ADLER AND THE 1910 VIENNA SYMPOSIUM ON SUICIDE


REPLY BY DR. PAUL FRIEDMAN

The remarks of Dr. Ansbacher are highly interesting, indeed, and I shall make use of some of them in the next edition, should there be one. Unfortunately, the small book was already in press at the time the second volume of the *Minutes* appeared. Therefore, I was not able to include in it an identifying footnote as to Dr. Molitor’s name.

The same goes for my erroneous assumption that Freud was the one who presided and not Adler. According to the *Minutes*, the meeting of April 20, 1910 was indeed under the chairmanship of Adler (p. 491), and the continuation of this discussion that took place in the scientific meeting of April 27, 1910 was under the chairmanship of Stekel (p. 506). This mistake, made also in a French paper of mine in 1935,1 probably resulted from the fact that Freud was the one who opened and closed the discussions, since nowhere in the original

pamphlet, published by the Verlag von J. F. Bergmann, Wiesbaden, 1910, is the chairman specifically identified.

It was far from my intention to minimize Adler’s role, or for that matter the roles played by Stekel and others in the development of modern psychological thinking. Did I not, in my introductory words, mention the fact that the most reticent of all participants was Freud himself, while Adler, Stekel, Oppenheim, Sadger, etc. contributed extraordinary and revolutionary ideas, which, however, had to be validated by subsequent clinical experience?

I must, again, emphasize, that my goal in publishing this volume was essentially to offer a complete and faithful translation of an important document in the history of psychoanalysis.

As to my remark that “the teacher has assigned to himself the historical role of a psychoanalytic catalyst in the process of linking school and home” (p. 25), I must again stress the fact that in so doing I was only being faithful to history, since at the time of the discussions the participants still belonged to the intimate circle of Freud’s disciples. By the way, Dr. Ansbacher himself acknowledged that the 1910 discussions took place under the aegis of the psychoanalytic movement.

Most of the data Dr. Ansbacher mentions had been known to me, but I did not consider this the proper occasion to bring them out.

1165 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10028