

Essay Review

ALDO CAROTENUTO, *A secret symmetry; Sabina Spielrein between Jung and Freud*, trans. from the Italian by Arno Pomerans, John Shepley, and Krishna Winston, New York, Pantheon Books, 1982, 8vo, pp. xix, 250, [no price stated].

HANS KONRAD ISELIN, *Zur Entstehung von C. G. Jungs "Psychologischen Typen". Der Briefwechsel zwischen C. G. Jung und Hans Schmid-Guisan im Lichte ihrer Freundschaft*, Aarau, Verlag Sauerländer, 1982, 8vo, pp. 152, [no price stated], (paperback).

ROBERT S. STEELE, *Freud and Jung. Conflicts of interpretation*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, 8vo, pp. x, 390, £14.95.

The 1970s saw the publication of several full biographies of Jung, mostly by writers who had had first-hand contact with him: A. Storr (1973); M.-L. von Franz (1975); P. J. Stern (1976); L. van der Post (1976); B. Hannah (1976); V. Brome (1978). Basing themselves largely on the autobiographical outline given in Jung's own *Memories, dreams, reflections* (1961), they added their own stories to the growing collection of Jungiana, often in the form of personal testimonials to the great man, or occasionally and cautiously alluding to some controversial aspect of his personality, backed up with anonymous references for fear of offending the Jung family. This wave of biographers was followed by another, who attempted to apply outside principles to the Jung story (P. Homans, 1979, context theory; J.-R. Staude, 1981, new adult development psychology). To date, however, none of these works has been especially satisfying to medical historians, who tend to favour the long chapter on Jung in H. Ellenberger's *Discovery of the unconscious* (1970). But there are signs that the situation is changing, with the appearance of three books, all written by people who have had no personal contact with Jung. Two of their authors, Carotenuto and Iselin, publish new documentary materials relating to Jung, while the third, Steele, though ostensibly viewing Jung through "hermeneutic principles", does a creditable job of analysing already printed historical materials. These new books represent a shift in direction, away from an almost exclusive focus on Jung, towards a concentration on persons in Jung's sphere of influence.

Carotenuto's work deals mostly with the relationship between Jung and Sabina Spielrein, MD (1885–1937?), who was actually an associate of both Jung and Freud, before and after their break. Her name would probably still lie forgotten in the dusty pages of early psychoanalytic journals, or be faintly remembered as an odd footnote in the collected writings of Jung and Freud, had it not been for the publication of the *Freud/Jung letters* in 1974. It was then brought to light that Spielrein had also been an embarrassing complication in Jung's personal life. Following up this historical clue with admirable diligence, Carotenuto has uncovered the existence of a Spielrein diary for the years 1909–12; several letters and fragments of letters to Jung from 1911 to 1918; several letters and fragments of letters to Freud, 1909; twenty letters from Freud to Spielrein, 1909–23; and thirty-four letters from Jung to Spielrein. All of the above, excepting the letters from Jung to Spielrein, appear in the first half of the book. Although we are not told why permission to publish these particular Jung letters has been denied, the Jung family has curiously allowed Carotenuto to make a few brief quotes from them in the essay part of his text.

According to Carotenuto's reconstruction of the story, Spielrein arrived on the scene from Russia in August 1904, as a patient of Jung's at the Bûrgholzli in Zurich. After her discharge, she continued to be analysed by Jung, and graduated from the Zurich University Medical School in 1911, with Jung as her thesis supervisor. Afterwards, she moved to Vienna to become an active participant in the famous Wednesday night meetings of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Association. After marriage, she practised in Berlin and Geneva, where she was the analyst of Piaget. In 1923, she moved back to Russia and disappeared from history in the Stalinist purge of 1937.

Carotenuto was unfortunately denied access to the Spielrein case records at the Bûrgholzli. But we learn from the *Freud/Jung letters* that Spielrein was Jung's first published psy-

choanalytic case study, in *The Freudian theory of hysteria*, 1907. Also that she was Jung's first entanglement in a long and messy love transference/counter transference affair. Her diary reveals a tender and torn young woman who had the misfortune to fall in love with a married man. Jung is cast in the roles of doctor, teacher, friend, lover, and part-time Don Juan. The strain of the relationship finally burst into scandal in 1909. Both Jung and Spielrein reached out to Freud for help, he for consolation and she to break her dependence on Jung.

Aside from her romantic life, Spielrein was by the time of her move to Vienna in 1911, well on her way to becoming a psychoanalytical thinker in her own right. In her first presentation before the Vienna Psychoanalytic Association, *Die Destruktion als Ursache des Werdens*, she put forward the idea of a destructive instinct, an idea which Freud himself was later to develop. Even though Freud recognized her intellectual dependence on Jung, particularly with reference to schizophrenia and mythology, Spielrein was able to cut her own path without alienating either Freud or Jung. In fact, her 1917–18 letters to Jung are partly propaganda for his reconciliation with Freud; hence the author's allusion, in his title, to a "secret symmetry". Those same letters to Jung were also written on the level of one colleague to another, with detailed discussions on psychological ideas and semantic clarifications, i.e. will to power or drive to power, subconscious or unconscious, reversibility of symbols, psychological types, etc.

Like Carotenuto, Iselin has concentrated his biographical labours on a little-known colleague of Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist Hans Schmid-Guisan (1881–1932). Until now, he has probably been better known as the father of Jung's personal secretary from 1932 to 1952, Marie-Jeanne Boller-Schmid. But back in 1932, Jung had written an obituary of Schmid, mourning the passing of his comrade of twenty years, fondly recalling their bicycle journey to Ravenna in 1914, and their long collaboration on "the problems of psychological practice". Schmid is also named in the preface to the first Swiss edition of Jung's *Psychological types* (1921), where Jung speaks of an extensive correspondence with Schmid on this major problem of types (1915–16). A truncated version of one letter from this exchange appears in Jung's *Letters* (1973), with the bulk of the correspondence being deliberately omitted because the editors judged it to be too technical. This irritating editorial decision, however, left the door open for Iselin's book, which not only prints the omitted letters (five from Jung to Schmid and eight from Schmid to Jung), but provides us with just enough biographical information on Schmid to allow him a brief notice on the stage of psychiatric history.

Schmid did his psychiatric residency at the university clinic at Cery, near Lausanne (1910–13). Before his arrival, the psychological methods of treatment developed at the famous sister institution, the Burghölzli, under Bleuler and Jung (1900–09), were apparently not in use at Cery. From 1911 on, Schmid's scientific papers show a decided interest in psychoanalytic ideas. He did his psychoanalytic training under Jung, and sided with the Zurich group that split off from the International Psychoanalytic Association in 1913. And they remained close after the break with Freud, during the so-called years of Jung's "creative illness". No doubt, one of the binding elements was their intense preoccupation with the problem of psychological types, which they approached from differing points of view, Schmid the purported "extroverted feeling type" and Jung the "introverted thinking type", both struggling to comprehend and explain their own and each other's typological "Wahrheit".

The third work under review pivots on Jung's relation to Freud. Steele, as an experienced "archaeologist" on the development of Freud's ideas, has taken advantage of the availability of the *Freud/Jung letters* to extend his interest to Jung. His technique for exposing the historical Freud, and now the historical Jung, is largely twofold. In some instances he uses comparison; in others, he analyses their methods of interpretation.

Sometimes Steele takes a known statement or incident from their biographies, writings, or letters, and collates it with what the counterpart, Jung or Freud, has said, or with other people's letters, book reviews, remarks by friends or colleagues, studies on patients, etc. For example, both Freud and Jung tended to claim that their works were not well received. Yet, with few exceptions, they were both widely and favourably reviewed. Of course, writers are sensitive about the odd critic, but in the cases of Freud and Jung, their "isolation" fantasies clearly dominate the historical facts. Also, failures of memory sometimes create inconsistencies

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between their autobiographies and the *Freud/Jung letters*. And their judgements, on occasion, are not necessarily to be taken as historically accurate, e.g., towards the end of their relationship, the International Psychoanalytic Association did not judge Jung so harshly as Freud, as he was continually re-elected to important positions in the organization. Steele is most poignant when he is able to use these external comparisons. When he cannot, he reiterates the known biographical facts and stands in line with the other interpreters of Freud and Jung.

Steele's other strength lies in his skill at analysing Freud and Jung as storytellers. Freud, who works with adults, projects the origins of neurotic problems back into a hypothetical personal infancy; while Jung practically omits the personal lives of his patients from the amplification of their dreams. Both Freud and Jung operate first and foremost as narrators of the psyche; their differences are fundamentally interpretative.

But within Steele's strength, one can also find a weakness (that to a lesser extent can also apply to Carotenuto), namely, that he has a propensity for counter-interpreting, or psychologizing, Freud and Jung, which is, at times, overdone: "If Breuer had been more of a man, more willing to fight on Freud's behalf, then Freud could have easily invested in him his sublimated homosexual love" (page 63); "Anima figures exist because: males have strong attachments to their mothers and must repress the feminine elements in their personalities" (page 284). By contrast, Iselin takes no independent interpretative risks; he makes no commentary on the Schmid/Jung letters, and only safe observations on the historical context, sources, and development of Jung's ideas on psychological types. Still, Iselin succeeds in whetting our appetite. We especially want to know more about Schmid.

Jung, in his *Memories, dreams, reflections*, was careful to focus on the images, rather than the people, in his life. Now Carotenuto, with the sympathy of a practising analyst, has gone to great lengths to focus on two of those people – Spielrein and Freud; Iselin on another – Schmid; and Steele on another, more ideological than personal, aspect of his relation to Freud. The effect of Jung having to share centre stage with others is for him to appear more fallible and less the heroic-solipsistic thinker of the Jung biographies of the 1970s. What Jung writes to Freud about Spielrein is not the same as what he says to her. What Jung writes to Spielrein about Freud is not necessarily the same as what he says to Freud (see pp. 183–184). As Spielrein's father succinctly put it back in 1909, "People have made a God out of him [Jung], and he's nothing but an ordinary human being. I'm glad she boxed his ears!" (page 178).

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