BOOK REVIEWS

EARLY PSYCHOANALYSIS IN PROCESS


The great attraction of Freud at the beginning of the century was his courage to go beyond the orthodoxies of the then existing academic psychology and psychiatry in his quest for an understanding of human beings and their life problems. His early circle included many from different professions who shared this interest: educators, philosophers, a music critic, a musicologist, a publisher, a free-lance writer, in addition to the medical men who were the majority. It was so-to-speak an interdisciplinary seminar which met at Freud's house every Wednesday evening to discuss not only psychiatric case histories and publications, but also the lives and works of poets, writers and philosophers, those who have always dealt with human life in its uniqueness and wholeness.

Careful minutes of these meetings from 1906 to 1915 have been kept and preserved and will be published in three volumes. The first of these, 1906-1908, has now appeared, giving us the opportunity to witness what went on at these meetings.

The others had the floor. Freud was essentially only one of the discussants, and his comments were not too much longer than those of the others. Although he was in control of the meetings and his comments were those of the final authority, the atmosphere was that of a well-run academic seminar where the participants had ample opportunity to express their views. Those of us who today oppose Freudian psychoanalysis as a dogmatized mechanistic system with an extensive vocabulary of its own representing questionable concepts, will be agreeably surprised to see how different it was then. Terms like id, ego, superego, Oedipus complex, narcissism did not exist. In consequence the corresponding processes were described in the general language, with the result that the entire discourse was closer to the concrete life situations with which it was dealing. It becomes understandable how Freud and Adler could work together as long as they did.

On several occasions Freud is actually quite un-Freudian. For example he seems to accept the individual's active participation in his own life when he agrees with Karl Abraham "that children themselves seek out their traumata" (p. 273). Traumata only "determine the form of the neurosis if a neurosis ensues" (p. 273). He questions that "pleasure is not a positive feeling in itself but only a release from unpleasure" and adds the very modern statement that "tension is not always unpleasant" (p. 239). He seems to imply that frigidity is connected with woman's protest against an inferior role, for when superiority is undisputed, there is also no frigidity: "We know of no case of sexual anesthesia in female rulers" (p. 311). When Adler cautions against a fixed interpretation of symbols, Freud agrees that "the most common symbols are occasionally used in a different way (individually adapted symbols)" (p. 368).

And Adler is still not very Adlerian, e.g., "Altruism is frequently found in persons who were strongly sadistic in childhood but have repressed their sadism"
He also accepts the concept of "sexual repression" (p. 163). "Love for an older woman appears mostly where love for the mother has been repressed" (p. 171). He speaks of "the sexual root of paranoia" (p. 290).

Still, differences from Freud appear on many occasions. While accepting the concept of libido, Adler added, "A great deal depends on how the individual tolerates this libido" (p. 96). One time he threw in the remark, "There is more than one way in psychoanalysis" (p. 234). On this the editors comment correctly that in the tendency to find his own way as far as technique is concerned, Adler's future deviation announces itself as early as 1907 when he also stressed the importance of organ inferiorities.

Although Freud attributed great importance to Adler's work on organ inferiority (p. 42), he also very perceptively pointed out the far-reaching difference between himself and Adler which eventually led to their separation. In finding fault with a statement by Adler, Freud remarked, "Our interest [in contrast to Adler's] is focused on the way in which something comes about, develops, not on the final goal" (p. 321).

The present volume of the Minutes is then like the first act of a drama in which the characters are introduced and the plot gets under way. As in an actual drama there is also the supporting cast of which the main characters are Hirschmann, Paul Federn, Stekel and Rank. Wittels introduces a touch of involuntary humor with his fantastic views on women, on which point all the others unite against him.

The main credit for the Minutes goes to Otto Rank who as the official, salaried secretary of the Society recorded its meetings so well that they now come to life again for the reader. Here we should like to point out that it was Adler who introduced Rank at the age of 22 to Freud and his circle (Jones, E. The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud, Vol. 2, p. 8). The Minutes cover only the years during which Rank held this office, from 1906 to 1915. The records kept after this time, by others, were no longer worth publishing.

But the present translators and editors, Herman Nunberg and Ernst Federn, did their jobs with equal care and devotion. Some 600 footnotes attest to the tremendous amount of work they have done. These footnotes provide ever so many bibliographical, biographical and other details which are of great help in enabling the reader to participate in the meetings as if he were an initiated contemporary, with the added advantage of occasional forecasts of future events.

The one serious criticism we have is regarding the editors' statement that "in later life, Adler's scientific views became greatly influenced by his political beliefs" (p. xxxiii). For this they offer no evidence, and as far as we know, there is none. We object to this sentence because it would detract from Adler's scientific integrity. True, Adler was a socialist. He also rejected the assumption of man's innate evilness and shifted the emphasis from the intrapersonal to the interpersonal. But to impute a causal relationship here, is merely fallacious reasoning.

University of Vermont

Heinz L. Ansbacher

AN ANTHROPOLOGIST SPEAKS

Resident psychiatrists in a mental hospital formed the initial audience for this book, originally presented as a lecture series. Dr. Becker, an anthropologist, sought to make the social basis of clinical judgments clearer to the medically trained. At the same time he intended to etch a portrait of man, the product of organic evolution and societal living. We can imagine a lively interdisciplinary discussion to have followed each lecture.

In the first few chapters occur restatements for new ears of familiar themes: prolonged infantile dependence, man's probably unique facility in handling symbols, and the transmission of complex habits from generation to generation through language. From the prolonged infancy survives a sensitivity to and an anxiety concerning other persons' actions toward the self. Among the array of learned symbols emerges an ego. This delicate symbol must be continuously protected from anxiety and nourished by actions which maximize self-esteem. Psychiatric clinics derive their clientele from the failure of social intercourse to achieve these results. A final lecture indicates the limitations of psychiatric categories when employed outside Western society, together with suggestions for working toward a universal psychiatry based on self-esteem.

Individual Psychologists will find interest in Dr. Becker's espousal of an Adlerian in preference to a Freudian approach. The basic psychoanalytic theses of hostility and displacement he rejects in favor of anxiety dynamics. He cites societies where exceptions to the traditional stage of Oedipal development seem to occur. In sum he finds Adler's ego-oriented psychology a more useful schema for studying the psyche under a variety of social milieux.

The reviewer would have liked to join the discussions that followed the lectures. He would have asked why Dr. Becker preferred "veridity" and " privatize" to "verity" and perhaps "isolate." The author could well have been asked to amplify: "The function of culture is to make continued self-esteem possible." Did he stress this single aspect of culture for the benefit of the psychiatrists, or did he literally mean that all features of culture, symphonies as well as cosmetics, serve only this function? It would have been interesting to hear him discuss particular cases using his concepts. For example, why does Kwakiutl self-esteem at the death of a kinsman become maximized only by killing a neighboring tribesman rather than by pouring ashes on the head or taking a quiet boat trip up the coast? Additional concepts beyond self-esteem and anxiety are evidently needed to account for such behavior.

The reviewer would have disagreed that man is undergoing "a progress of rationalism (reason?) . . . by attempting to divide the world more sharply between the real and the not real." Is it further true that symbols have no reality beyond their service as fictions which maximize self-esteem? In these respects Dr. Becker seems to enclose himself in the lifeless world of the positivist. He discounts the human imagination which through symbols frames realities, be they a divine comedy or galaxies in space.

Bennington College,
Bennington, Vermont

To the review of Dr. Hanks we should like to add a few lines showing the forcefulness with which Becker rejects the Freudian, in favor of the Adlerian view. Thus Becker speaks of "the straight jacket in which Freud has held social scien-
tists" for a half-century (p. 133). Today, "Freud's physiological drive invariants have been all but wholly discredited by researchers in a variety of disciplines. . . . Most of the major invariants which Freud derived from his theory of human development are spurious" (p. 162). By contrast, Becker finds, "We shall make no real progress in social science until we accept the symbolic nature of human striv­ing upon which Adler—who early abandoned the concept of aggression—insisted long ago" (p. 134). And there is the forthright statement: "This is probably as good a place as any to add my own protest to the growing number of protests by others, over the temporary historical eclipse of Alfred Adler. It is incredible that human behavior can be discussed from a psychoanalytic point of view without mentioning his name. Or that some so-called 'neo-Freudians' can deliver ostensibly 'fresh' ideas with an air of discovery, when many of these ideas were adumbrated by Adler over a half-century ago. Freud set a precedent for ignoring Adler's dangerously competitive brilliance, which has been continued ever since their formal split" (p. 200).—H. L. A.

Cognitive Change in Clinical Psychology


The high level of sophistication of this advanced textbook can perhaps be indicated from the start by the authors' question as to the psychologist's own "professional life style" (p. 35). This would be an important factor in his dealing with a given case. The authors state their own conceptual framework as emphasizing developmental relationships, rather than merely inner forces; and choices and decisions, rather than inner conflicts. Thus we may say their outlook is on the side of field-theoretical and cognitive theories.

The two main parts of the book deal with psychological assessment and with psychological approaches to treatment. The first part includes discussions of the principles of interviewing, testing, assessment from life situations, and report writing. While the fifty most important clinical tests with annotations are listed in an appendix, any specific discussion is not attempted. Among life situations, the Adlerian approach to earliest recollections is specifically included. Several illustrative psychological reports are given, and a guide for a history-taking interview is included in a second appendix.

In the second part, seven kinds of approaches to psychotherapy are distin­guished: counseling, client-centered, habit change (learning theory), cognitive change in concepts and values, emotional reorganization (psychoanalysis), interpersonal relations, and group and environmental approaches. For the cognitive and the interpersonal approaches the authors point out that "the lead in both these lines . . . was taken by Alfred Adler. . . . Many present-day psychologists who do not think of themselves as Adlerians are emphasizing the cognitive and social aspects of personality" (p. 42).

It is, of course, today quite generally appreciated that Adler's Individual Psychology is the prototype of the interpersonal relations theories, such as those of Karen Horney, E. H. Erikson, Erich Fromm, W. A. White, Clara Thompson, and perhaps most importantly H. S. Sullivan. But it is new for a textbook to
recognize Adler also as the predecessor of the present-day cognitive-change theorists, i.e., those who would insist that "the basic change that occurs in therapy... is in general outlook on life." In the authors' words, "Alfred Adler was probably the first among major psychotherapists to design a technique of therapy around the need to change the patient's general conception of his life, or, as he put it, his style of life" (p. 357). In this connection they also say, "It is as though other persons, when they reach a certain stage in their own development, feel a need to break with Freud on essentially the same grounds that Adler originally did" (p. 360). Among the cognitive change theorists the authors present Albert Ellis, F. C. Thorne, G. A. Kelly, Lakin Phillips, O. H. Mowrer, and the existentialists, including Rollo May and V. E. Frankl.

How did the authors become so keenly aware of Adler? They are both of the University of Oregon where Rudolf Dreikurs has taught Adlerian psychology during three summers in the recent past. In a private communication Dr. Sundberg answers the question as follows:

Probably the first person we should mention with regard to the influence of Adler's ideas on us is the head of our department, Robert Leeper. He has always evaluated Adler positively and sees a great many similarities with his own theories. He sees Adler as essentially a cognitive theorist and finds concepts like "mistaken ideas" and "life style" very congenial. ... The most direct Adlerian influences, however, have stemmed from the visits of Rudolf Dreikurs. ... Much of his thinking has also been further expanded and carried on by the work of Ray Lowe and his associates in the School of Education. During the first summer that Dreikurs was here I had the fortune to be able to work quite closely with him. I attended most of his classes, and we carried a case together in multiple therapy. ... Of course, we do not consider ourselves Adlerians. We have learned much from a number of other people with differing points of view, including Starke Hathaway, Carl Rogers, James Miller, Roger Barker, and colleagues at the Universities of Oregon, Minnesota, and California. ... I hope I am on my way to a resolution of a number of approaches and the development of my own personal theory.

The book concludes with an enlightening section on the personality of clinical psychologists, summarizing recent research in this area, and on the profession of psychology in relation to the larger society.

One aspect of the book yet to be mentioned is its stress on research throughout. There is one chapter devoted to the special problems in clinical research, one to research in assessment, and one to research in psychotherapy. Furthermore, each chapter of the two main sections is followed by several pages of research examples. This integrated research emphasis will undoubtedly make the book additionally appealing to wide academic circles, as it is particularly appealing to the present reviewer for its theoretical orientation and scholarliness.

University of Vermont

Heinz L. Ansbacher

BEING RATIONAL ABOUT THE EMOTIONS


Albert Ellis differentiates this book from its forerunners in that it is intended primarily for the clinician, and it does carry the theory of rational-emotive psychotherapy further than any previous volume. Because of this and its extremely
stimulating aspects it would seem to be an excellent supplementary text for advanced courses in the psychology of personality as well as clinical psychology.

Ellis relates his theory to the second signal system and to the latest research and thinking on the emotions, on the cognitive aspects of the personality, and on the interrelatedness of the two. He includes a full comparison with the Rogerian approach, a sharp disagreement with Mowrer, briefer comparisons with most other psychotherapies, and deviations from Freudian doctrine passim. The vigor and honesty of his writing matches that which he would seem to show in his practice. He tries to cover all the fields of therapy; to attack all the problems, practical and theoretical; and to answer all criticisms.

The result is exhaustive—and highly challenging reading, especially as one is not likely to accept all of Ellis’ solutions immediately. One would have liked, for example, to be able to hear a rebuttle from Rogers and from Mowrer. And many of the problems with which Ellis deals so neatly are so fundamental that one must wrestle with them oneself for a while. For instance, where is one to draw the line between the doer and the deed? Ellis feels that misery stems from the individual’s inability to discriminate between the wrongness of his acts—or his lack of achievement—and his own worthlessness. But what about the self as “agent” or merely as a form of continuity between behaviors? As another instance, can one accept the assumption that “the rational individual who strives for his own happiness will, for that very reason also be interested in others?”

In the case of the last statement Ellis takes issue with Adler who phrased his guiding principle in the reverse, namely, that the individual who is motivated by social interest will as a matter of course meet his own needs and interests as intermediate goals. But there are several places where Ellis notes his similarity with Adler, and the agreement seems even greater than Ellis realizes. It is, in fact, too great to be detailed here. The most important similarity is between the fundamentals of Adler’s omnia ex opinione and Ellis’ A-B-C in which A is the stimulus, B, the individual’s interpretation (often irrational) of A, and C, the emotional response. To carry theoretical synthesis one step further, one could point out that this schema is also another version of the older S-O-R.

This is not to minimize Ellis’ development of his concept. On the contrary, with every restatement one becomes more impressed with the tremendous and far-reaching importance of his key postulate: to be human means to be telling yourself something all the time. In addition to serving as an explanation of maladjustment and as a technique for treating the same, it yields a whole new perspective on man, as the verbal animal who can talk to himself, a view which promises fruitful developments still to come.

Burlington, Vermont

Rowena R. Ansbacher

A Holistic Personality Theory


This is a reprint of a book which was first published in English in 1953. Its author is professor of psychology at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, and a priest. The original edition of the book is listed by A. H. Maslow in his
bibliography of writings by the "third force" group of psychologists and psychiatrists (Toward a Psychology of Being, Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1962), representing a counter-force against Freudianism and experimental-positivistic behaviorism. We also know that under Professor Nuttin two theses on the early writings of Adler have been written (see this Journal, 1960, 16, 218; and 1963, 19, 97-98), and that a third thesis, on Adler's later writings, is in preparation. This leads to certain expectations regarding the book, and we shall examine how these are met.

The book consists of a long introduction entitled "Freudian Psychoanalysis: a Preliminary Survey," and two main parts. In the first part psychoanalysis is evaluated as a philosophy, as a therapeutic method, and as a system of depth psychology. In the second part the author presents his own dynamic theory of the normal personality.

Nuttin's presentation of Freud is detailed and sympathetic, and his criticisms are moderate in tone. But they are incisive in nature. Thus he finds, "The context of Freudian theory does not foster the development of a psychology of the ego in terms of the constructive dynamisms proper to it" (p. 19). "A conflict between an impersonal force (the id) and an ego completely stripped of any dynamism of its own is an unreal construction which does not correspond to the fundamental structure of human personality" (p. 56). "The Freudian reduction of psychic forces to one single dynamic element has appeared as theoretically an impoverishment, a result of faulty methods and hasty theories" (p. 273).

Nuttin's own theory, presented in the second part, sees man as inextricably embedded in and interacting with his world. "If we break down this functional (organism-milieu) unit and treat each of the two poles as self-contained entities standing face to face, we destroy the only existing concrete reality" (p. 225). Human dynamics consist essentially of the need for self-affirmation and self-realization, as well as the expansion of one's personality, on the one hand (p. 235), and a need for others, on the other hand. "Man feels an internal need of contact, exchange, communication, support, sympathy, self-giving" (p. 237). "It is by giving himself to what is objectively valuable, i.e., by not being directly concerned with himself, that man really develops" (p. 241).

All this is not far removed from Adler, and the author indeed refers to him throughout the book. He introduces the work of Karen Horney under the heading, "The Assimilation of Adlerian Ideas" (p. 104). Nuttin believes that in connection with the conception of the ego-instinct "Freud had tried desperately to integrate Adler's conceptions into his own system, but without very happy results" (p. 82). And he acknowledges, "On the psycho-social level, Adler has insisted that the will to power only reaches a happy issue when it is connected with the social urge" (pp. 257-258). Finally, in addition there is a special appendix of 16 pages devoted to, and titled, "Adler's Individual Psychology." Explaining Gemeinschaftsgefühl which is translated as "community feeling," Nuttin writes that according to Adler, "Man is not only an individual; he is also . . . a communal being. . . . The chief problem . . . is whether the individual can assert himself at the community level, i.e., where social demands are made on him which are objectively valuable, or whether he will remain self-enclosed in his egocentricity" (p. 282).

In this manner Nuttin indeed attests throughout this book to his kinship with Adler, and in his final evaluation he concludes, "Adlerian psychology . . . undeniably presents us with a large part of the truth, and it is of great help in
psychotherapy” (p. 292). Since he wrote this, Nuttin has apparently become even more outspoken in his support of Adler. According to a release by the publisher, “Father Nuttin believes Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology should become better known in the United States.” We hope the same for Father Nuttin’s book.

University of Vermont

ADLER RESEARCH IN BELGIUM


This is the second thesis on the earlier writings of Alfred Adler done in recent years at the University of Louvain under Professor Joseph Nuttin. The first, by H. Cammaer (5), [reviewed in this Journal, 1960, 16, 218], gave a chronological survey of the contents of nearly all of Adler’s writings up to 1914. The present thesis attempts to gain an understanding of the evolution of the concept of life style in relation to other simultaneous developments of Adler’s theory.

Three stages in this development are distinguished. The first, 1898-1908, centers on Adler’s first important publication, his Study of Organ Inferiority (1907). Here, objective factors, organ inferiorities, determine psychic development in a causal, quite mechanical manner; compensation is seen as a physiological law. But even in this period the individual nature of the development is pointed out by the term “psychological main axis” (psychische Hauptachse).

The second period, 1909-1911, is characterized by two new basic concepts, “inferiority feelings” and “masculine protest.” The basic law of compensation becomes psychological and subjective in nature, and the aim of the compensation becomes a goal of superiority, which is also the organizing principle. Although the two new terms are not introduced until 1910, the ideas of inferiority feelings and of striving for superiority are already expressed in a 1909 paper (1), where Adler states: “At first there is a feeling of being slighted ... This leads to thoughts and fantasies which express themselves in the life of the child ... as the burning ambition to outdo the others” (1, p. 536, & p. 63, respectively).

For the third period, 1912-1917, The Neurotic Constitution (1912) is the main publication. Adler grounds his comparative Individual Psychology in its definitive form, despite some important changes in later years. He completely drops drive psychology, renounces any kind of objective causal determinism, and replaces these with the personality ideal, the fictional goal, as explanatory principle. He also introduces the concept of “life plan,” the most direct predecessor in name and in meaning to “life style.”

Beginning with 1918 the concept of “social interest” becomes increasingly important in Adler’s system. But already in this third period, in 1914, Adler published two papers (3, 4) emphasizing that education must be socially oriented. The term Gemeinsinn (3) is introduced as a forerunner of his later Gemeinschaftsgefühl. Like Gegenfiktion (2, pp. 42-43), Gemeinsinn is considered as a force opposing the striving for personal superiority. “The outcome of the clash of these two ‘guiding lines’ represents the core of the future personality” (3, p. 41). In the same context Adler also speaks of “the will to social adaptation” (4, p. 484), which may
be considered as a counterpart to “the will to power.” This is early evidence that any interpretation of Individual Psychology as a mere striving-for-power theory represents a complete misunderstanding of Adler’s ideas, although this early conception still implies a dualistic rather than truly holistic view to which Adler advanced after 1918.

A bibliography of 99 titles to which references are made, completes the study.

References


Catholic University, Louvain, Belgium

Godelieve Vercreysse

A NEW GERMAN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY


A survey of Individual Psychology is attempted, starting with a careful interpretation of the basic concepts. Under the heading “Ways of Studying the Human Personality” such problems as understanding, early recollections, test, and dreams are dealt with. Adler’s pioneering contributions to education are emphasized. Besides the family, the significance of the school for character formation is discussed, and the Individual Psychology experimental school in Vienna is used as a model.

A further chapter deals with personality theory. Adler’s approach which regards personality as the creative product of the child, is contrasted with the psychoanalytic view and the doctrine of heredity. Following Adler’s *Understanding Human Nature*, character traits are classified into aggressive and nonaggressive traits. This is followed by a description of the “nervous character” according to Adler’s basic work by this title. This leads to the area of psychopathology, including theory of neurosis, prostitution, perversion, crime, and psychosis; and to psychotherapy.

The book concludes with an interpretation of literary classics, such as Oedipus, Hamlet, Peer Gynt, Raskolnikov, from the viewpoint of Individual Psychology which has a broader anthropological basis than psychoanalysis.

The book is addressed to the general reader whom it attempts to familiarize with the personality of Adler as well as his work.

*Psychologische Lehr- und Beratungsstelle*

Zurich, Switzerland

J OSEF RATTNER