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Psychoanalysis, Nazism and 'Jewish Science'

A Ferocious Silence

The history of psychoanalysis in Germany during the Nazi period has been a source of some controversy and heart-searching within the analytic community over the past twenty years. Prior to that, with the exception of early revelations concerning C.G. Jung's collaboration with the Nazis (Léon, 1946) and a rather negative report to Ernest Jones from John Rickman in 1946 (reprinted in Brecht et al, 1985), there had been a ferocious silence over events between 1933 and 1945. 'Ferocious' here, because the silence not only covered up a troubled history, but also repressed a set of contradictions and tensions which have relevance both to the social history of psychoanalysis as a profession, and also to its theoretical positions. Both this history and these theories are heavily invested in by psychoanalysts and others committed to the discipline, the benign nature of which is to some extent called into question if one argues -as it is possible to do- that psychoanalysis fell rather easily into Nazi hands. Thus, 'not speaking' about the Nazi period was one of those functional defences arising out of a partially unconscious awareness of the problems which could have been caused by speaking too clearly. The silence not only served to create a space to get on with post-war reconstruction; it was also a way of holding together a movement which might easily, faced with its own destructive impulses, fragment.

Since about the mid-1970s, there has been an opening out of work on the Nazi period, with one spur to action being the meeting of the International Psychoanalytic Association in Hamburg in 1985, although this produced disappointment in some Jewish analysts that the issues of the Nazi Holocaust were not fully attended to (Moses and Hrushovski-Moses, 1986). The work includes documentation by Brecht et al (1985) and English-language studies of psychotherapy in Nazi Germany by Cocks (1985, second edition 1997) and of psychoanalysis by Goggin and Goggin (2001). In addition, *Psychoanalytic Review* published a special issue on the topic (issue 88, 2001) and there have been many substantial papers on various aspects of the historical record (Riccardo Steiner's work based on the correspondence between Anna Freud and Ernest Jones is of special importance -Steiner, 2000). The controversy has been and remains one between those who see the Nazi period as an aberration in which psychoanalysis was destroyed and therefore had to be recreated anew in Germany, and those who argue for 'continuity', that however much it was constrained by its Nazi masters, psychoanalysis continued and possibly -at least as a form of psychotherapy- flourished. This controversy was part of the post-war debate between the two German institutions claiming psychoanalytic legitimacy. The Deutsche Psychoanalytische Gesellschaft (DPG), which was the 'original' group, claimed that psychoanalysis had been 'saved' by its members during the war. The Deutsche Psychoanalytische Vereinigung (DPV) -which split from the DPG largely on issues of the 'purity' of psychoanalytic practice and which was recognised by the IPA in 1951 (Bibring, 1952), with Carl Müller-Braunschweig as its leader- argued that psychoanalysis had been destroyed and that a new organisation was needed to resurrect it. Brecht et al (1985, p.214), tracing the history, note:

> In the efforts to rebuild the Psychoanalytical Society after 1945 there were now two currents: one apparently continued without a break the evolution toward psychotherapy which had begun under National Socialism, the other tried to free psychoanalysis from other therapeutic trends and to make common cause with the

> developments which had meanwhile been going on abroad. But in both divergent trends there was little room for reflection on their common past under National Socialism, their collaboration with it, their own susceptibility to its ideology, the advantages they had gained from it, or the fact that representatives of the new psychoanalytical institution had belonged to the NSDAP. If such thoughts emerged, they apparently disappeared again without trace

Not only has this debate between those who posit continuity and those who claim discontinuity in psychoanalysis from the Nazi period to the post-war situation had practical ramifications in the structures and splits in contemporary German psychoanalysis, but it also says a considerable amount about the fundamental assumptions of psychoanalysis, the conditions under which it can survive, those under which it can thrive, and the moral standing of its practitioners. None of these issues have gone unnoticed, although often they become somewhat swamped by the political and transferential realities of the psychoanalytic scene. In addition, there is the relatively silenced question of psychoanalysis as a 'Jewish science', which the Goggins have brought it back into focus in their book (including in its title *-Death of a 'Jewish Science'*). This was, of course, the way it was catalogued by the Nazis and the notion of it as 'Jewish' therefore has strong antisemitic connotations; but there are also many serious Jewish scholars interested in the links between psychoanalysis and Jewish thought (e.g. Bakan, 1958, Klein, 1985, Roith, 1987, Diller, 1991, Gilman, 1993; Yerushalmi, 1991), making any simple repudiation of the 'Jewish science' idea difficult to sustain.

This paper takes up some of the points raised above and casts them as a set of questions surrounding what might be called the ' Jewish impulse' in psychoanalysis and the response it calls forth in others. The fate of psychoanalysis in Germany in the Nazi period is an example of the tension between the critical stance of psychoanalysis and the impulse to repress this criticality; the absorption of psychoanalysis into projects of social adjustment is one manifestation of the repressive impulse, grandiose under the totalitarian conditions of Nazism, but present elsewhere too (see Jacoby, 1975, 1983). However, the thesis here is that the collaborationist tendency in psychoanalysis under the Third Reich expressed not only personal and professional fears and ambitions and misguided strategies, but also something about antisemitism on a psychological and political level.

The Origins of the 'Jewish Science'

The notion of psychoanalysis as a 'Jewish science' depends not only on the fact that most of its originators in Europe were Jews[1], but also on the idea that Jewish thought, Jewish philosophy and history, flooded its foundations, making it the inheritor of the specific inward-consciousness of the Jews, newly released in the nineteenth century from their ghettoes and at least some of their traditions. That is, the claim is based on the idea of cultural inheritance: that however atheistic these Jews were, they *could not but* pursue a way of looking at things which was 'Jewish'. Much of this argument is focused on Freud himself, who is evoked as not just the founder of psychoanalysis, but its mainstay -something still true today to some degree, but very much the case during his lifetime, which ended only in 1939. Freud is seen as epitomising the kind of secular Jew who played such a powerful role in revolutionising western culture at the turn of the twentieth century, and his 'science' as

[1] 'Until March 6, 1907, when Carl Jung and... Ludwig Binswanger, attended their first meeting in Vienna, every member of the [psychoanalytic] circle -by this time, there were about 20- was Jewish' (Klein, 1985, p.93). This was not the case in Britain, where a different set of conditions prevailed (Frosh, 2003).

completely infused with such 'Jewish' perceptions. Yerushalmi (1991), for instance, argues that the secularism which arose in the wake of Jewish emancipation produced 'Psychological Jews' of whom Freud was a prime example.

> Alienated from classical Jewish texts, Psychological Jews tend to insist on inalienable Jewish traits. Intellectuality and independence of mind, the highest ethical and moral standards, concern for social justice, tenacity in the face of persecution -these are among the qualities they will claim, if called upon, as quintessentially Jewish. (p.10)

To this list of formidable attributes, Yerushalmi adds a sensitivity to antisemitism of a very specific kind, far removed from the acceptance of ethnic antagonism which was more characteristic of pre-emancipation eras, resenting and resisting 'any attempt on the part of the surrounding society to define them against their own wishes' (Ibid.). This is very much a story of Freud, but it is also a characterisation of an interior way of being, hovering around questions of belonging and otherness, of historical determination and freedom, which demonstrably influences modern Jewish identities and perhaps modern identities in general. This 'Psychological Jew' is not a Freudian creation, but it is deeply inflected by, as well as reflected in, Freudianism, with its unsettled, constantly questioning, ever-analysing search for some elusive truth.

Taking this further into thoughts on the specific inheritance of psychoanalysis, what arises is the issue of marginality and the cultivation of a critical consciousness. This relates to many aspects of Jewish culture: Talmudic patterns of exegesis, free thinking within a heavily structured pattern of rules, fascination with words, with reading, with commentary, a relentless and unending search for another way of looking at things. Sharing something here with the Protestant and the capitalist world-view in their focus on individual self-determination, but ethnically still embedded in the Jewish *difference*, psychoanalysis, at least in its own mythology, stands outside orthodoxies, offering a radical alternative, an otherness which is 'independent'. This new approach, neither religious nor scientific, whatever Freud's cravings in the latter direction, is best called deeply *critical*: there is nothing that can stand outside analysis, no final resting place for the questing intelligence.

Freud's relationship with his Jewish identity was notoriously ambivalent and has been the subject of a great deal of historical, psychoanalytic and frankly speculative scholarship. A number of things are clear from this work. First, Freud identified as a Jew throughout his life, ever more so as antisemitism became increasingly rife in Europe and in Germany and Austria in particular. Early on, in fact, the situation was not so simple, and Gilman (1993) gives a long account of the internalised antisemitism of Freud himself as a young man, meeting and avoiding and parodying the Eastern European Jews who he regarded as racial throwbacks and degenerates. Whatever the strength of his internalised antisemitism, however, the external world's actual antisemitism ensured that Freud kept a strong positive identification with his Jewish identity, despite a complete lack of Jewish *religious* affiliation. Gay (1988, p.507) describes Freud's trajectory as follows:

> in the poisonous atmosphere of the late 1920s and early 1930s he did more than refuse to deny his Jewish origins. He trumpeted them. Freud's attitude towards Judaism throughout his life reveals this largely unconscious strategy.

The 'Jewishness' of psychoanalysis, however, was regarded by Freud as more than just a response to antisemitism. As he got older, he became more inclined not just to assert his Jewishness against antisemites, but also to express a strong positive emotional attachment to it. Some of this was nostalgic, expressing gratitude for the sense of community that his Jewish identity could give him in a hostile world; this attitude was most clearly expressed in his striking acknowledgement of, and lifelong gratitude for, the support he received from the

Vienna B'nai Brit whilst he was formulating his early ideas. Often, however, Freud called on a specific cultural or even 'racial' affinity to explain how Jewishness and psychoanalysis might intersect. This relates to the ease with which Freud thought he and his Jewish followers could understand one another, in comparison to the situation with non-Jews. Writing in 1908 to Karl Abraham about Jung, for instance, he asserted, 'you are closer to my intellectual constitution because of racial kinship.' This 'racial kinship' determined a way of thinking and reasoning, and non-Jews struggled to keep up with it. Abraham himself thought that this was because of an ingrained Talmudic strand in psychoanalysis ('After all, our Talmudic way of thinking cannot disappear just like that' -Gilman, 1993, p.34), something which could only have crept in unconsciously given that Freud never studied the Talmud. This at least has the virtue of suggesting a cultural explanation for the affinity between Jewish thinkers and psychoanalysis: that, once they burst out of the confines of solely religious scholarship, the deeply ingrained modes of thought which characterised Jewish intellectual life across centuries infiltrated the wider intellectual and cultural scene, including psychoanalysis.

There are also places, however, where the emotional element in Freud's Jewish affiliation is more pronounced and less easily reducible. Here is the most expressive of his accounts of something mysterious drawing him in, from the preface to the Hebrew edition of *Totem and Taboo*.

> No reader of the Hebrew version of this book will find it easy to put himself in the emotional position of an author who is ignorant of the language of holy writ, who is completely estranged from the religion of his fathers -as well as from every other religion- and who cannot take a share in nationalist ideals, but who has yet never repudiated his people, who feels that he is in his essential nature a Jew and who has no desire to alter that nature. If the question were put to him: 'Since you have abandoned all these common characteristics of your countrymen, what is left to you that is Jewish?' he would reply: 'A very great deal, and probably its very essence.' He could not express that essence in words, but some day, no doubt, it will become accessible to the scientific mind. (Freud, 1930, p.xv)

By this point in time, Freud must have understood what it might mean to assert his Jewishness in the context of renewed political antisemitism. Freud's reference to his *essentially* Jewish nature can be read both as an act of the deepest political resistance and an attestation to the limits of psychoanalytic knowledge -an assertion that when all is said and done, something else still remains, not susceptible, or at least not yet susceptible, to psychoanalytic scrutiny. This paradox, in which one of the sharpest and most unrelenting rational minds of the twentieth century stands back from uncovering one of its own deepest emotional attachments, is expressive of the psychoanalytic conundrum as a whole: that whatever it turns up from under a stone, there is always something else to find.

Freud also offered another set of reasons why Jewish identity, modernism and psychoanalysis run together in their forward-looking, tradition-breaking aspects.

> It was only to my Jewish nature that I owed the two qualities that have become indispensable to me throughout my difficult life. Because I was a Jew I found myself free of many prejudices which restrict others in the use of the intellect: as a Jew I was prepared to be in the opposition and to renounce agreement with the 'compact majority'. (Freud, 1961, p.368)

Freud certainly had the necessary 'degree of readiness to accept a situation of solitary opposition -a situation with which no one is more familiar than a Jew' (Freud, 1925, p.222), that capacity to hold to his own thoughts and articulate what might have been half-known, but was also severely repressed. Seizing the modernist moment, Freud could adapt the Jewish

penchant for finding hidden meanings and apply it to the state of humanity itself. Secular Jews, like modernists, cannot hide from the confusing realities of the world, cannot make it all straightforward or pre-formed; tradition has its value, bonds between people exist, but more is needed to wrest these confusions into symbolisable form, some way in which they can be understood. Relentlessly interior and self-reflexive, Jewish thought does this, playfully sometimes, with anguish at others; this is also part of the psychoanalytic response to modernity: there is no place of refuge from restless thought.

Clearly, the idea that psychoanalysis might at least have a strong Jewish connection, even if one might baulk at the idea of it being a Jewish 'science', is not particularly contentious. Sociologically and philosophically, in its membership, its practices and its mind-set, psychoanalysis was constructed out of the energy released from the antisemitic as well as the theocratic restrictions of the past. With the resurgence of the antisemitic part of this in its newly virulent twentieth century European form, these issues became key once more: psychoanalysis was to be damned because of its Jewish origins and structure, and if it was going to be rescued, then -so at least some of the thinking went- its Jewishness (including its Jewish membership) would have to be discarded.

Appeasing the Nazis

By the early 1930s, German psychoanalysis and specifically the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute (BPI), was a model for how psychoanalysis might be practised and developed in an advanced society. The BPI had been founded by Ernst Simmel and Max Eitingon in 1920 and was bankrolled by Eitingon, who in the early 1930s was also President of the German Psychoanalytic Society (DPG). It was explicitly social reformist in attitude and approach, and had amongst its members some of the stars of the movement to combine socialism or Marxism and psychoanalysis -Wilhelm Reich, Otto Fenichel, Erich Fromm, Edith Jacobson, Ernst Simmel, Siegfried Bernfeld and others, most of them Jews. It also adopted a programme of developing psychoanalysis so that it could be of benefit to working people, with a substantial commitment to low cost psychotherapy. Otto Fenichel ran the famous 'Children's Seminar' at the BPI, the 'children' of the title referring to their position in the hierarchy of analysts rather than their focus, for the purpose of this Seminar was to study relations between psychoanalysis and politics, particularly socialism (Jacoby, 1983). The BPI thus enacted both a commitment to psychoanalytic practice and education, and an attempt to make psychoanalysis of cultural and political relevance -a serious yet immensely exciting affair. Goggin and Goggin (2001, p.19) comment, 'it is not too much to say that by 1930 the BPI had established itself as a role model for the profession.' Yet, within a remarkably short time after the accession of the Nazis to power in 1933, all this had gone.

The story of how this happened is quite complex, and its underlying dynamics are even more so. There are also continuing uncertainties over the role of certain important protagonists, including Freud and Anna Freud themselves. Mixed up in the narrative is the provocative figure of Jung, and a subsidiary plot is provided by the machinations around Wilhelm Reich. Ernest Jones is at times both villain and hero. Three names recur: Matthias Göring, Felix Boehm and Carl Müller-Braunschweig, the first of these a cousin of the top Nazi politician, who took over the psychotherapy movement as a consequence; the other two being non-Jewish ('Aryan') psychoanalysts who were instrumental in the collaboration with Nazism in the 1930s and who survived the war, in Müller-Braunschweig's case going on to head the new psychoanalytic organisation in West Germany. The story is one of failed appeasement and muddled thinking, not especially scarce commodities in the 1930s, with a contributory

undertone of self-deception.

The history has been reasonably well documented in recent years, particularly in Brecht et al (1985), and can only be summarised briefly here. Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany at the end of January 1933 and rapidly consolidated his power. Within months the opposition had been largely defeated, the mechanisms of terror had been put in place, and the writing was on the wall for Jews, communists and other anti-Nazi elements. The psychoanalysts panicked. Max Eitingon, then President of the DPG, went to consult with Freud, leaving Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig in temporary charge. These two immediately began a process of negotiation with the Nazis, hatching a plan for Eitingon to be replaced as leader of the DPG and for the Jewish members to resign. Freud himself, when consulted by Boehm, agreed that he could take over the DPG if he could get a majority to vote for him, apparently hoping that hiding the Jewish culture of psychoanalysis behind the 'Aryan' figure of Boehm might be enough to appease the Nazis. This was also the view of Ernest Jones, President of the International Psychoanalytic Association, who in the early period of the Third Reich was strongly committed to an approach which would protect the interests of German psychoanalysis even at the expense of its individual members -that is, its Jewish members. Even though the DPG opposed Boehm's move, Eitingon resigned at the meeting of 6 May 1933 and shortly afterwards left Germany to live in Palestine. By the end of 1933 a further twenty or so Jewish analysts had left the country and, in a symbolic act of great significance in bringing home to them the new State's attitudes, Freud's books had been publicly burnt. Simmel, a past chairman of the Association of Socialist Doctors, had also been arrested in the summer of 1933, increasing the anxiety of the DPG (Brecht et al, 1985, p.112). Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig were hard at work, following an appeasing plan: 'the DPG went its way eliminating step by step whatever endangered it as an institution, in the hope of saving itself and psychoanalysis at the same time' (ibid.). They had met with the Nazi Ministry of Culture in September 1933 to discuss the conditions under which the DPG could be preserved, and by November 1933 all the offices of the DPG had been taken over by non-Jewish members, while only non-Jewish candidates for membership were approved.

To the Nazis, psychoanalysis was a prime example of the corrosive nature of Jewish thought, its degenerate capacity to poison the sources of idealism and feeling for race and nation and, especially, 'to strike the Nordic races at their most vulnerable point, their sexual life' (Deutsche Volksegesundheit aus Blut und Boden, 1933, quoted in Brecht et al, 1985, p.101). Psychoanalysis 'belonged to the overrationalized corruptions of late capitalism, its alleged obsession with sexual drives plaguing primitive peoples like the Jews making it a proper therapeutic method only in rare cases' (Cocks, 1997, p. 60); the practice of psychoanalysis could thus be seen as actively anti-social. Defending psychoanalysis against this onslaught, Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig therefore saw themselves as faced with the task of persuading the Nazis that psychoanalysis was not necessarily 'Jewish', but could be utilised in the service of the state. From Boehm's own account (Brecht et al, 1985, pp.132-137), a great deal of his energy went into persuading Nazi functionaries that psychoanalysis was not dependent on the fact that Freud, a Jew, had founded it, but rather stood independently of this on its merits. Moreover, whereas the Nazis were inclined to see it as a 'subversive' discipline, Boehm himself attempted to persuade them that 'I had never known psychoanalysis to have a destructive effect on love of country' (ibid., p. 132). Müller-Braunschweig wrote a famous 'Memorandum' on psychoanalysis for the Nazis, published in a slightly adapted form in October1933, under the title 'Psychoanalysis and *Weltanschauung*' in *Reichswart*, a 'rabid anti-Semitic publication' (Nitzschke, 1999, p. 357). In this article, the basis of psychoanalysis is asserted to be not just the understanding of sexuality, but of ego-instinct conflicts in

general; this particular slant allows Müller-Braunschweig to use the language of ‘mastery’ so resonant with the Nazis -the unconscious can be ‘mastered’, the patient can achieve ‘mastery of himself’. Then comes an infamous passage, taken generally as an example of the slippage in Müller-Braunschweig’s thinking between an analytic stance and one in which service to the Third Reich could come to predominate.

> Psychoanalysis works to remodel incapable weaklings into people who can cope with life, the inhibited into confident types, those divorced from reality into human beings who can look reality in the face, those enslaved by their instincts into their masters, loveless, selfish people into people capable of love and sacrifice, those indifferent to the totality of life into those willing to serve the whole. Thus it does outstanding work in education, and is able to give valuable service to the principles, only now mapped out anew, of a heroic, constructive conception of life, attuned to reality. (Ibid.)

This last sentence in particular shows the direction of the argument, calling as it does on the (‘only now mapped out anew’, that is, Nazi) ‘heroic’ conception of life and advancing the idea that psychoanalysis, despite its past faults, can contribute to this. Interestingly, the key advocate of ‘neo-analysis’ in the DPG before and after the war, Harald Schultze-Hencke, published a very similar article at about the same time as that by Müller-Braunschweig. In this, he too argued that the goal of psychotherapy should be to ‘free the powers of fitness and proficiency within the individual’ and contended ‘that the achievement of this kind of psychological health was a duty each individual owed to his community and that its maintenance was the corresponding duty of the psychotherapist’ (Cocks, 1997, p.87). Psychological health was defined ‘in terms of blood, strong will, proficiency, discipline, community, heroic bearing, and physical fitness’ (ibid.); from here to the idea of an accommodation with the Nazis’ projected ‘German psychotherapy’ was an easily managed step.

With the support of Jones, Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig thus followed a tactic of attempting to persuade the Nazis that psychoanalysis could be divorced from its Jewish origins and its socialist associations, so as to try to ensure its survival in Germany. Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig were left in no doubt by the Nazis that the proportion of Jewish analysts in the DPG made it very likely that their organisation would be banned, and that for the sake of the survival of the DPG, the Jewish analysts had to go. Again with the active connivance of Jones, who famously sent telegrams in November and December 1935 urging the Jewish analysts to resign, and who chaired the meeting which finally provoked them to do so, the DPG was ‘Aryanised’ by the end of 1935, nearly three years before other Jewish professionals, such as lawyers and doctors, were excluded from their equivalent organisations. By 1936, Fenichel could comment that the ‘Aryan’ members of the DPG ‘are avoiding any contact -both the slightest professional contact as well as personal contact- with their non-Aryan colleagues: an almost incredible example of the devil, who will grab your whole hand when you stretch out your little finger’ (Eickhoff, 1995, p.950). The exclusion of the Jews was thus embraced with some enthusiasm by their non-Jewish erstwhile colleagues, whether through fear of being associated with the specifically derogated marginality of the Jews, or through active antisemitism. Although, ironically, there was a beneficial outcome of this in that most of the Jewish analysts, deprived of their livelihood, left Germany before the Holocaust, and so were saved (although fifteen did die in the concentration camps, as Jones confirmed at the first post-war International Congress –A. Freud, 1949) -and although Jones played a heroic part in getting them out and in finding them places to go- this was not the motivation at the time; rather, the vain hope of appeasing the Nazis was the conscious purpose of this collusive strategy. One might wonder, in addition, whether behind this there was a darker strand, a point which will be returned to below.

The pressure to resign 'voluntarily' under which the Jewish analysts were put can be seen as an only slightly more benign version of the famously brusque treatment meted out by the psychoanalytic movement to its errant scion, Wilhelm Reich. Reich had joined the communist party in Berlin in 1930 and caused dissent within it both because of his particular views on the gravity of the working class' defeat with the advent of Hitler, and because of his promotion of sexual liberation (Sharaf, 1983). His political radicalism was also of concern within the psychoanalytic movement, with Freud himself being noticeably critical -although some of the problems here concerned Reich's opposition to Freud's theory of the death drive. With the arrival of the Nazis in power, however, the threat posed by 'political' activity to the safety of psychoanalysis within Germany was seen by Freud as well as by Jones as potentially extremely damaging, with Reich (who in fact left Germany for Vienna in March 1933 and a month later embarked on some hectic to-ing and fro-ing around Scandinavia) as the most obvious representative of this tendency. Anna Freud's letter to Jones of 27 April, 1933, shows the reasoning:

> Here we are all prepared to take risks for psychoanalysis but not for Reich's ideas, with which nobody is in agreement. My father's opinion on this matter is: If psychoanalysis is to be prohibited, it should be prohibited for what it is, and not for the mixture of politics and psychoanalysis[2] which Reich represents. My father can't wait to get rid of him inasmuch as he attaches himself to psychoanalysis; what my father finds offensive in Reich is the fact that he has forced psychoanalysis to become political; psychoanalysis has no part in politics. (Steiner, 2000, p.128)

Promotion of the idea that 'psychoanalysis has no part in politics' was a key element in the defence of psychoanalysis against the Nazi critique of its inherently destabilising nature, and was precisely the line taken by Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig in their negotiations with the Nazis. Boehm, for example, noted in 1934 that 'Reich had often come out publicly as a Communist and as a psychoanalyst, presenting his opinions as the results of psychoanalysis... I had to fight against this prejudice' (Brecht et al, 1985, p.120). As it turned out and as Reich and a few others were prescient enough to see, this 'non-political' attitude effectively paved the way for a partial Nazification of psychoanalysis, while depriving psychoanalysis of its crucial critical role. It also resulted in the 'secret' expulsion of Reich from the DPG and the IPA. Boehm's account of this is instructive:

> At a Board meeting [in the summer of 1933] Simmel proposed that Reich should no longer be included in the list of members (Fenichel was away and was not at this meeting). Besides Simmel himself, his proposal was supported by Müller-Br[aunschweig] and myself; by Eitingon too, in principle, but he asked urgently that this 'purge' should be postponed until the next General Meeting at the beginning of October, when he would have resigned. The decision to inform Reich about this was not carried out, because we did not consider it opportune to have any contact with Reich, who was still abroad. Here I should like to add at once that at a later Board Meeting at the beginning of 1934 we asked Frau Jacobssohn to inform Reich of this decision during the meeting in Oslo, which however she failed to do. (Brecht et al, 1985, p. 121)

In fact, Reich seems to have known nothing about it until he arrived at the Lucerne Congress of August, 1934, when Müller-Braunschweig informed him that he had been expelled from the DPG a year earlier; over the course of that Congress it became apparent to Reich that the leadership of the IPA endorsed this decision. Jones later claimed that Reich had resigned from the IPA at that Congress, but this, it seems, was never Reich's view (Sharaf, 1983,

[2]Nitzschke's (1999, p.355) translation is 'a hodgepodge of politics and analysis'.

p.188).

Jacoby (1983) has discussed some of the complex politics surrounding Reich at this time, pointing out that he did not have the unequivocal support even of the 'political' Freudians, notably Fenichel. However, the key point here is not so much how difficult Reich was even for those who might be seen as potentially aligned with him, but rather that from Freud down, the early period of Nazi rule in Germany was seen as requiring extreme caution about political involvement of any possibly subversive kind -and that the consequences of this were that the politics of the psychoanalytic movement itself came to be played out under the shadow of Nazi demands.

It is worth noting a few more of the ambiguities in Ernest Jones' actions at this point. That he followed a policy of appeasement of the Nazis in the early period of the Third Reich is not in doubt, though in the context of the time this was less indefensible than it now seems, and it is also true that Jones' skilfulness and energy in finding routes out for endangered Jewish analysts was exemplary. On the other had, he clearly played a double game. Supporting Boehm, he wrote to him in July 1934 to warn him of what might happen at the forthcoming psychoanalytic Congress in Lucerne, in which his activities in negotiating with the Nazis were bound to come under attack. Revealing both personal prejudices and the acceptable language of the time (which may also have indicated some of his own ambivalence towards the Jewish dominance of psychoanalysis), Jones included in his letter the following piece of gentile solidarity.

> You will know that I myself regard those emotions and ultra-Jewish attitude very unsympathetically, and it is plain to me that you and your colleagues are being made a dumping-ground for much emotion and resentment which belongs elsewhere and has displaced in your direction. My only concern is for the good of psychoanalysis itself, and I shall defend the view, which I confidently hold, that your actions have been actuated only by the same motive. (Brecht et al, 1985, p.78)

Jones had previously expressed some similar sentiments (without the aside on ultra-Jewish attitudes) to Anna Freud. In a letter of 2nd October 1933, he commented that, 'After the interview [with the DPG leaders] my impression of the Germany situation has slightly altered and I don't feel that the people concerned are quite so villainous as it has been suggested to me here.' Boehm in particular, whose 'initial action was very debatable' was seen as 'having saved Psycho-analysis in Germany from a horrific explosion that threatened early in August... which would have probably ended in the dissolution of the Society and Institute and the internment of most of its members in concentration camps' (Steiner, 2000, pp.53-4). On the other hand, he also noted two somewhat different appeals of Nazism to the two leading figures in the DPG.

> Müller-Braunschweig was pretty objective. He showed no signs of any anti-Semitism, but evidently felt rather German. I suppose his leanings towards idealism draw him a little to that somewhat neglected aspect of Hitlerism. Boehm, on the other hand, was more sceptical about the Government but did show some indications of anti-Semitism, possibly associated with the unfortunate discovery of his unhappy grandmother. (Ibid.)

This differentiation, between Müller-Braunschweig's tendency towards a generally nationalist feeling infused with the heritage of German Romanticism and Boehm's more active, possibly biographically-rooted, antisemitism, was played out in many other spaces in German society, including the wider psychotherapeutic and psychiatric professions (Cocks, 1997), with the effect of encouraging collaboration with the Third Reich. Interestingly, by 1935 Jones had reversed his assessment of which of the two German analysts showed the

more obvious antisemitic tendencies. Writing again to Anna Freud, he portrayed Boehm as a weak and inadequate leader: 'He has neither the personality required to manage a group nor a sufficiently quick grasp of the essentials of the strategic situation' (Brecht et al, 1985, p.131). Müller-Braunschweig, on the other hand, was infected rather more with the times: 'Müller-Braunschweig is busy coquetting with the idea of combining a philosophy of Psycho-Analysis with a quasi-theological conception of National-Socialistic ideology... No doubt he will proceed further along these lines, and he is definitely anti-semitic, which Boehm is certainly not' (ibid.). Who was, and who was not, and for what reasons, is a complex question, but Jones' acuity in most areas is not to be doubted, and clearly at different moments in the 1930s he was persuaded of the antisemitism of each of the two main DPG leaders. In his 1946 report, Rickman confirms the Nazi taint in Müller-Braunschweig: 'I believe his personality has deteriorated during the Nazi regime... and I think he is "dark grey"' -Boehm was seen as possibly 'black', meaning completely corrupted (Brecht et al, 1985, pp. 237-8). Within four years of Rickman's report, however, Müller-Braunschweig was back in favour and Jones acted in his support.

Antisemitism bites

While all this was going on within the DPG, a parallel development in the General Medical Society for Psychotherapy became the context for another lively piece of controversy, the role of C.G. Jung as a Nazi spokesman. In June1933, Jung became chairman of the newly formed International General Medical Society for Psychotherapy and from this point until 1939 he seems to have been caught up in admiration of Nazi philosophy, mystical celebration of the cult of Wotan, and self-aggrandisement at the expense of Freudian psychoanalysis. Jung clearly hoped that his own brand of depth psychology would become the leading psychology of the Third Reich, and to that end he was ready with pronouncements offering support for Hitlerism and castigating Freudianism as 'Jewish psychology' (Eickhoff, 1995, p.948). There is considerable evidence of Jung's antisemitism and of his admiration for the Nazis as releasers of the German people's potential, evidence which has been thoroughly documented in various places (e.g. Hayman, 1999, Diller, 1991, Cocks, 1997) and sensitively discussed even within the Jungian movement (Samuels, 1993), but which cannot be presented at any length here. However, while Jung's antisemitism was undoubtedly fuelled by his antagonism to Freud and his general opportunism, and as Samuels has shown while Jungianism's theoretical base laid it open to racist concepts, it is indicative of a more widespread phenomenon evident for example in the writings of Müller-Braunschweig. This includes an admiration for the leadership of Hitler and for the idea of the German nation finding its 'destiny' through Nazism. For some at least of the 'Aryan' psychoanalysts who sought appeasement of the Nazis, as well as for Jung, the question was not, or not just, one of sustaining depth psychology in the face of the nightmare, but of finding a place for psychotherapy in a system in which what was promoted was nationalism and authority. Psychoanalysis had, in Freud, theorised an opposition between the individual's desires and society's needs; with the Nazis, the individual disappeared in the mass, her or his only value what she or he could contribute to national revival. Some participants, Jungian and psychoanalytic alike, got very excited about this and sided with the 'Aryan' mass, an act which automatically led them to discard or even (psychologically speaking) assault their Jewish associates. Jung is an easy target, because his antisemitism is so transparent, but there was plenty of it around.

While Jung was leader of the International General Medical Society for Psychotherapy, the German Medical Society for Psychotherapy was headed by Matthias Heinrich Göring, who

was a psychiatrist and had undergone Adlerian analysis. M. H. Göring was a member of the Nazi Party from 1 May 1933 onwards; Brecht et al (1985, p. 152) comment that, 'Göring's identification with National Socialism remained clear until... April 1945,' and Goggin and Goggin (2001, p.117) opine, 'In general we believe that M. H. Göring was an enthusiastic Nazi but he showed variation in his ideological concerns.' Göring himself, writing in response to the invitation to take on the leadership of the German psychotherapists, phrased his views as follows (Cocks, 1997, p.103).

> In the interests of our society I wish to accept your offer, because I am a National Socialist not in name only but wholeheartedly in the spirit of Adolf Hitler, because moreover I bear the name of the Prussian Minister-President and am related to him. Also in the interests of National Socialism I must not refuse, for I believe that we psychotherapists have a great mission in the new state.... we are called to educate children and adults in the right spirit.

From the very start, therefore, the psychotherapists in the Third Reich pinned their colours to a masthead already painted in the Nazi red and black.

It was rapidly apparent that the future survival of psychoanalysis in the Third Reich would be bound up with the psychotherapists and hence with the person and organisation of Göring rather than with the continuation of the DPG, and indeed the psychoanalysts took it upon themselves actively to seek the protection that Göring's name offered. As early as 1934, Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig and some of their non-Jewish colleagues met with the Jungians and with other psychotherapists to discuss joining together under a planned new institute headed by Göring. In February 1936, Boehm was told by the Ministry of Culture that psychoanalysis would be allowed to continue if the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute would join with other branches of psychotherapy in an organisation under Göring's leadership, with a commitment to developing a 'New German Psychotherapy' (Goggin and Goggin, 2001, p.104). Boehm met with Anna Freud to discuss this, apparently gaining support from her, and the German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy -known, colloquially and lastingly, as the Göring Institute- was set up on May 26th 1936. In July 1936, Göring, Boehm and Müller-Braunschweig met with Jones and Brill to gain the approval of the IPA, promising that the independence of psychoanalysis would be maintained within the Institute. This promise, however, was not kept: psychoanalytic training came to be combined in most important respects with that of other psychotherapies. The DPG handed its building over to be the base for the Göring Institute; the experience of the remaining analysts was thus that their 'home' had become occupied, and they were allowed only shared and partial use of it. In October 1936, Göring gave his inaugural remarks on the new German psychotherapy, which was to be founded on a non-Freudian, pro-Nazi and antisemitic basis; reading of *Mein Kampf* was made an obligatory part of the training and the remaining Jews were excluded (although neither of these last two moves was fully enforced, and some Jews and half-Jews survived in the Göring Institute until the end of the war -Cocks, 1997, pp.104, 273). Otto Fenichel, in his typically scathing way, described Boehm's subsequent attempt to patch things up with Freud. After an occasion at the Göring Institute when 'people had to "fall in", whilst Göring gave a lecture on the Jewish libido conception of Freud and the Aryan one of Jung,' Fenichel states,

> Böhm had such a bad conscience that he went to Vienna to assure Freud of his loyalty and to obtain absolution. He was not given it; Freud said to him: 'Different peoples, with different destinies, have developed a capacity, varying in strength, of holding on to their convictions, even if they have to be abandoned on the outside. Our Jewish people have had the misfortune, or fortune, of accumulating a host of experiences of this kind... Other peoples are less capable of resisting, and when they give in on the outside, they eventually give in on the inside too. It will all depend on what you hold

> onto inside.' After Böhm had left he said he did not believe that analysis would last in Germany: 'They are a submissive people.' (Fenichel, *Rundbrief* of 30th November 1936, in Eickhoff, 1995, p.951).

Freud's assertion of a mode of Jewish superiority is notable here, in the light of the continuing attempt to appease the Nazis and to accommodate to their own ideology of racial superiority.

A Non-Jewish Psychoanalysis

The Göring Institute had a surprisingly important place in the hierarchy of the Third Reich, apparently invested with the expectation that it could serve the needs of the German people in developing a Nazified psychotherapeutic process serving national ideals. When the second conference of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy took place in Düsseldorf in 1938, a telegraph was received from Hitler thanking the Society for its 'vow of fidelity and for the announcement of the establishment of a German Institute for Psychological Research and Psychotherapy' and wishing it 'great success in [its] work' (Brecht et al, 1985, p. 146). Throughout the war, the Göring Institute was involved in psychotherapy and leadership training (particularly with the Luftwaffe), and attracted a substantial budget (Cocks, 1997, pp.335-8). While its practical activities were probably valued as a contribution to the war effort, it was its efforts towards the development of a Nazified psychotherapy which distinguished it most -as its proponents were the first to acknowledge. In a newspaper interview from May 1939 (Brecht et al, 1985, p. 151), Göring answers the question of, 'how *psychoanalysis*, a very modern branch of medicine, could once have had *so destructive an effect?*' His answer is that, 'since Freud, it has been almost exclusively the domain of *Jewish doctors*.' Freud, as a Jew, could not understand that the unconscious is not a domain of repressed sexual activity, but the 'foundation of life', the source of creativity.

> It is clear that it is precisely in a field of work like that of the mind that Judaism could bring its destructive influence to bear most fruitfully. For the Jews, psychotherapy became a business, and the poisoning of mental life a necessity, so that they could then undertake to cure the poison. *Today a thoroughly German form of psychotherapy has been developed.*

The 'new German psychotherapy' aimed to 'strengthen belief in the meaning of life and reinforce the link with the higher world of values; it was to convey to the patient the consciousness of being bound and incorporated into the common destiny of the German people' (Brecht et al, 1985, p.152). It is clear from this that what was being proposed was a psychology without the critical doubt so central to Freud -without, that is, something of what might be thought of as its 'Jewish' heritage. Instead, the objective of psychotherapy was to facilitate in the patient the discovery of an unconscious energy and purpose which could be activated in the service of the German state. That the orientation of the work was towards the collective and not the individual is evidenced both in the expressed aims of the 'new German psychotherapy' and in some of its practices, for example its involvement with 'euthanasia', something leading members of the Institute, including Boehm, came to accept as a solution for the 'untreatable' patient (Goggin and Goggin, 2001, p.123). The relevant point here, however, is that despite this apparent displacement of key psychoanalytic assumptions and ethical values in favour of a Nazified psychotherapy, and even after the formal dissolution of the DPG in 1938 (which was connected with an intercepted letter of homage from Müller-Braunschweig to Anna Freud in Vienna that provided the pretext for Göring to deny Müller-Braunschweig the right to teach or publish, and Felix Boehm to offer training analyses), psychoanalytic activity continued within the Göring Institute in an explicit manner. Brecht et

al (1985, p. 154) note:

> In fact the training of psychotherapists was to a great extent the responsibility of the 'Berlin psychoanalysts'. After the events of 1938 they did indeed lose some official responsibilities and were partially restricted in their teaching activities. But they were able to keep their influential position and expand it through clever staffing policies. They managed to keep the Polyclinic, the heart of the Institute, as their responsibility.

Thus, the psychoanalysts continued to have an impact in the Göring Institute. Boehm led the programme for homosexual soldiers; Werner Kemper helped work out treatment programmes for soldiers suffering from war neuroses; Müller-Braunschweig remained responsible for lecture organisation and the teaching programme of the Institute. Even the Goggins acknowledge that the training programme involved training analysis, supervision and 'conventional-sounding' courses (2001, p.109) and that 'between 1938 and 1945 Working Group A [the Freudians] had trained thirty-four people' (p.112). Chrzanowski (1975), in a relatively early interview-based study, notes that, 'Neither the people inside the Institute nor organised German psychiatry outside of the Institute believed that psychoanalysis had been extinguished' (p.496).

> Our research demonstrates that those analysts who remained in Germany, under the Nazis, were doing 'regular analytic work' during the critical years. Not one person interviewed by us expressed the slightest doubt that he had continued to function as a psychoanalyst throughout the Hitler years. We have no doubt as to their sincerity. (pp.494-5)

Chrzanowski does point to the mutual fears of betrayal by analysts and patients as powerful factors interfering with the therapy; however, while this is of considerable importance, it does not in itself imply that the activity being engaged in was not psychoanalysis.

As Cocks (2001) notes, none of this means that all the analysts were Nazis or Nazi sympathisers, but it does reveal a degree of social blindness, moral cowardice and self-seeking which, it seems, even thorough-going orthodox personal analysis had not been able to remedy. What seems clear is that during the period of the Göring Institute, non-Jewish analysts carried on with their work as best they could, with varying degrees of collaboration with the aims of the new German psychotherapy, including implication in the euthanasia programme. No-one, with the pre-war exception of Edith Jacobson (who was imprisoned for subversive activities and who Boehm successfully prevented Jones from supporting) and the wartime martyr John Rittmeister, rebelled, although few actually joined the Nazi party. Psychoanalytic training activities continued, even though Göring himself exercised personal censorship of Freudian terms and concepts and the members of 'Workgroup A' (the psychoanalysts) accordingly had to resort to euphemisms (e.g. 'depth psychotherapy' instead of 'psychoanalysis'). Some cases were handled by depth analysis including free association and the use of the analytic couch. Whether one likes what it became or not, psychoanalysis was going on, albeit 'in a most peculiar way' (Rittmeister, 1939).

Conclusion

There are numerous ways of understanding the somewhat sorry tale of psychoanalysis in Germany in the Nazi period. At the simplest level (which is not to say that it does not have its own complexities), it is a story of individuals faced with circumstances hostile to the continuation of their professional work, who were also caught up more or less strongly in a phenomenon of stupendous power, with its threat and its excitement. At the very least, these individuals went along with the dictates of the Nazi machine, retaining what dignity they

could (less as time went on), plying their trade and preserving their profession as much as possible. This may have been ignoble, but perhaps not more so than those who did exactly the same in other walks of life. Psychoanalysts were certainly no more malevolent than many others who should and might have done better, being representatives of a class or professional group which was built upon self-reflection or accurate analysis of personal and political situations, or which had around it a clear ethical framework: lawyers, doctors, academics. Whilst there were heroes of resistance in all these fields, as a group they did not cover themselves with glory; psychoanalysis may not have had many heroes, but it also had relatively few perpetrators of Nazi abuses, and at least most of its Jewish representatives escaped.

However, there is something else to be explored here, which has been the rationale for this paper: psychoanalysis had some kind of special status not (or not *just*) because it is premised on an idea of awareness of personal motives, but more (or also) because of its position as a paradigmatic 'Jewish science'. As noted earlier, this was a term of Nazi abuse and carried with it all the racist connotations that are instantly recognisable: something corrupting, parasitic, demeaning and impure, which should be wiped out. However, psychoanalysis was also seen by many of its *practitioners*, including Freud himself, as having a special connection with Jewish culture, history and identity, a connection which had made psychoanalysis 'Jewish' well before the Nazis made this an index of abuse. Not only were the vast majority of European psychoanalysts secular Jews, but analysts and others alike could see that Jewish assumptions and ways of thinking were key elements of the psychoanalytic approach, however much it hungered for the apparent objective universalism of 'science'. Under such circumstances, it might have been possible to hope that German psychoanalysis, with its outstanding history of political engagement, would provide a source of political and cultural resistance to Nazism; in the name of its own values and origins it might have resisted appeasement even if that meant exile (as happened in France, Holland, Norway and even Austria). In fact, as soon as it was tested, the opposite was the case.

There is little doubt about the antisemitism of some of the players in this game: Jung, Göring, Müller-Braunschweig, probably Boehm; this has been attested to elsewhere in this paper. More profoundly, however, there was an antisemitic *movement* at work, which fed off and into Nazism and represented a serious attempt to rewrite the future of psychoanalysis. Jung thought he could bid for it and become the dominant force in an 'Aryanised' depth psychology; the Göring Institute was the institutional centre for the more formal attempt to put it into practice as a 'new German psychotherapy'. But what may be dimly perceived in all the scheming, the appeasement and collaboration, the forced resignations and (at least in the case of Wilhelm Reich) secret expulsions, is the enactment (albeit probably guilt-ridden, as Müller-Braunschweig revealed in Vienna) of a wish to eradicate the Jewishness from psychoanalysis. This *consciously* involved opposition to Freud and the centrality of sexuality, it also meant *consciously* replacing the Freudian critical stance and the theory of the opposition between individual desire and social order with an approach that gave primacy to the interests of the latter -recast as the 'Aryan nation'- and asserted that individuals could be psychologically enriched by falling in with these interests. It also meant constructing a theory of leadership congruent with the Nazi 'Führer-fixation', and converting a theory of necessary psychic conflict into one in which wholeness and integrity, in the service of the state, is possible. All this was *conscious* and can be read out from the writings of the representatives of psychoanalysis in the Third Reich.

The *unconscious*, however, was also at work, as it always is. What could have been the

meaning, for gentile psychoanalysts, of finding themselves caught in the web of a 'Jewish science', subservient to its demands and, through their own transferences and the trust they had put in mainly Jewish training analysts (not to mention their institutional idolising of Freud), personally implicated in this Jewish cultural product, at a time and in a place in which things Jewish had become the defining mark of corruption, antisocial activity, parasitism and defilement? If Jewish analysts felt at home with psychoanalysis because of its compatibility with their culture, however much they had repudiated the beliefs of Judaism as a *religion*, then non-Jewish analysts were always likely to have a sense of marginality within their chosen profession, have the tables turned, as it were, be the uncomfortable outsiders who have to learn the rules to 'pass' -the reverse of the usual social situation. Once the Nazi hegemony was established, as it was in Germany extraordinarily quickly, these same non-Jewish analysts found themselves in a bind: hold out heroically as representatives of a Jewish culture to which they would always be outsiders, but to which they had given themselves through their training and professional affiliation, or join the new path and become central, insiders again. Coupled with the general uncertainty about whether appeasement was an appropriate political policy, and added to the genuine dangers of speaking out, of resistance; and mixed in with some no-doubt unconscious fratricidal urges towards their Jewish analytic peers; and perhaps enraged by the loss of so many senior Jewish analysts, whose disappearance might have been experienced unconsciously as abandonment at a time of need; it perhaps did not require more than an average dose of moral turpitude and self-serving ambition to side with the apparent historical victors. Psychoanalysts of the Third Reich kept going throughout the Nazi period, quietly most of the time, doing good sometimes, but collaborating, losing their way, corrupting the psychoanalytic movement. They did so not only for all the compelling reasons that make it so hard to resist totalitarianism, but also because it was a form of revenge against the Jews.

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