

Rezension von Kai Sammet, *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 38 (2002), p. 319-320.

There are many writings on the "pilgrim fathers" of psychoanalysis, and one wonders if there is anything new to be said on, say, this Viennese Professor Freud? However, beyond the mythological founders, what was early psychoanalysis and who did it? Who, for example, was Henry Lowenfeld (or: Heinrich Löwenfeld as he called himself until he became an American)? Born in Berlin 1900, he never was in the limelight of historical interest. Now Thomas Müller, physician and historian from Berlin, has written a fine work, based on abundant sources, about this typical German-Jewish psychoanalyst of the twentieth century. Far from writing a hagiography, Müller succeeds in writing the social history of an individual and his time along three red threads: What was it like to be a Jew in Imperial and Weimar Germany? What was it like to be a young psychoanalyst in the most famous German psychoanalytic institute of the time (and an "adult" psychoanalyst in the important New York psychoanalytic Institute)? And how - if at all! - can one talk of "assimilation" in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany?

Löwenfeld was the son of Raphael Löwenfeld, the Jewish-German Bildungsbürger, translator of Tolstoy, founder of the Berlin Schiller-Theater as well as one of the originators of the "Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens" in 1893 (as a reaction against the increasing anti-Semitism in the German Kaiserreich). Heinrich studied medicine from 1920 to 1926, then worked as an assistant physician at the famous Heidelberg psychiatric clinic. While working in a hospital in Berlin-Lankwitz he made his training analysis at the well-known Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute and was as well a member of the "Socialist Medical Society". Müller not only describes this skeleton of facts, but also embeds Löwenfeld's biography in the background of the increasing anti-Semitism of Weimar Germany and the evolution of the psychoanalytical movement, especially in Berlin. In 1933, Löwenfeld had to emigrate to Czechoslovakia with his wife Yela (a physician and psychoanalyst as well) and his son Andreas. Like many other young German emigrés the Löwenfelds chose Prague because they could work there without being compelled to change their language. Müller describes many new things about psychoanalysis in the Czech republic in interwar times, and about the psychoanalytic circle of the German emigrés with Otto Fenichel at the center.

In 1938, after the Anschluss of Austria, the Löwenfelds had to emigrate to the United States, where they had to begin a new life in a foreign cultural milieu and an unknown language. Nevertheless Löwenfeld stayed in the U.S. until his death in 1985 (although his friend Alexander Mitscherlich wanted him to take over the directorship of the Frankfurt "Sigmund-Freud-Institute"). Although he saw himself as a settled psychoanalyst, he remained rooted in German culture and thought of "exile" as "always tragic". In these chapters Müller also focusses on the "americanisation of psychoanalysis", i.e. the abandonment of its left-wing political implications.

Müller also critically discusses the question of "assimilation" of Jews in nineteenth-century Germany. Although he acknowledges that there was an identification with German classical culture on behalf of the Jews as a "door-opener", Müller skeptically states that there was no such thing as a "german-jewish dialogue". Therefore "assimilation" is a misleading concept and the term "acculturation" would cover reality better.

In sum, this book is an important contribution to the history of psychoanalysis (beyond great names), of Jewry in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany, and of emigration as well.

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