherapy, proves: This treatment of psychoanalysis was no exception.

### **The *Central Journal for all Neurology and Psychiatry***

This journal, edited by Karl Bonhoeffer, was a "refereeing organ", i.e. its issues consisted exclusively of reviews and book references. It claimed to report on the entire, worldwide developments in neurology and psychiatry and to include "all important publications", including various German medical journals. In this *central journal*, too, a high number of mentions of analytic literature and a remarkably tolerant handling of it can be noted.

Here, too, it remained possible to pay tribute to Freud and psychoanalysis, but this happened less frequently as time went on. Various publications by authors who were subject to book bans were also reviewed in this journal.

<sup>44</sup> Without reference to psychoanalysis, the *Zentralblatt* often emphasised the importance of "racial hygiene" and "racial segregation". The subject of "hereditary biology and racial science" was also given its own section in the papers, to which M. H. Göring, E. Herzog and J. H. Schultz, among others, contributed (ZfP, vol. 10, pp. 301ff).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. for example the relevant quotations in the section "Psychoanalyse und Sexualwissenschaft" (Psychoanalysis and Sexual Science) in Peglau (2017a, pp. 84-86), the earlier criticism of psychoanalysis in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, e.g. ZfP., vol. 5, pp. 779ff, the documents in Cremerius (1981) or the references cited in the Complete Index of Freud's *Collected Works* to the keywords "Psychoanalysis, resistances to d." or "psychoanalysis, prejudices" (Freud 1999, p. 464f.). Even though Kranefeldt accused Freud of "Yahweism", he did not go beyond earlier accusations of alleged "Talmudic sophistry" and the like (Cremerius 1981, p. 9; cf. also Brecht et al. 1985, p. 88). Hans-Martin Lohmann writes about the situation in Austria before 1938: "Of course, Freudian psychoanalysis was considered a 'Jewish science' in the eyes of most conservatives and Catholics" (Lohmann 2006a, p. 8). Gudrun Zapp already provides detailed information about the racist accusations of "Aryan" psychotherapists against analysis (Zapp 1980, pp. 70-112).

Analogous to the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, defamation seems to have occurred only occasionally. Criticism or vilification of psychoanalysis that went beyond accusations made before 1933 were not discovered in my investigation. However, I only examined random samples in this special respect.

### M. H. Göring about Wilhelm Reich

Wilhelm Reich's *Massenpsychologie* was of course completely ignored in the *Zentralblatt für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie*. Reich himself, however, appeared in 1939 in a review of Nic Hoel's writing about *Pseudodebilität*. There, the review said, Hoel argued "on the basis of the fundamental views of psychoanalysis, and in particular the writings of *Wilhelm Reich*" (ibid., vol. 93, p. 44). On the other hand, Reich's textbook *Charakteranalyse*, published in 1933, was also reviewed - by the leader of German psychoanalysis, M. H. Göring, of all people. This is all the more remarkable because Reich also combined his therapeutic and political views in *Charakteranalyse* in this way, especially in the preface and the last section of the book:

"I have endeavoured to show that neuroses are the results of patriarchal-familial and sexually repressive upbringing, that furthermore only a neurosis *prophylaxis* can seriously be considered, for the practical implementation of which all prerequisites are lacking in today's social system, that only a fundamental overturning of social institutions and ideologies, which depends on the outcome of the political struggles of our century, will create the prerequisites for a comprehensive neurosis prophylaxis" (Reich 1933a, p. 11)

Under these sentences Reich wrote: "Berlin, January 1933". In other passages it becomes clear that he envisioned this necessary revolution as a socialist one, which also took into account psychoanalytical insights and sexual reform requirements.

One year later, M. H. Göring countered in his *Zentralblatt* review:

Reich "believes that the social system of the time before the National Socialist revolution - for this is the period in which the book was written - did not have the prerequisites within itself to carry out neurosis prophylaxis, that only a fundamental upheaval of social institutions and ideologies [...] would create the prerequisites [...]. The upheaval has begun with tremendous intensity, but certainly not in the form that the author [that means: Reich] had envisaged, but in the opposite way. The new Germany resists giving sexual instinct life the paramount importance that it received from *Freud* and his pupils and with which the author crowns it" (ZfNuP, vol. 69, p. 188).

## 7. A "very modern medical subject" and "Jewish soul poisoning": psychoanalysis in the *Völkischer Beobachter*

The fact that it was also not taboo to mention analysis in a positive way outside of specialist media,<sup>46</sup> is even indicated by the *Völkischer Beobachter*. After 1933, this became not only the German daily with the highest circulation (almost one million copies in 1938/39), but also the leading organ of the NSDAP and the official voice of the state and the party (Frei/Schmitz 1999, p. 99ff.), edited by Alfred Rosenberg.

Psychoanalysts, however, appeared there earlier.

### Freud (1930) and Reich (1933)

On 28 August 1930, Sigmund Freud received the prestigious Goethe Prize. The next day, the *Völkischer Beobachter* published the following article:

"This time the Goethe Prize of the City of Frankfurt was awarded to Professor Sigmund Freud, the world-famous Viennese scholar and creator of psychoanalysis, cheers the 'Israel. Gemeindeztg.' in No. 10. The Goethe Prize, the largest scientific and literary prize in Germany, will be presented to the recipient on August 28th, Goethe's birthday, at a large ceremony in Frankfurt/Main. The prize money amounts to 10,000 Marks. - It is well known that renowned scholars reject the entire psychoanalysis of the Jew Sigmund Freud as highly unscientific gibberish and gossip. The great anti-Semite Goethe [a baseless exaggeration - A.P.] would turn over in his grave if he found out that a Jew gets a prize bearing his name."

Three years later, on 2 March 1933, Reich also found himself in the *Völkischer Beobachter*. Under the headline "Bolshevism or Germany?" the question was asked there what Bolshevism meant for German women. The answers were: "hunger and death", "dissolution of the family", and

"Destruction of the moral laws through the seduction of youth. A blatant example [...] is the communist book by Dr. Wilhelm Weiß [sic] 'Der sexuelle Kampf der Jugend'<sup>47</sup> [The sexual struggle of youth]. It is a shameless seduction which appeals to the lowest instincts of immature human children and attempts to break down in young people the obligation to morality, decency and self-control".

The confusion of names was probably a Freudian slip: The Jewish police chief of Berlin, Bernhard Weiß, had - through intensive propaganda by Goebbels - almost become a pseudonym for "foreign-racial" political opponents.

After psychoanalysis had proved sufficiently adaptable, other sounds were to be heard.

<sup>46</sup> Carl Müller-Braunschweig was able to publish two articles in non-specialist journals - in 1933 in the *Reichswart* and in 1939 in the *Berliner Illustrierte Nachtausgabe* - in which he argued psychoanalytically, in the former also with clear reference to Freudian teachings. On 9.2.1941, psychoanalytical (as well as Jungian and Adlerian) insights were also found in the popular *Koralle - Wochenschrift für Unterhaltung, Wissen, Lebensfreude* (*Weekly magazine for entertainment, knowledge, joie de vivre*), offered as a life aid by the depth-psychologically interested doctor Otto Kankleit. Under the heading "Your dream knows more about you than you do!" he reported, supported by generous illustrations, on the unconscious, repression, resistance and dream symbols and concluded that the dream can be "warner, educator, advisor, critic, but it must be understood correctly". The "work of the soul doctor" consists in "interpreting this dream knowledge" and "making it serviceable for the healing of neurosis". (I owe the reference to this article to Wolfgang Leuschner.) I have not looked for other similar publications, but I assume that there were. If so, it would mean that Freud's knowledge, without naming him, continued to be popularised in the *Third Reich* - to a hitherto unknown extent - and continued to become "general knowledge".

<sup>47</sup> Reich published this book in 1932.

## "Early childhood influences also determine the shape of life".

On 3 December 1938, DIPFP director M. H. Göring published on page five of the *Völkischer Beobachter* the article "German soul medicine. A German field of science that was almost exclusively in Jewish hands". Accordingly, one of the key sentences was:

"Even if [...] Jewish influence, led by Freud and Adler, has undoubtedly been largely at work in the development of this depth psychology, the primal knowledge of those areas which depth psychology is concerned with has always been familiar to a people in culturally significant times, especially to its members who are close to the soil".

Even this contribution, in which the importance of depth psychology and the unconscious is emphasised several times, characterised distancing from psychoanalysis rather than its outright defamation; the word "psychoanalysis" was, however, avoided. Half a year later, M. H. Göring renounced this reticence.

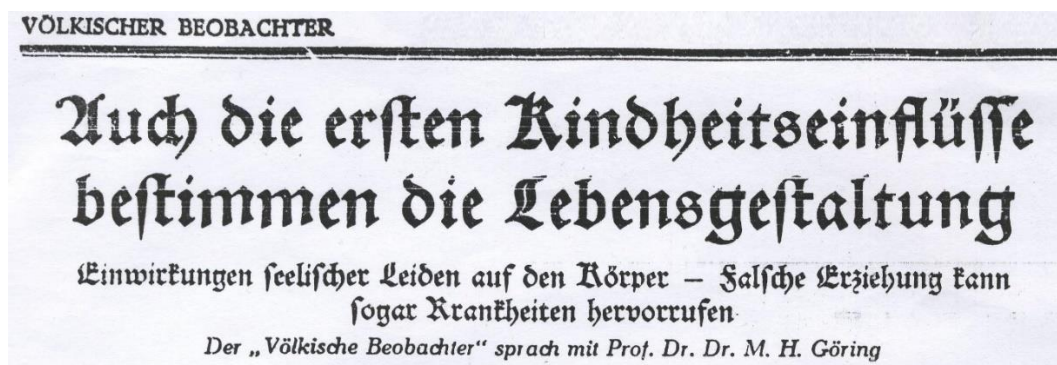


Figure 14: Headline of the Göring-Interview of 1939 (facsimile)

On 14 May 1939, a Göring interview was processed in the *Völkischer Beobachter* under the headline "The first childhood influences also determine the shaping of life". The article, which took up a whole newspaper page (documented in Brecht et al. 1985, p. 141), dealt, among other things, with the question "how it came about that psychoanalysis, which is a very modern medical subject [!], once [!] had such a corrosive effect." Response: "Undeniably, the Church made serious educational mistakes. By suppressing everything sexual, it finally prepared the ground for the incursion of the Jews into the field of psychoanalysis."

"For the German", we were then told, it was "not at all necessary" to acquire the Jewish-infected part of the analysis, since Germans already got the "knowledge of the forces slumbering in the unconscious" by the „Aryans“ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Carl Gustav Carus.

Then it went on to say: "Only the development of the unconscious", for which dreams in particular provided "essential clues", made it possible to successfully "combat" neuroses. These, in turn, were caused "to a large extent" by wrong upbringing, especially from the time "up to the age of 6".<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> For actual preliminary work by Carus and Leibniz, see Peglau 2017a, pp. 361-362, 382-383; Buchholz/Gödde 2011, pp. 24-28; Goldmann 2005, pp. 140-145. The Austrian physician Ernst Maria Johann Karl Freiherr von Feuchtersleben (1806-1849), also mentioned in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, did not - for all his merits - anticipate psychoanalysis either. In the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, a closer examination of psychoanalysis was also often avoided by



The article went on to say that sexual education was "extremely important" for the prevention of neurosis: "It should become an established educational principle that *every child's question* should be *answered* and not dismissed with excuses such as 'you are too young for that'."

Of course, the tendency to train children from birth into compliant subjects through oppression and "hardening", which was even more pronounced in the Nazi era, also came into play: the infant should "only be taken in [...] when it is wet or in pain", children should be expected to tolerate as much as they can "bear", "spoiling and effeminacy" should be avoided (cf. Chamberlain 2010).

Nevertheless, it should be noted: Mixed with Nazi ideology and coupled with the common reinterpretation that psychoanalysis was a pre-Freudian, "Aryan" achievement, even the *Völkischer Beobachter* - at least on that day - propagated basic analytical insights and praised *psychoanalysis*, not just the already highly esteemed depth psychology, as a "very modern medical subject". This proves once again how well parts of Freud's teaching were integrated into the National Socialist system.

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claiming that it essentially only contained statements about the Jewish people. Thus the doctor Carl Haebler - who intended to use Nazi psychotherapy to "lead the will of the individual back into the great community of blood, people and soil" – stated there in 1935: "We recognise *Freud's* research personality just as much as that of his people's comrades [Paul] Ehrlich and [August Paul von] Wassermann, we consider him to be an outstanding phenomenon in this people, no different from how the prophets of the Old Testament outshone their contemporaries. But we are also aware of the deep divisions that exist between Semitic and our thinking, between the worldview there and here" (ZfP, vol. 8, pp. 289, 294).

On Goering's intention to "combat" neuroses, see Kaggl (2020, pp. 109f.).

## 8. "If possible, no lethal diagnoses". Contributions to "eugenics" by the *Göring Institute*

### Against "hereditary offspring", for "racial purity".

In 1934, the "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring" came into force. With this, the National Socialists took up "eugenic" efforts that had been widespread since the end of the 19th century in both the "left" and the "right" camps, among doctors, biologists, theologians and other professional groups (cf. Klee 1997, pp. 15-33; Peglau 2000b; May 2009, pp. 6f.).

The advocacy of sterilization and euthanasia was therefore nothing specifically National Socialist - but their radical, institutionalized and expanding application to mass murder in the hundreds of thousands was.

In order to register "hereditarily ill" patients and send them for sterilisation, health institutions were required from 1934 onwards to collect and document "hereditary-biological" data on patients and to pass it on to state authorities on request. This led to about 400,000 sterilisations of people between the ages of 10 and 60, to multiple severe psychological and/or physical consequential damages and to about 6,000 deaths. Others who had already been "captured" in the course of sterilisation later fell victim to the „euthanasia“ crimes (Hinz-Wessels 2004, pp. 101ff., 168ff.).

At the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy, too, the norm was to comply with the stipulations of the "Gesetz zur Verhinderung erbkranken Nachwuchses" (Law for the prevention of hereditary ill offspring),<sup>49</sup> which M. H. Göring, among others, reaffirmed several times<sup>50</sup> (Peglau 2017a, pp. 478ff.).

### "Incurable psychopaths"

The fact that the „hereditary health act“ did *not* explicitly include "psychopathies" subsequently led to controversy. However, renowned German psychiatrists such as Kurt Schneider were sceptical about classifying "psychopathies" as hereditary diseases.

Nevertheless, apparently on its own initiative, a working group of the DIPFP developed a "diagnosis scheme" that made exactly this classification for allegedly incurable "psychopaths" (Knebusch 2005). This working group included the "Freudians" Felix Boehm, Werner Kemper, Carl Müller-Braunschweig, "neo-Freudians" Harald Schultz-Hencke, ex-"Jungians" John Rittmeister, the "Jungians" Gustav R. Heyer, Wolfgang M. Kranefeldt and Werner Achelis, the "Adlerians"

<sup>49</sup> A few quotations from the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* 1942, issue 1/2 may prove this. J. H. Schultz: "[A]n initial step is a thorough psychiatric assessment of *each* client, even if he only comes for 'marriage counselling' or the like [...]. The experience of our polyclinic is that all serious patients who are willing to recover are quite understanding and grateful [...], whereas antisocial psychopaths or anti-community schizoids and similar inferiors tend to be 'offended' [...]. The life and community value of the sick must be assessed and taken into account so that the productive-healing potentials of our institute for valuable personalities are preserved [...], for example, healing work can reveal that an incurable hereditary malformed psychopath was misjudged as a neurosis during the polyclinic admission" (ibid., p. 15f.). The "Jungian" Olga von Koenig-Fachsenfeld on "educational help" at the Institute or its branches: "Hereditary biological aspects are emphatically taken into account, since hereditarily ill children [...] are not treated psychotherapeutically [...]. All negotiations with authorities and services required in the course of therapy, referrals to other doctors, to homes etc. have to go through the educational support [...]. The polyclinic has also emphasised again and again how important well-kept medical records are for our work [...]. We need them [among other things] for reasons of representing our work to authorities" (ibid., pp. 27-30). At the same time, medical confidentiality was systematically undermined by the state anyway (Rüther 1997).

<sup>50</sup> For example, when he said about the "drafting of certificates and expert reports" at the Institute: "It is not acceptable that we write [...], There is no mental illness [...], the criminal judge must know whether a defendant is a psychopath, i.e. hereditarily abnormal [...]. In other words, whether he can still become a useful member of the national community or not" (*Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* 1942 Heft 1/2, p. 36).

M. H. Göring and Edgar Herzog, as well as Hans v. Hattingberg, who did not (any longer) belong to any school of therapy but saw himself as a depth psychologist, and J. H. Schultz, the inventor of "autogenic training",<sup>51</sup> the "Jungians" Gustav R. Heyer, Wolfgang M. Kranefeldt and Werner Achelis.

In February 1940, the scheme was presented at the Institute and made available to the public in issue 1940, 2/3 of the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, after which it was applied (Boehm 1942, p. 81). Because of the political conditions - which were best known in the Institute<sup>52</sup> - that meant: 10 to 15 percent of the Institute's patients (ZfP 1939, vol. 11, p. 52) were now stigmatised in a way it could still lead to sterilisation and - at the latest since 1939 (cf. on this Peglau 2000a, pp. 66f.) - also to killing by "euthanasia". And apparently *had* already led to this, as shown by the paper with which J. H. Schultz presented this diagnostic scheme at the Institute or in the paper reprint of the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*:

"We agree [!] that there is also a *hysterical psychopathy, a degenerative hysteria, which is completely incurable*. [...] [T]here is undoubtedly this hereditary-degenerative, psychopathic, incurable hysterical type. Mostly it seems to be a very pervasive heredity.

*The few cases where I have given this death sentence in the form of a diagnosis* [!] showed this clearly; you know that in the new divorce law in Germany this form of hysteria is rightly considered grounds for divorce; for no man can be expected to live with such a beast" (ZfP 1940, Heft 2/3, p. 114f.; emphasis A.P.).

## Decisions about life and death

Regine Lockot writes in this context:

"The diagnosis decided the life and death of the patient. By recommending a phenomenological diagnostic scheme, psychotherapists probably tried [!] to make the diagnoses in such a way that the patients were spared from the euthanasia programme" (Lockot 2002, p. 220f.).

Individual Institute members, Regine Lockot continues,

"were working as psychiatrists in clinics. A psychoanalyst who was an assistant doctor in Buch near Berlin reported that she had to fill out the RMDI [Reich Ministry of the Interior - A.P.] registration forms. Since she suspected what purpose they were to serve, she did not make any 'lethal diagnoses' if possible [!]" (ibid., p. 223).

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<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, it was only on 15.6.2019 that I learned of an article that the psychoanalyst Ulrich Schultz-Venrath had already published on 20.6.1984 in the newspaper TAZ: "Autogenes Training und Gleichschaltung aller Sinne - 100 Jahre Johannes Heinrich Schultz." This already summed up everything essential about J. H. Schultz's culpable actions during the Nazi era. It was not until 2002 that the German Society for Psychoanalysis, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatics and Depth Psychology (DGPT) finally agreed to revoke J. H. Schultz's honorary membership, which had been awarded in 1950.

<sup>52</sup> In part, the DIPFP members were also informed "first hand". For example, the head of the "T4" („euthanasia“) campaign, Herbert Linden, who was also a member of the Institute's board of directors, gave lectures there on "hereditary and racial care" (Brecht et al. 1985, p. 148). Klee 1997, 130-134, 193-219, 334-344 reports in detail on the already rapidly growing awareness of "euthanasia" among the German population.

Philip Bennett drew my attention to the fact that there is a controversial discussion in the English-speaking world about "voluntary euthanasia". In German, however, "euthanasia" has become, as a result of the Nazi crimes, an epitome of the murder of people allegedly "unworthy of life." And in the latter sense the term is used here by me.

About the same analyst, Ingeborg Kath, Regine Lockot adds elsewhere that, according to her own statement, she only selected old patients "who would have died soon anyway" (Lockot 1994, p. 78).

In 1950 Kath then became one of the six founding members of the German Psychoanalytic Association DPV,<sup>53</sup> led by Carl Müller-Braunschweig (ibid., p. 243f.).

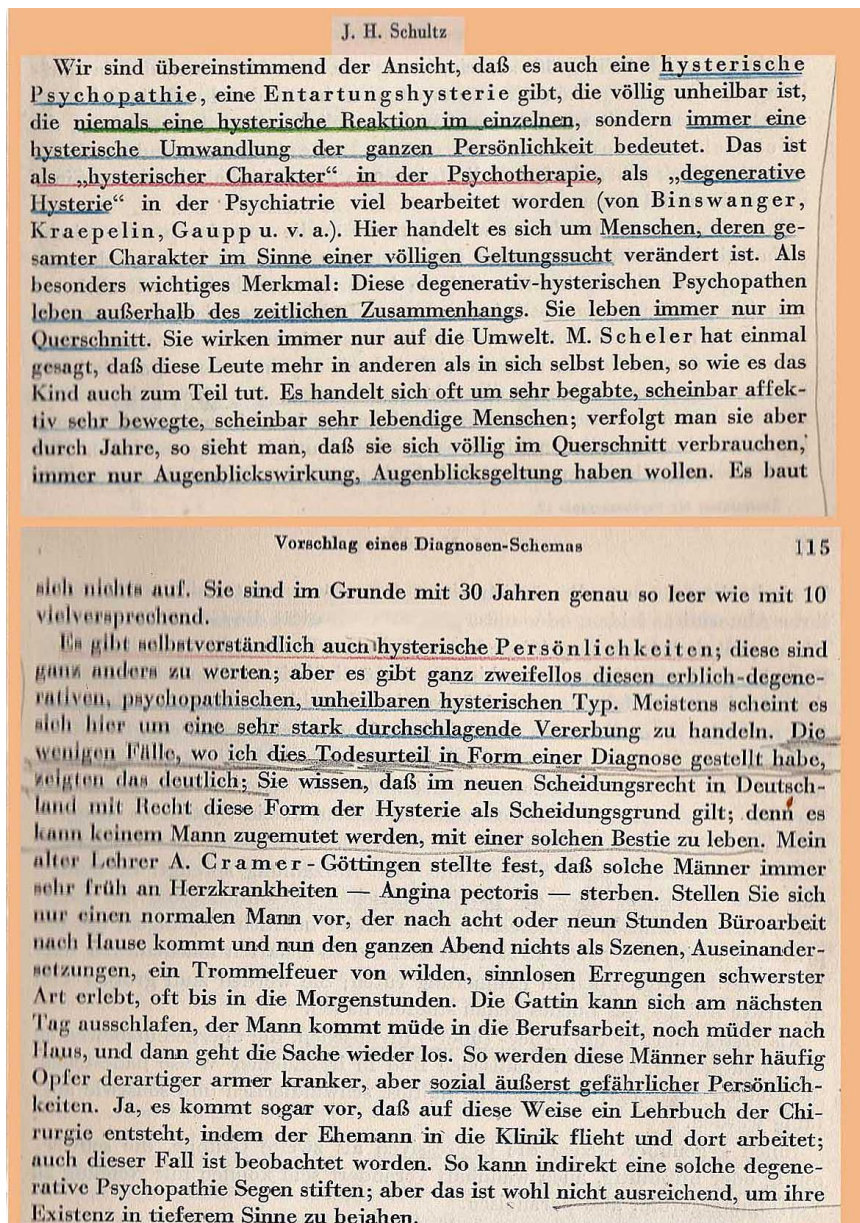


Figure 15. J. H. Schultz in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* 1940: „Death sentence in the form of a diagnosis“ (archive A. P.)

Felix Boehm's report for 1941 alone, published in the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* (1942, issue 1/2, p. 65 f.), lists 93 diagnoses of 464 polyclinic patients which could lead to sterilisation and „euthanasia“: 8 cases of debility, 8 cases of epilepsy, 22 cases of schizophrenia, 38 cases of manic-depressive illness, 17 cases of psychopathy.

<sup>53</sup> Apart from Kath and Müller-Braunschweig, these were Käthe Dräger, Hans March, Gerhart Scheunert, Margarete Steinbach (Hermanns 2010, p. 1159f. and Fn 4, here also details of the DPV foundation).

Later, the group of people affected by the so called „euthanasia“ was considerably expanded by the responsible Nazi officials and included - among many other groups - other "disorders" that also played a role in the work of the DIPFP: "school failures", "neglected", "war neurotics and hysterics", "homosexuals" (Peglau 2000a, p. 67).

There is a high probability that DIPFP patients afflicted with such stigmatisations or the diagnoses listed above fell victim to euthanasia, at least whenever they were subsequently sent to hospitals or sanatoria.

For it was here that the „euthanasia“ machinery was most intensively targeted, taking more than 200,000 lives by the end of the war.

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### **Addendum**

Medical involvement in Nazi „euthanasia“ was not a matter of weighing up whether to sacrifice one's own life *or* that of a patient. Not a single "case has become known of a doctor being sentenced to death or imprisoned for refusing to cooperate, although in some cases doctors refused to cooperate and in some cases even offered considerable resistance" (Klee 1991, p. 274).

An example of the latter was Dr Hans Roemer (1878-1947), director of the asylums in Illenau and Göppingen, who took up "the fight for each individual patient with the all-powerful head of the health authority" (ibid.). Over a long period of time, he turned to all the state authorities he could reach to lodge a protest, refused to cooperate, and thus saved the lives of many of his patients (for more details see Plezko 2011, pp. 54-63).

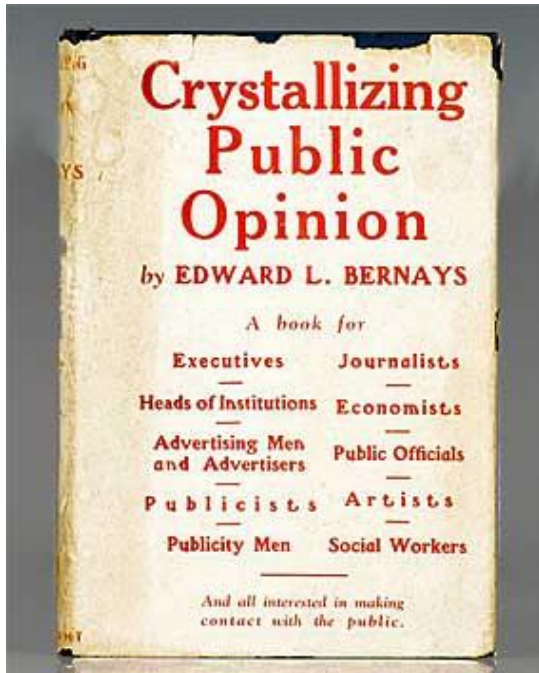
So this alternative also existed.



## 9. Depth psychological warfare

### Bernays, Goebbels - and Freud

Sigmund Freud's nephew Edward Bernays, who lived in the USA, was one of the "fathers" of "public relations". In his instructions on how to manipulate public opinion, Bernays incorporated Freud's theses and claimed:



"If we understand the mechanisms and motives of the mass soul, it is now possible for us to control and lead the masses to our will without their knowing it" (Bernays 1928, pp. 47-48).

According to Bernays, his first book on the subject, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, published in 1923, was also consulted by Joseph Goebbels (Fossel 2017).<sup>54</sup> But as Florian Fossel informs us, Freud is only mentioned by name once in this book, otherwise he is only referred to indirectly.

Figure 16: Cover of Bernay's „Crystallizing public opinion“

Fossel, however, discovered another way in which Goebbels might have come across Freud. In 1922, the German officer Kurt Hesse had written the book *Der Feldherr Psychologos: Ein Suchen nach dem Führer der deutschen Zukunft* (The commander psychologos: A search for the Leader of the German future). There

"Hesse makes direct reference to Freud's Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse by describing the libidinous bond between the soldier and his commander (Hesse 1922, 189-190). The book was probably known to Goebbels and is still used in military training today" (ibid.).

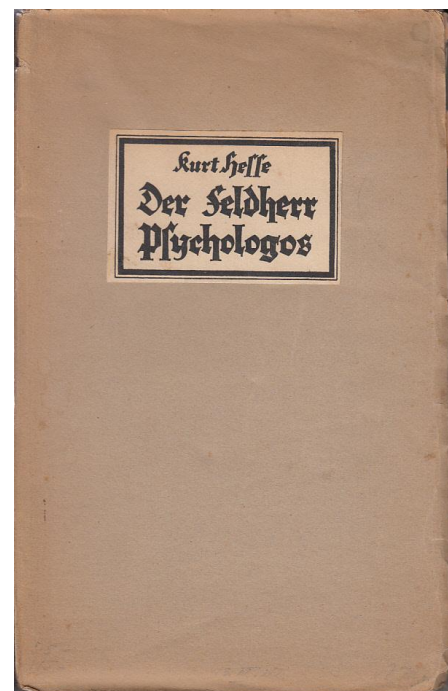


Figure 17: Cover of Kurt Hesse's „Der Feldherr Psychologos“ (archive A. P.)

<sup>54</sup> Fossel (2017, p. 206) writes: "In his autobiography, Bernays describes a dinner in 1933 with Karl von Wiegand, press correspondent for Hearst Newspapers, who told him about a visit to Joseph Goebbels in Germany. Wiegand told of Goebbels' propaganda plans and his extensive propaganda library, where he had seen Bernays' book. Goebbels, Wiegand said, used the book in his destructive campaign against the German Jews."

## More libido, more fighting power! Prelude in the First World War

Specifically, Hesse - who, in addition to Gustave LeBon, also draws on Wilhelm Stekel (Hesse 1922, pp. 188, 193) - comments on Freud's writing published a year earlier:

"In my opinion, the view held by the Viennese psychologist Siegmund [sic!] Freud, which is unfortunately also ridiculed here and there in military circles, *that the army, like the church, is an artificial mass* held together by the concept of the libido, deserves special examination. According to Freud, there is a close connection between commander and soldier. Love of its own kind. Every captain was, as it were, the father of his division [...] Prussian militarism, however, did not recognise this libidinous bond, and this was partly to blame for the fact that in 1918 there were such strong signs of decomposition.[...] Today, when we treat sexual questions as an unalterable part of our natural being, we ask without fear whether we can actually deny the core of this bond - of a spiritual kind - which Freud assumes to exist."

In fact, in *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse*, Freud (1921c, p. 103) had described and continued the "neglect of this libidinous factor in the army" as a theoretical deficiency and a "practical danger":

"Prussian militarism, which was as unpsychological as German science, perhaps had to experience this in the great world war. The war neuroses that disintegrated the German army were largely recognised as a protest of the individual against the role expected of him in the army, and according to E.[rnst] Simmel (1918), one may claim that the uncharitable treatment of the common man by his superiors was at the top of the list of motives for the illness. With a better appreciation of this libido claim [...] the great instrument [...] would not have broken in the hands of the German war artists."

The fact that Freud attested to the war-wounded soldiers as being partly caused by libido deficiency and that he classified the military killing machinery as a "great instrument" had a previous prehistory.

At the end of September 1918, at the Budapest IPV congress, many analysts wore uniforms, since they were there "as part of the medical service, like all military psychiatrists, to maintain the fighting strength of the army" (Reichmayr 1994, p. 53). However, official government representatives from Germany, Austria and Hungary were also present,<sup>55</sup> and were interested in analytical findings on so-called "war neuroses": traumas caused by combat operations, which impaired the further usability of soldiers.

The aim was to continue to provide as much "cannon fodder" as possible. Sándor Ferenczi, Ernst Simmel and Karl Abraham contributed to this through lectures, Ernest Jones also contributed a lecture text for their later publication.

Freud then began this publication with a preface which stated:

"[T]he hopeful [!] result of this first meeting was the promise to establish psychoanalytic stations where analytically trained physicians would find the means and leisure to study

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<sup>55</sup> The following took part in the congress as "official delegates": "Oberstabsarzt [Chief Medical Officer] Dr. Sándor Szepessy and Stabsarzt Dr. Ödön v. Németh, representing the Hungarian government; Generalstabsarzt Dr. Adalbert Pausz and Oberstabsarzt Dr. Friedrich Valek, representing the Austrian government; Stabsarzt Professor Dr. Casten and Staff Physician Dr. Holm, representing the German government" (Das Korrespondenzblatt der Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung 1910-1941, ed. by Michael Giefer <https://www.luzifer-amor.de/index.php?id=179>, IZP / V / 1919 / 53).

the nature of these puzzling diseases and their therapeutic influence through psychoanalysis."

Apparently with regret he added: "Before these intentions could be carried out, the end of the war came" (Freud et al. 1919, p. 3; cf. Gay 2006, p. 423f.; Jones 1984, vol. 2, p. 238f.) - namely already six weeks after the congress, on 11 November 1918.

Freud was aware of the ethical problems associated with the hoped-for treatments:

"However, this therapeutic procedure was flawed from the outset. It was not aimed at producing the sick person, or not primarily at this, but above all to make him fit for war. This time, medicine was in the service of intentions that were alien to its nature. The doctor was himself a war official [...]. The insoluble conflict between the demands of humanity, which are otherwise decisive for the doctor, and those of the people's war had to confuse the doctor's activity as well" (Freud 1955, p. 708f.).

This tactical Freud, who pushed aside scruples and attributed war suffering to "drive constellations," offered Kurt Hesse and other psycho-warriors points of reference.

[The involvement of later psychoanalysts in the US in human experiments and the creation of psycho-torture methods](#) can also be seen as a continuation of this line of tradition - an "after-math", so to speak.

## Analytically inspired war propaganda

From 1930 Hesse worked for the Army Education Inspectorate. In 1933, he returned to psychoanalysis again in *Persönlichkeit und Masse im Zukunftskrieg* (Personality and the masses in the future war), with an obviously fictitious "discussion of younger officers". Several times he used the term "ego drive" coined by Freud and put it in the mouth of a "fellow discussant":

"When Freud recently posed [the question of the death instinct](#), I also sought to answer it for the soldier, in the sense of whether it drove the German man out of the subconscious into the great sacrifice of the world war" (Hesse 1933, p. 32).

Hesse did not provide an answer.

Later he was to become of major importance to the psychological warfare of the Nazi regime: From 1939 to 1941, Hesse headed the Army Propaganda Department at the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht. Whether he continued to draw on Freud in the process has not yet been clarified.<sup>56</sup>

Publications by Albrecht Blau, from 1938 onwards a leading member of the propaganda unit of the Wehrmacht, also echo depth psychological positions. In his treatise *Propaganda als Waffe* (Propaganda as a Weapon), which he wrote for the Army High Command in 1935 and which was "intended for official use only" and was presumably also inspired by Edward Bernays, Blau stated: "We know that the course of life takes place in conscious and unconscious processes. This is what 'advertising' has to influence" (Blau 1935, p. 8). Since "the psychological masses are dominated by their drives and their power of judgement is low", "advertising content must primarily address feelings" (ibid., p. 10), aim at "drives", which in turn are directed at "satisfying needs".

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<sup>56</sup> In Hesse 1939 - as well as in the entire book in which his contribution is included - neither Freud nor depth psychology appear.

The "advertising content" should suggest "the elimination of feelings of unwillingness or the acquisition of feelings of pleasure", and for this purpose should be directed at the "libidinal unconscious". Special points of reference for this are "self-esteem", "need for recognition" and "striving for power" (ibid., pp. 16-17). The most frequently used "advertising method" was "propaganda", i.e. the "planned influencing of opinion formation with positive advertising content", which was "equally directed at all drives" (ibid., p. 22). Blau went on to apply this and various other theses to propaganda for the Nazi system and against its "enemies".

## DIPFP collaborations

With the beginning of the Second World War, the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy also participated in increasing "military strength", initially by assessing war-damaged soldiers (Roth 1987, p. 40).

As Karl Heinz Roth demonstrated on the basis of documents from the military archives, the institute was able to gain considerable influence within the Luftwaffe (cf. Cocks 1997, pp. 210, 308-314). This may have been favoured by the fact that Hermann Göring, M. H. Göring's cousin, served as Luftwaffe chief. But it also had to do with the fact that the aversion "therapy" - electric shocks and the like - customary for the ordinary soldiers of the infantry - was out of the question for the highly qualified flying personnel (Roth 1987, p. 35). The DIPFP had therefore specialised in the "prevention and treatment of future 'war neuroses'" in good time:

"The staff of the Berlin Polyclinic had trained a number of medical officers in 'people management', in the handling of 'therapeutic communities' and, of course, in analytical neurosis theory. Afterwards, these officers began their service in the Luftwaffe command staffs" (ibid., p. 35).

Depth-psychological-analytical treatment ultimately established itself as the "*ultima ratio* of war neurotic treatment in the air force". However, this was preceded by "hierarchies of suggestive and 'minor' procedures". M. H. Göring, Hans v. Hattingberg and J. H. Schultz "held the strings together in this respect and ensured smooth cooperation with the institute's polyclinic" (ibid., p. 34f.). From 1944 onwards, the DIPFP's tasks also included: psychological warfare, training of military psychologists and treatment of soldiers who had taken part in mass executions; Schultz-Hencke worked on "questions of the application of depth psychology within military psychology" (Lockot 2002, pp. 209f., 206f.). Boehm participated at the end of 1944 - as M. H. Göring's "commissioner" - in the drafting of proposals for the "assessment of criminal cases on account of unnatural fornication", in which homosexual soldiers were equated with criminals (documented in Brecht et al. 1985, pp. 156f.).

Also as a Göring representative, Werner Kemper was involved in drawing up "Guidelines of the Wehrmacht Psychiatrists for the Assessment of Psychogenic Reactions of Soldiers" in 1942. For cases of "permanent recidivism or severe degeneration" it was "suggested that departments be created in suitable places so that both the troops and the homeland are protected from the corrosive effects of these special people".

In practice, this probably usually amounted to transfer to „Strafkompanien“ (punishment troops) - which, as was already known at the time, was often tantamount to a death sentence (ibid., p. 150ff.). In 1944, following a request by Felix Boehm, Alexander Mette also declared he was willing to act as an expert witness in Wehrmacht trials, which actually happened at least once - on 4 January 1945 (Mette diaries).

Even the psychoanalysts and depth psychologists working in the DIPFP did not succeed in what is in any case an absurdity: to work within a system and with its recognition, without having a share in the guilt that this system loads upon itself.

## With Freud recognising "weak points of the enemy"

At the same time, studies were carried out at the DIPFP about the psychology of different nationalities in the Soviet Union, USA, Great Britain, France and Czechoslovakia „in order to identify the 'weak points' of the enemy" (Lockot 2002, pp. 195ff., 209ff.). In the literature associated with this, Freud's *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* then reappeared alongside Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Gustave Le Bon's *Psychologie der Massen* (Cocks 1997, p. 306).

This would probably have been unthinkable if Freud had dealt with the interrelation between the masses and their idealized leader on the basis of emerging Italian fascism. Freud may well have had this in mind when writing the book published in 1921, but he did not mention it there. Thus even this "only writing by Freud whose subject matter [...] can be attributed to sociology in the narrower sense" (Reiche 2006, p. 175) was neither considered worthy of indexing by the Leipzig Volkelt Commission in 1933, nor did the "Göring Institute" allow itself to be prevented from making use of it.

If the latter had been an expression of such radical pragmatism that any literature containing interesting mass psychological expositions was resorted to, Reich's *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* should also have found its way onto the literature list of the "Göring Institute". However, this was not the case.

This is understandable. As soon as the Nazi state, its representatives or its ideology were *named* in written critiques, the defensive strategy of "that has nothing to do with us" no longer worked. Concrete criticism also had a completely different signalling effect. It therefore also led to completely different - far more aggressive - reactions to Reich and his writings.

## Strengthening the "esprit de corps" of the Luftwaffe

In the last two years of the war, the budget of the Institute, which had been "granted the special status of 'war importance'", was "immensely increased" (Lockot 2002, p. 209). From 1944 onwards, M. H. Göring, Hattingberg and Schultz

"together with the staff of the Polyclinic [...] had to do a lot to counteract the growing fear due to the increasing number of aircraft shootdowns and to rebuild the esprit de corps of the Luftwaffe by means of 'defence-minded' training courses, by passing on 'autogenic training' and 'small psychotherapy' to the troop doctors" (Roth 1987, p. 45).

How effective the DIPFP was and remained until the end of the war was also demonstrated in 1944 by the "Instruction (!) for Troop Doctors on the Recognition and Treatment of Abnormal Mental Reactions (Neuroses)" written by "Oberfeldarzt<sup>57</sup> Prof. Dr. J. H. Schultz".

Over 19 pages, Schultz summarised and defined the Institute's position adopted by the Luftwaffe:

"A neurosis is a functional disorder in which the overall behaviour of the whole person is of decisive importance, especially with regard to its drive and affect side. The problem of neurosis is therefore actually a psychological one" (quoted in Roth 1987, p. 69).

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<sup>57</sup> Another kind of Chief Medical Officer (see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oberfeldarzt>).



The angry protest that SS-Standartenführer<sup>58</sup> Max de Crinis, head of the Psychiatric Clinic of the Charité and chief consulting army psychiatrist, then addressed to his superior, the "Reichsarzt SS und Polizei"<sup>59</sup>, Ernst-Robert Grawitz, on 8 February 1945, underlines the influence of the DIPFP therapists:

"The arrogance and self-congratulation of the Institute of Depth Psychology would still be bearable, but it seems unacceptable to me to confuse the clear scientific basic attitude of our doctors in the Waffen-SS<sup>60</sup> with this new kind of Freudianism". (ibid., p. 8).

## The end

In the last days of April, not even three months after Max de Crinis had written his letter quoted above, the Soviet Red Army conquered Berlin, the *Reichshauptstadt*.

Hitler committed suicide on April 30. Two days later, Joseph Goebbels and his wife did the same after poisoning their six children with of cyanide.

On the second of May, de Crinis, one of the masterminds behind the "euthanasia" mass murders, also killed himself with poison. "Reichsarzt" Ernst-Robert Grawitz, not only partly responsible for the "euthanasia" programme but also for lethal "experiments" in the concentration camps, had already blown himself and his family up with a hand grenade one week earlier. He had been slated to be the main defendant at the Allies' Nuremberg doctors' trial<sup>61</sup> where he would have faced execution.

On May 8, 1945, the official act of unconditional surrender was signed in Berlin.

Germany lay in ruins.

Six million Jews were murdered in the Shoah. World War II cost the lives of up to 65 million people, including up to 27 million in the Soviet Union alone.

In early May, a Soviet officer wanted to visit the DIPFD building in Berlin, which had declared itself a lazaret, but in which M. H. Göring nevertheless offered SS members shelter. They shot at the officer., and the building was subsequently destroyed. M. H. Goering was placed under arrest and died of dysentery in a Soviet military hospital towards the end of July 1945.

Thus ended the history of psychoanalysis under National Socialism.  
Its legacy can still be felt today.

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<sup>58</sup> A paramilitary officer rank comparable to colonel (see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standartenführer> and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max\\_de\\_Crinis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_de_Crinis)).

<sup>59</sup> Reich Physician SS and Police (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst-Robert\\_Grawitz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst-Robert_Grawitz))

<sup>60</sup> The combat branch of the SS (see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waffen-SS>).

<sup>61</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctors%27\\_Trial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctors%27_Trial)

## 10. Wilhelm Reich's *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (1933)

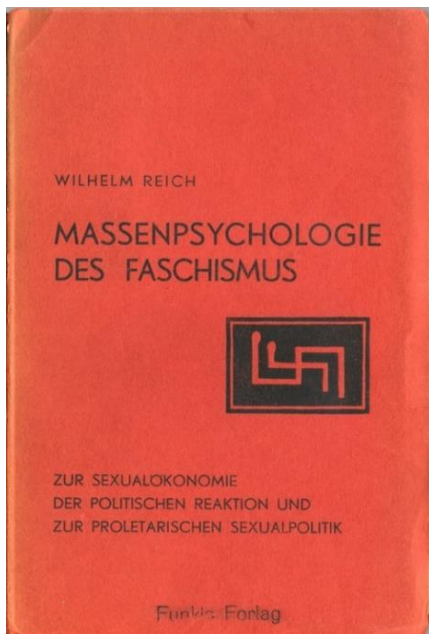
At the latest with his book *Geschlechtsreife, Enthaltensamkeit, Ehemoral* (Sexual Maturity, Abstinence, Marital Morality), published in 1930, Wilhelm Reich explicitly addressed authoritarian conditions. He characterized the petty-bourgeois "patriarchal father" in this way:

"He is, so to speak, the exponent and representative of state authority in the family. Because of the contradiction between his position in the production process (servant) and his family function (master), he is logically and typically a drill sergeant (Feldwebel); he is cowed by his superiors and completely absorbs their views [...] and he steps on those below him; he transmits the authoritarian viewpoint and reinforces it" (Reich 1930, pp. 62-63).

What Reich formulated there was later to form part of the core of the concept of authoritarianism, by means of which the social scientist Theodor W. Adorno and his associates (1950) sought to explore fascist attitudes in the 1940s.<sup>62</sup>

After Reich moved to Berlin in 1930, he apparently immediately became a member of the Communist Party of Germany there, soon assuming a leading role in the mass sexual-political organization close to the CP. And he began work on *Massenpsychologie*.

His book is therefore also the report of a contemporary witness: a Marxist psychoanalyst of Jewish origin experiences, comments on and analyzes the end of the Weimar Republic and the triumph of National Socialism.<sup>63</sup>



He was able to complete his work only after arriving in Denmark, his first country of exile, in May 1933. That same year, he was expelled from both communist and psychoanalytic organizations (Peglau 2017a, pp. 293-299, 286f.).

Within what is now called right-wing extremism research, *Massenpsychologie* was the first publication on psychosocial backgrounds of the Nazi system. Jens Benicke (2016, pp. 9-10) states, "Wilhelm Reich set the direction for the coming theories of authoritarianism with these reflections, based on a combination of the thoughts of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud."

Figure 18: The cover of the first edition: *Mass psychology of fascism. On the Sexual Economy of Political Reaction and Proletarian Sexual Politics* (archive A.P.)

<sup>62</sup> Despite various borrowings from Reich and Fromm, Adorno et al. largely underestimated their preliminary work. This set a precedent: In most works on the history of research on right-wing extremism, the beginning of authoritarianism research is now attributed to Adorno et al (Peglau 2018a).

<sup>63</sup> [After 87 years, in 2020, it was reissued by me with extensive additional material by Psychosozial-Verlag.](#) An English edition is in preparation. For details on the book's prehistory, content, reception see Peglau 2017a, pp. 266-293; ed. 2020, S. 229-272. For a unique and profound analysis of the book see Kaufhold und Hristeva 2021, pp. 13-32.

## What goes on in the masses

Historian Armin Nolzen (2004, p. 103) has presented impressive facts about the *Third Reich*. In 1939, some 80 million people were counted in Germany, including the incorporated territories of Austria and the Sudetenland. Even if one takes only the "cosmos of the NSDAP" as a starting point and includes in the analysis, in addition to the SA and SS, all "affiliated and supervised associations such as the German Labor Front, the National Socialist People's Welfare Organization, the German Women's Work," or the Hitler Youth, it is estimated that about two-thirds of the entire population of the "Greater German Reich" aged ten years and up belonged to this world of organizations. For the most part, these were individual memberships that came about on a voluntary basis, required an individual decision, and could be revoked.

Thus, the approximately 10 million members registered by the NSDAP between 1925 and 1945 were offset by more than three quarters of a million party resignations (Falter 2016a, p. 25). Several times and for extended periods, the NSDAP denied admission to the bulk of the population so as not to be swamped by the masses of opportunists. Finally, Adolf Hitler set an upper limit that no more than ten percent of adult Germans could become party members (Falter 2016b, pp. 20-37, 41).

How could such an unabashedly aggressive ideology,<sup>64</sup> a social order ultimately as destructive as the National Socialist one, achieve such acceptance?<sup>65</sup> In *Massenpsychologie*, Reich (2020, p. 29) showed that any answer that ignores psychological components falls short. Unproductive, for example, was the common

"explanation that [...] political reaction, in the guise of fascism, 'obfuscated,' 'seduced,' and 'hypnotized' the masses. This is and remains the function of fascism as long as it exists. [...] Is it not obvious to ask what is going on in the masses that they did not want to and could not recognize this role?"

Particularly since National Socialism

"towards the various objects of its propaganda [made use of] different means and, depending on the social stratum it needed at the moment, [made] different promises. For example, in the spring of 1933, the emphasis on the revolutionary character of the Nazi movement came out in the propaganda because they wanted to win over the industrial workers, and they celebrated May Day after they had satisfied the aristocracy in Potsdam."<sup>66</sup> [...] The basic question is: Why do the workers let themselves be swindled politically? They had every opportunity to control the propaganda of the various parties. Why did they not discover, for instance, that Hitler promised the workers expropriation of ownership of the means of production and the capitalists protection against strikes at the same time?" (ibid., p. 45).

## Beyond Freud and Marx

Psychoanalyst Johannes Cremerius (1997, p. 160) asked, "Wasn't *Massenpsychologie* [...] a magnificent analysis that Reich had written entirely in the spirit of Freudian social criticism?"

It should be added to this that Reich's book did not simply transfer existing psychoanalytic

<sup>64</sup> Germans had been able to find out about this since 1926 in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, 287,000 copies of which had been sold by January 1933 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mein\\_Kampf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mein_Kampf)).

<sup>65</sup> On the extent of German approval of the Nazi system, see Falter 1991; Aly 2006, pp. 130-145. On the question of whether Germans were "a nation of murderers," see Schoeps 1996; Kühl 2014, pp. 10-46.

<sup>66</sup> Reich is referring here to the "Day of Potsdam," at which Hitler and Goebbels sought to win over the conservative-monarchist novelty on March 21, 1933, with media effect by alluding to Prussian history.

concepts to another event, but clearly went beyond Freud and further developed psychoanalysis at crucial points one more time.

Freud's writing *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* was indeed a point of contact used by Reich. But Freud had once again suggested in 1921 that he was presenting timeless connections independent of social formations, and he had explained his theses on the basis of undefined masses in "Kirche und Heer" (Church and Army) - instead of referring to the Italian fascist movement, for example (Peglau 2022).

Reich agreed with Freud that the formation of masses is often based on the devaluation of the self and its supposed elevation through identification with an authoritarian leader. Likewise, he shared Freud's assumption that attachment to this leader and other group members may be shaped by unconscious sexual desires and familial dependencies. Freud's insight that sexual energy can be redirected toward nonsexual, even destructive, goals, thus creating the corresponding personality structures, was a guiding principle for Reich.

But he additionally worked out the interactions between leaders and followers, their mutual dependence, that which did not separate them but connected them, the co-responsibility of those led. While Freud thought to perceive above all a dull acting in the members of masses, Reich strove to understand the entire processes in a specific group: conscious as well as unconscious, neurotic as well as healthy, destructive as well as creative. Therefore, he could also see larger groups of people being more than merely uniformed stooges of an autocrat.

Reich did not even impute an quasi-automatic loss of individuality to Hitler's supporters, since "in the mass base of fascism, in the rebellious petty bourgeoisie, not only the reactionary, but also quite progressive", anti-capitalist "forces of history had appeared". Moreover, "it was not only petty bourgeois, but broad and not always the worst sections of the proletariat that swung to the right" (Reich 2020, p. 20).

Already because of this differentiated approach, some things can be found in *Massenpsychologie* that contradict clichés about fascism that are still widespread today. It may already have triggered intense defensive reactions on "the left" and "the right" at the time that Reich demanded that "the National Socialist movement" not be dismissed as "a work of crooks and people's swindlers",

"even if there are crooks and people's swindlers in it. Hitler is only objectively a people's swindler, in that he tightens the rule of big business; subjectively he is an honestly convinced fanatic of German imperialism, whom an objectively justified giant success has spared the outbreak of the mental illness which he carries within himself. It not only leads to a dead end, but achieves the very opposite of what was intended, if one tries to ridicule the National Socialist leadership with old, insipid methods. With unheard-of energy and great skill, he inspired the masses and thereby captured power. National Socialism is our mortal enemy, but we can only beat it if we correctly assess its strengths and courageously name them" (ibid., p. 12).

The main part of *Massenpsychologie* then began with Reich articulating "doubts about the basic Marxist conception of social events" (ibid., p. 15). "Marxist politics" had

„not included, or included incorrectly, the psychology of the masses. Anyone who observed and practically experienced the theory and practice of Marxism in the revolutionary left in recent years had to conclude that it was limited to the field of the objective processes of the economy and state politics" (ibid., p. 17).

Evaluating demographic data - already unusual for psychoanalysts at that time - Reich then provided evidence that there was a glaring contradiction between the economic situation and the ideological condition of part of the German people: millions of working people acted against their "objective" class interests by voting for bourgeois or even "right-wing" parties that could at best administer proletarian misery, at worst increase it through massive oppression and war (ibid., pp. 21-24). This could no longer be justified with Marx alone - psychoanalysis had to be brought to bear.

### **The Fabrication of Potential Fascists**

The child first passes through "the authoritarian miniature state of the family [...] in order to later be able to fit into the general social framework". The resulting "moral inhibition of natural sexuality" makes the child "fearful, shy, authority-fearing, well-behaved and educable in the bourgeois sense" (ibid., p. 38).

Since the sexual energy, after suffering the process of education, no longer obtains a natural outlet, it looks for substitute valves. It flows into natural aggression and increases it "to brutal sadism, which forms an essential part of the mass-psychological basis of that war, which is staged by a few for imperialistic interests" (ibid., p. 40). An authoritarian deformed person "acts, feels and thinks" contrary to his healthy life interests (ibid.).

This had already provided the "mass psychological foundation" of the First World War. This was no coincidence, because "every social order" generates "in the masses of its members those [psychic - A.P.] structures [...] which it needs for its main goals" (ibid., p. 31).

The "more helpless the mass individual feels due to his upbringing", the more intense at the same time the desire for an authoritarian substitute father becomes. The petty bourgeois could identify with this, "to such an extent that at suitable moments he does not perceive his complete sinking and being pushed down to a meaningless, uncritical follower" (ibid., pp. 69-70). Precisely in order not to have to perceive this depressing state, the Führer cult helps him: "Every National Socialist feels in his psychological dependence like a 'little Hitler'" (ibid., p. 86).

Reich dealt only marginally with Adolf Hitler's origins and personality, for "only when the structure of a leader's personality resonates with mass-individual structures of broad circles can a 'leader' make history." The "petty-bourgeois origins" of Hitler's ideas coincided in the main features "with the mass psychological milieu of the structures that readily assimilated these ideas." The masses were looking for someone who could best embody their authoritarian-destructive impulses, best realize their neurotic-infantile fantasies of revenge and grandeur. In Hitler they found him. That the National Socialist "mass organization succeeded" was therefore "due to the masses and not to Hitler" (ibid., pp. 44-45, 48).

### **Hatred of Jews**

By means of racial ideology, the "theoretical axis of German fascism," there was not only an attempt to "wrap a biological cloak around imperialist tendencies," that is, to construct alibis for wars of conquest and the like. At the same time, the hatred of Jews helps the individual National Socialist not to perceive his psychosexual inhibitions. Whereas the Christian religion had for centuries been hostile to the sexual "as an international characteristic of humanity, from which only the hereafter could redeem", now "nationalist fascism shifts the sexual sensual into the 'foreign race'". "Nordic" becomes "synonymous with light, noble, heavenly, pure," Asian or Jewish, on the other hand, with "libidinal, demonic, sexual, ecstatic". Thus, in the enemy image of the Jew, the National Socialist also fights his own denied sexuality (ibid., pp. 81, 84, 92, 94).



Since this denial is not limited to NSDAP members, fascism is also "the rebellion of a sexually as well as economically terminally ill society against the [...] tendencies of Bolshevism towards sexual as well as economic freedom, a freedom at the mere idea of which bourgeois man is overcome with mortal fear" (ibid., p. 67).

### A Holistic View

Reich thus described fascism as a psychological, social, economic, and political phenomenon and at the same time placed it in broader historical contexts. For him, lasting protection against fascist aberrations was therefore no longer conceivable without a psychological-psychoanalytical understanding of social processes, without serious changes in upbringing, education, sexuality, without overcoming patriarchal norms.

Whoever wanted to eliminate the psychosocial roots of "right-wing" movements would therefore have to fight not only the NSDAP and abolish capitalism, but also the nuclear family including monogamous marriage, the church, sexual repression - in short: patriarchal socialization (ibid., pp. 93-97).

From this, in March 1934, in the epilogue to the second, otherwise unchanged edition of *Massenpsychologie*, he drew the conclusion: "If one tries to change the structure of people alone, society resists. If one tries to change society alone, the people resist. This shows that neither can be changed on its own" (ibid., p. 195).

Reich continued to develop his conception of fascism over the next few years, recording the results in a significantly modified and expanded third edition in 1946 (Reich 1986).

There he wrote:

"Fascism is still taken today, as a result of a political misconception, as a specific national characteristic of the Germans or Japanese [...].

My character-analytical experiences, on the other hand, convinced me that there is not a single living person today who does not carry in his structure the elements of fascist feeling and thinking [...].

Consequently, there is a German, Italian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon, Jewish and Arab fascism [...].

One cannot render the fascist rampage harmless if, depending on the political conjuncture, one looks for it only in the German or Italian and not also in the American and Chinese; if one does not trace it in oneself, if one does not know the social institutions that incubate it daily" (ibid., pp. 13-15).

A psychoanalytic book that offers a reappraisal of the psychosocial roots of fascist currents and "right-wing movements" that is even remotely as thorough as Reich's *Massenpsychologie*<sup>67</sup> - and Erich Fromm's *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* of 1973 (Fromm 1989e) - has not appeared to this day.

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<sup>67</sup> See also Peglau 2018b (<https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/a-shift-to-the-right-in-the-21st-century-wilhelm-reichs-mass-psychology-of-fascism-as-an-explanatory-approach/>)

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<sup>68</sup> All further literature see here: <https://andreas-peglau-psychoanalyse.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Quellen-und-Literatur-Peglau-Unpolitische-Wissenschaft-Wilhelm-Reich-und-die-Psychoanalyse-im-Nationalsozialismus-Psychosozial-Verlag-Gie%C3%9Fen-2017.pdf>

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## The main abbreviations

AAA: Political Archives of the German Foreign Office  
 AOI: The Archives of the Orgone Institute  
 APA: American Psychoanalytic Association  
 ARSO: Association of Socio-Political Organizations  
 BA: Federal Archives Berlin Lichterfelde  
 BA Koblenz: Federal Archives Koblenz  
 Comintern: Communist International  
 DIPFP: German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy  
 DPG: German Psychoanalytic Society  
 DPV: German Psychoanalytical Association  
 DSt: German Student Organization (Deutsche Studentenschaft)  
 UA: Unified Association for Proletarian Sexual Reform and Maternity Protection  
 FDA: Food and Drug Administration  
 HADB: House Archive of the German Library Leipzig  
 IAH: International Workers' Aid  
 IFA: Interest Group for Workers' Culture  
 IPV, IPA: International Psychoanalytic Association  
 IZP: International Journal of Psychoanalysis  
 LA: Berlin State Archive  
 LHAB: Brandenburg State Archive  
 MASCH: Marxist Workers' School  
 NSDAP: National Socialist German Workers' Party  
 Psa., PsA., PsA or psa, psa. (in quotations): psychoanalysis or psychoanalytical  
 ZfN: Zentralblatt für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie (Central Journal of Neurology and Psychiatry)  
 ZfP: Central journal for psychotherapy and its border areas including medical psychology and mental hygiene  
 ZPPS: (Wilhelm Reich's) Journal for Political Psychology and Sexual Economics

## Quotations from reviews of the book „Unpolitische Wissenschaft? Wilhelm Reich und die Psychoanalyse im Nationalsozialismus“

"Through the prism of Reich, Peglau illuminates the history of the psychoanalytic and socialist movements by reconstructing their engagements with and about Reich."

*Jerome Seeburger, Einsicht*

"The merit of Peglau's excitingly readable research lies in the fact that in dealing with Wilhelm Reich and the adaptation of psychoanalysis to the prevailing conditions, he has shown in a document-rich way a historical course that was fateful for psychoanalysis."

*Rainer Funk, Fromm Forum*

"A look into the everyday history of adaptation and resistance using the example of psychoanalysis in the *Third Reich* could sharpen our attention above all to how unspectacularly and imperceptibly barbarism can make its way into everyday life. Peglau has provided valuable material for this."

*Fritz Rebeis, Das Argument*

"The interweaving between the fate of psychoanalysis in the Nazi state and Wilhelm Reich's history of exclusion, persecution and emigration, which Peglau meticulously reconstructs, is the linchpin of the book. It is an indispensable reference point for anyone henceforth who wants to deal with the Nazi history of psychoanalysts without blinkers."

*Bernd Nitzschke, PSYCHE*

"A real pioneering achievement. After reading it, one can really speak in a more qualified way about the less than friendly 'dealings' with Wilhelm Reich."

*Roland Kaufhold, Psychoanalyse. Texte zur Sozialforschung*

"The mammoth task of tracing the simultaneous discrediting and demonisation of Reich by psychoanalysis, on the left from the KPD German Communist Party, and from the right the anti-Semitic forces before 1933, as well as by the Nazi rulers after 1933, has been masterfully portrayed by Andreas Peglau in a moving and touching, yet academically well-founded and systematically structured account."

*Galina Hristeva, literaturkritik.de*

"Andreas Peglau may have succeeded in producing the most thorough and comprehensive scholarly reappraisal of a difficult chapter in the history of psychoanalysis. His contribution to the clarification of a catastrophe still shrouded in legends, myth-making or simple ignorance, are immense and can hardly be overestimated. Many readers now and in the future should thank him."

*Hans-Martin Lohmann, LUZIFER-AMOR*

"Both the general history of psychoanalysis in this period and the case of Reich are presented here in rich material, deepened, expanded beyond the available knowledge to the latest state of the art. Peglau additionally provides insight into Reich the author and political activist, enabling us both to get to know Reich and to better understand the conflicts with him through psychoanalysis."

*Almuth Bruder-Bezzel, Zeitschrift für Individualpsychologie*



"Especially in a time of increasing unimportance of psychoanalysis (and Peglau names numerous reasons for this), one wishes the book many readers from the practising and growing psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic guild. Historians will greatly benefit from reading the study."

*Elke Mühlleitner, hsozkult.de*

„Peglau's remarkable study of Wilhelm Reich and of the fate of psychoanalysis under Nazism is a major and outstanding contribution to its subject. Painstakingly researched and lucidly argued, it radically overhauls the prevalent picture of Reich as some 'halfcrazed genius' or 'mildly paranoid' Freudian renegade and reinstates the best period of his work (the late twenties to the end of the thirties) in the context it belongs to.“

*Jairus Banaji, academia.edu*

"Should those who belong to social work [...] also read the book? Yes, first of all those who feel committed to psychoanalytic social pedagogy [...] or psychoanalytic social work [...] in Germany; they could examine whether and to what extent they are duped by the idealising psychoanalytic historiography criticised in this book. Furthermore, those interested in the history of social work [...] could work out how great [...] the common ground between psychoanalysis and social work was in the Third Reich."

*Hans-Peter Heckerens, socialnet.de*

"One should not be put off by the considerable size of this book. It should be assured here that, firstly, it is concisely and fluently written. Secondly, it is one of the most important books on the history of psychoanalysis, making its decline from a socially critical theory and practice to a medicalised, *supposedly* 'apolitical' science comprehensible in detail for the first time. And thirdly, it offers the rediscovery of an outstanding left-wing social scientist whose work is of topical brisance: Reich's insights, put on paper in 1933, are urgently needed not only to understand the European 'shift to the right', but also to counter it appropriately."

*Werner Abel, Neues Deutschland*

"This book is unique in the German literature, I suspect even worldwide.

Why? It has three merits, which individually may also be found in other books, but never in this combination.

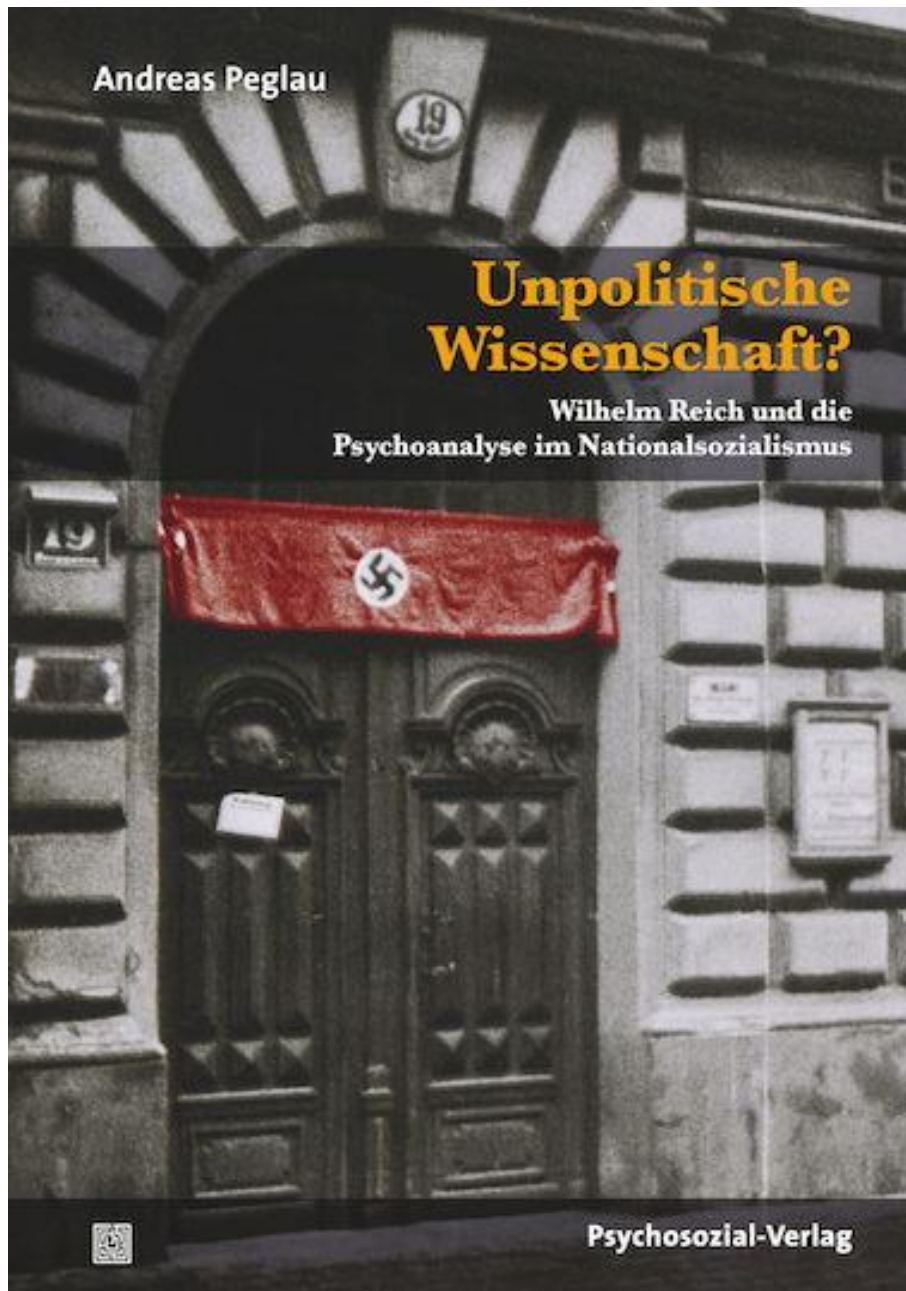
First - and far from self-evident: the author can write clearly. [...]

Then - the historical and current contemporary facts presented here are themselves highly interesting. Many are new, unique, and reassessed and placed in new contexts. [...]

Finally - and this shows the book's current explosive power, it is an immensely detailed, fine-grained, so to speak, account of real historical development processes and their actors, without coarsely sketched simplifications, without always only partially accurate classifications, without ideological guiding and blinkers.

Certainly, the future will unearth an infinite amount of further material on the history of psychoanalysis, which was partly banned by the Nazis but never really burned. But it will hardly surpass the density, diversity and ramification as it appears in the book by Andreas Peglau. That is why it is a unique book."

*John Erpenbeck, amazon.de*



**Andreas  
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Unpolitische  
Wissenschaft?  
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und die Psy-  
choanalyse im  
Nationalsozia-  
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## Links to other translated articles by A. Peglau, related to the content

**Please note the following:** My English skills are not very good. Therefore, I first translated the text with [DeepL](#) and then corrected it. I am sure that there are still translation errors - and ask those who discover such errors to send a message to [info@andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de](mailto:info@andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de)

### [A visit to the Wilhelm Reich Archive in Boston in the year 2012](https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/a-visit-to-the-wilhelm-reich-archive/)

<https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/a-visit-to-the-wilhelm-reich-archive/>

Before Wilhelm Reich died in the U.S. on Nov. 3, 1957, he had stipulated in his will that his legacy would not be made available to the public until 50 years after his death. In November 2007 the time had come. In January 2012 I visited – apparently as the first German-speaking researcher – this archive, located at the Medical School of Boston's Harvard University.

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### [A Marxist psychoanalyst of Jewish origin experiences the end of the Weimar Republic. After 87 years, Wilhelm Reich's \*Massenpsychologie des Faschismus\* \(1933\) appears for the first time in its edited original text.](https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/a-marxist-psychoanalyst-of-jewish-origin-experiences-the-end-of-the-weimar-republic/)

<https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/a-marxist-psychoanalyst-of-jewish-origin-experiences-the-end-of-the-weimar-republic/>

Consistent psychoanalysis is critical of society, as a social science as well as a therapeutic method. For this reason, too, the original of Reich's *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*, is one of the most important psychoanalytic books ever to have appeared.

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### [The Unified Associations for Proletarian Sexual Reform and Maternity Protection and Wilhelm Reich's real role in the German "Sexpol"](https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/the-unified-associations-for-proletarian-sexual-reform-and-maternity-protection-and-wilhelm-reichs-real-role-in-the-german-sexpol/)

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Through the creation of mass organisations, the KPD attempted from 1924 onwards to reach broader sections of the population and at the same time to draw them away from the SPD. This was not always accompanied by large membership numbers. Nevertheless, these organisations as a whole had an impressive following.

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### [Reich at the Marxist Workers' School MASCH](https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/reich-at-the-marxist-workers-school-masch/)

<https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/reich-at-the-marxist-workers-school-masch/>

Initiated by the KPD in Berlin in 1925/26, the founding of MASCH marked the beginning of an educational project that was in many respects unique and unjustly almost forgotten. The aim of the MASCH was to provide workers with education, above all basic knowledge of Marxism.

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### [Schlangenbader Str. 87, 14197 Berlin: the birthplace of body psychotherapy](https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/schlangenbader-str-87-14197-berlin-the-birthplace-of-body-psychotherapy/)

<https://andreas-pegiau-psychoanalyse.de/schlangenbader-str-87-14197-berlin-the-birthplace-of-body-psychotherapy/>

In November 1930, Reich moved from Vienna to Berlin. His reputation as a potential troublemaker, which endangered the maintenance of the desired psychoanalytic image, had, of course, preceded him.

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### **Was "Sex-pol" a movement?**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/was-sex-pol-a-movement/>

Even before Reich moved from Norwegian exile to the U.S. in 1939, the final failure of what Reich had called the "Sex-Pol movement" had occurred. Already when Reich planned the work program for the following year in the summer of 1937, the "Sex-Pol" was no longer mentioned.

But does what was disintegrating there really deserve the title "movement"?

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### **Mass Organization or „small splinter group“? About the German „Sex-pol“**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/mass-organization-or-small-splinter-group-about-the-german-sex-pol/>

Already during his lifetime Reich was the victim of intense slanders. They never stopped. Peter Bahnen has the merit of being the first to reconstruct Reich's sexual reform activities in Berlin. However, this was done on the basis of a clearly negative bias against Reich. Bahnen also doubted Reich's figures about the "German Sex-pol".

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### **Wilhelm Reich and Willy Brandt as "High Traitors"**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/wilhelm-reich-and-willy-brandt-as-high-traitors/>

Announcement of an astonishing find: the psychoanalyst Reich and the later German Chancellor Willy Brandt were jointly targeted by the Nazi People's Court for high treason in 1939. The role, perhaps decisive for Reich's survival, of a hitherto unjustly unknown person is also revealed: Martin Mayer.

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### **Was Reich "mad"? On the credibility of widespread clichés**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/was-reich-mad-on-the-credibility-of-of-widespread-cliches/>

A "campaign of character assassination that continues to the present day" was and is ongoing against Reich. Already during his Scandinavian exile (1933-1939), former colleagues of Reich, including his former teaching analysts, put the claim into the world that Reich had gone mad. Preferably, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia.

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### **Expatriated psychoanalysts**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/expatriated-psychoanalysts/>

Psychoanalysis was far less suppressed under National Socialism than is usually assumed, even by experts. This - and the special position of Wilhelm Reich - is also proven by the files of the Foreign Office, which was responsible for expatriations at that time, evaluated here for the first time.

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### **Were there psychoanalytic writings against fascism? Results of an (almost futile) research lasting several months.**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/were-there-psychoanalytic-writings-against-fascism/>

As soon as "a writer overstepped the political boundaries set for him by the regime, he risked not only his membership in the Reichsschrifttumskammer and thus his professional existence, but in extreme cases also his life" (Barbian 2008, p. 20). But which psychoanalytic authors - before and after 1933 - exercised such unequivocal criticism in their publications?

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### **What would a Wilhelm Reich-oriented psychoanalysis look like?**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/what-would-a-wilhelm-reich-oriented-psychoanalysis-look-like/>

The question of what psychoanalysts can and should do here and now for the preservation of peace is, in my view, by far the most important reason why a profound discussion of Reich within psychoanalysis should urgently - for the first time - be put on the agenda.

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### **Concepts of Man**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/concepts-of-man/>

Each and every one of us has - at least unconsciously - an image or concept of Man: Assumptions about what people are like in general, good or bad, capable of learning and changing or not, reliable or unreliable, lazy or industrious ...etc. Depending on what we consider to be true in this respect, we also assess what causes and remedies there are for negative social developments - such as the fascistoid ones.

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### **Myth of the Death Instinct. About an aberration of psychoanalysis**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/myth-of-the-death-instinct-about-an-aberration-of-psychoanalysis/>

In 1932, Freud referred to "[t]he theory of drives" as "our mythology," drives as "mythical beings." In 1920, in *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* (Beyond the principle of pleasure), he had first publicly presented the most controversial of these "beings": the destructive or death drive. Even today, the assumption of such an instinct has influence inside and outside psychoanalysis - although its remoteness from reality has long been proven.

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### **An "unfulfillable demand" on the "lawgiver of philosophizing". The first public worldview debate of the psychoanalysts**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/an-unfulfillable-demand-on-the-lawgiver-of-philosophizing-the-first-public-worldview-debate-of-the-psychoanalysts/>

In 1983 Helmut Dahmer reported in the journal *Psyche* on publications that took a stand on the identity of psychoanalysis in the late 1920s, early 1930s. Dahmer also pointed out that something comparable had already occurred "on the eve of World War I," "in the form of a discussion of the relationship between psychoanalysis and 'philosophy'". This earlier controversy is also worthy of consideration.

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### **100 years of „Urszene“ („Primal scene“). Notes on a controversial term**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/100-years-of-urszene-primal-scene-notes-on-a-controversial-term/>

Johannes Cremerius assess that psychoanalysis only has a future if it undergoes "tidying up" in concept formation instead of continuing to stumble along "rubble heaps of arbitrary, ambiguous terms or that are understandable only to the initiated." Even "in the center of psychoanalytic theorizing" one encounters "generalizing ideas," "private philosophies," which have never been clarified and passed on without reflection. I share this view.

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### **„Im Auftrag der Firma.“ Book essay**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/im-auftrag-der-firma-book-essay/>

About Knuth Müllers "On behalf of the company. History and consequences of an unexpected liaison between psychoanalysis and military-intelligence networks of the USA since 1940".

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**Did the German Democratic Republic (GDR) produce more „right-wing“ attitudes than the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)? No – quite the opposite.**

<https://andreas-peglaue-psychoanalyse.de/did-the-gdr-produce-more-right-wing-attitudes-than-the-frg-no-quite-the-opposite/>

In 1992, two years after the GDR's annexation to the FRG, a social science study came to the following conclusion: the "proportion of East Germans expressing anti-Semitic, right-wing extremist or xenophobic views" was "lower than the corresponding proportion of West Germans. German citizens in the East take the consequences of the Nazi past for the present more seriously."

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