

# Freud and the Prenatal Dimension of Emotional Experience

Ludwig Janus

**Abstract:** The main perspective of this writing is that the development of psychoanalysis occurred in Central Europe within the context of a change of mindset from imperial rule in the 19th century to the democratically oriented 20th century. In short, the shift was from an authoritarian orientation to an orientation of self-experience. The prenatal dimension of experience is given specific focus.

**Keywords:** Freud, psychoanalysis, prenatal experience

This paper explores the development of psychoanalysis in the early 20th century and the accompanying change of mindset from the imperial rule of the 19th century to the democratically oriented 20th century. In accordance with the sensibilities of the time, this change took place particularly in the experiencing of sexuality. In authoritarian orientation, this experience occupied only a limited place as everything had to adhere to its position in the hierarchy. In the emerging bourgeoisie, however, the experiencing of sexuality played an increasing role, but this had not yet acquired a clear place in child rearing and social order. For this reason, it appeared to be a primal force, which is how Freud conceptualized it. In his research, he pursued its roots in childhood and in the conflicts with the still prevailing social standards and rules from earlier times. Freud created a supportive therapeutic situation that allowed for retroactive integration into a partially authoritarian-determined identity, which as a result then changed into a more self-determined identity.

Resulting from this clarification, a deeper layer of experience became accessible, namely that of primary pre-verbal self-organization and self-discovery and the associated primal force in the field of maternal relationship. Their positive aspects were described by Jung (1912/1952; 1985) in the metaphor of an archaic self and the archetypal forces of a maternal primal basis; their negative aspects were described by Adler (1907) as the primary damage, inferiority complex, and compensating power drive. Both already had the prenatal dimension in view, but at the time this could only be hinted at.

In obvious defense against these observations and concepts of his students, as well as the need for an opinion of his own, Freud (1914) did integrate these wider aspects in his theory through his concept of primary narcissism as a compromise. The further substantiation by Rank (1924/1997; 1926/1994; 1926/2006; 1927) of the acquisition of the prenatal and perinatal layer with the description of the experiential meaning of birth and its processing in the life of the individual and the cultural configurations led, via Rank's proposed extensions of psychoanalytic techniques (Rank, 1926/1994), to a systematic separation of Freud and his group from this deeper experiential layer of primary maternal relationship (Janus, 2015b; Kramer, 2015; Wirth, 2015). The conceptual break between Freud and Rank can now be exactly understood through the publication of their correspondence. Freud wrote in a letter, dated 02/15/1924, about the "womb fantasies" (Wittenberg & Tögel, 2006, p. 169), to which only Rank had given a special significance. On the same day, Rank answered that he feels misunderstood here, he was dealing with the "womb reality" (Lieberman & Kramer, 2015, p. 213). Both letters can be found in detail in Janus, 2014, p. 307.

The almost one-hundred-year-old history of the research of primary development before, during, and after birth now permits a clarifying retrospect of the beginnings, how they were realized by Freud and his group, their possibilities and also their limitations. In the following, I am concerned with the full understanding of structures in Freud's theories, which resulted in a limitation of the possibilities of knowledge. On the one hand, these are personal relationships and on the other social relationships. Such apprehension is important because these structures were perpetuated, as it were, in the organizational structures of psychoanalytic societies. Their insight-limiting impact could, therefore, not be reflected upon. My thoughts and remarks are intended to encourage such reflection.

## The Defensive Significance of Focusing on Sexuality

The positive aspects of a reflection on sexual experience in the sense of an extension of self-experience have been diversely recognized and appreciated as an epochal achievement of Freud. In contrast, the defensive significance of centering on sexuality has up to now been reflected far less. In a conversation with Jung, Freud made this defensive significance explicit: "My dear Jung, promise me never to abandon the sexual theory, which is the most essential. See, we must turn it into a dogma, an unshakable bulwark." Jung asked in astonishment: "A bulwark - against what?" To which Freud replied, "The black mudslide of occultism" (Jung, 1984, p. 154). It is now self-evident to associatively connect the occult symbolically with the secret, as described by Freud (1919) in *Das Unheimliche (The Uncanny)*. Here a connection can be made to the threatening aspect of the womb and the birth canal with the "inter faeces nascimur" (black mudslide) of birth (DeMause, 2005, p. 47).

How did sexuality come to acquire this special defensive significance? Here a statement by Jung at the same place is helpful, "Sexuality meant a numinosum to him (Freud)" (Jung, 1965, p. 150). Here a secret contamination with a positive prenatal maternal experience could have an effect, as it can be mirrored in mystical emotion (Kafkalides, 1995). In our context, however, the defensive significance and the associated perceived limitation are of relevance. This defensive significance also explains the background of the first theory of anxiety, which is that anxiety arises from the repression or blocking of sexuality. It, from my point of view, is more accurate to say that in such a case the defensive function of sexuality fails and the underlying anxiety arising from traumatic aspects in the early mother relationship appears.

In 1909, Freud formulated anew, "The act of birth is incidentally the first experience of anxiety and thus the source and the pattern of the anxiety effect" (Freud, 1909, p. 391). Notwithstanding, the first theory of anxiety remained valid until 1926, although it was actually derailed by this statement on the importance of birth anxiety. In *Hemmung, Symptom und Angst (Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety)* he then calls unprocessed birth anxiety a source of anxiety, "One cannot dismiss the fact that with abstinence, abusive interference in the course of sexual arousal, or distraction from their psychological processing anxiety arises directly from libido, that is, the state of helplessness of the ego produced against the overwhelming emotional tension that, as during birth, results in the development of anxiety" (Freud, 1926, p. 281). Here despite, or because of, the concretizations of Rank, it is contradictorily stated, in accordance with the defense, that anxiety arises on the one hand from the libido, and at the same time the anxiety at birth is referred to. Their significance is then again completely relativized in what follows. These contradictions once again emphasize the ambivalence on the subject of the primary maternal experience.

Due to the importance of the topic, the defensive significance of sexuality is illustrated in another example. In *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie (Three Essays on The Theory of sexuality)* Freud writes, "That children love passive motion games like being swung or being rocked so much and always want to do it again is evidence of the desire created by certain physical shaking movements... . Rocking is known to be used regularly for calming restless children. The vibration of wagon rides and later railway journeys produce such a fascinating effect on older children... The need to link traveling by railway with sexuality obviously comes from the pleasurable nature of the sensation of movement" (1905, p. 102). In the case of repressions there are "anxiety attacks on the journey" or "railway anxiety" (1905, p. 107). It is very clear that the experiencing of movement such as rocking and being swung, which are as a rule connected in a deep layer with intrauterine experiences, are tainted here with sexual feelings, in the sense also that the sexual feelings can conceal the anxiety aspect of prenatal or perinatal reminiscences.

The oscillation between touching on the topic of the early mother and a subsequent denial and distancing in the presentation of the theme of *déjà vu* in dreams becomes particularly clear, "This location is then always the mother's genitals; in fact you cannot say about any other place with such certainty that you have been there" (Freud, 1909, p. 350). But then again he writes on the dreams about birth, "A great number of dreams, which are frequently anxiety-filled, often involving passing through or being in narrow spaces, are based on *fantasies* about intra-uterine life, residence in the womb and giving birth" (1909, p. 390). Here again only fantasies are being dealt with, although previously the reality aspect of the birth experience was emphasized in the case of *déjà vu*.

But also in relation to the dreams of birth, the decision is clear that real aspects of birth can be reflected in them. The Adlerian psychoanalyst Friedrich Kruse (1972) compared hundreds of birth dreams

to the reality of each birth and was able to demonstrate the correlation many times. This corresponds again exactly to Freud's statement that the "anxiety affect faithfully reflects the form of birth anxiety just as the shape of the head reflects the shape of the birth canal" (Freud, 1910, p. 71).

This is further evidence of his dissociative wavering when it comes to the subject of the early mother. Another proof of this is that Freud introduced certain myths into his reflection of the psychological experience as auxiliary constructions of his theory. He did this in places where the early mother was actually concerned, as with the Oedipus complex and narcissism, because he was not able to directly reflect upon the topic of the earliest maternal experience due to the limitations of his period and his own biography.

### **The Mythological Auxiliary Constructions in Freud's Theory**

Both the Oedipus myth and the Narcissus myth are essentially concerned with a projective reflection of the effects of threatening prenatal and birth experiences. In the case of Oedipus, it is the father's primary rejection, the lack of maternal protection and the exposure and mutilation after birth that cause his "criminal" career as a parricide and his regressive mother fixation that causes incest (Wirth, 2015). What the myth can vividly demonstrate in a projective and amazingly concise way was intuitively guessable for Freud in his psychological developmental truth, but was not reflexible, as is relatively easily possible for us after a hundred-year history of research. In order to present this primary connection and to deny it at the same time, he used the myth as an auxiliary construction in his theory. This denial is evident from the fact that he only uses the later father conflict reflectively for his theory, which was then immortalized in the psychoanalytic tradition in understanding the Oedipus complex. Thus, the essential previous history is not considered, let alone reflected upon. It could also be expressed as follows—the dynamics of paternal individuation dominantly concealed the deeper dynamics of maternal individuation.

Similarly, the obscuring of the maternal dimension occurs by using the Narcissus myth as a theoretical construction. The deep relationship disturbance of many neurotic patients could not, as would be possible today, be dealt with on a reflexive level, but its importance and its reflection in myth was intuitively recognized. Because the pregnancy of his mother, Leiriope, was caused by rape, a prenatal lack of relationship can be conjectured as traumatic and shown to be formative in the fate of Narcissus. His primary mother fixation is made clear in the representation of his death as drowning (Janus, 1988).

As knowledge-deepening as these constructions were in using the wisdom of the myth, they were knowledge-limiting in so far as they achieved this while using the vision of an authority-bound time when only the paternal theme was important. In this way the prenatal and perinatal dimensions contained in both myths could be edited out. Since the present zeitgeist is no longer determined by external authority, these suppressions are perceived intuitively and the theoretical assumptions appear to be pseudo-religious (Pollack, 2014). In other psychoanalytic theories the simultaneity of presence and denial of the prenatal dimension can be demonstrated, such as in the drive theory.

### **The Perinatal and Prenatal Dimension in the Drive Theory**

Here again the defense significance or the trauma compensatory significance of sexuality is a starting point. I think that a birth trauma connection can probably be made for this, of which there is some evidence, as I will try to explain in detail later. In my opinion, in the following sentence, for instance, Freud (1920) describes in *Jenseits des Lustprinzips (Beyond the Pleasure Principle)* a birth trauma experiencing of fragmentation, "Following the suggestion of the poet-philosopher (Plato), do we want to dare to believe that the living substance in their vivification (birth) was torn into small particles that since that time strive to reunite through sexual drives" (1920, p. 63). Sexuality can have this compensatory effect, in that it can be linked in an archaic manner to positive prenatal holistic experiences (the "oceanic feelings"), as made accessible in LSD regressions (Kafkalides, 1995).

From this perspective, some peculiarities of drive theory are understandable, such as the strange Nirvana principle, which is intended to make explicit the tendency of drives to return to a previous state, whereby this tendency is not made explicitly a return to the womb, because this "yearning for the womb life" is also overshadowed by a death experience. Freud writes, "A drive would be the animate organic inherent urge to restore an earlier state, which had to be given up under the influence of external forces of disturbance ..." (Freud, 1920, p. 40). In my view, it is obvious that these "forces of disturbance" can be

thought of as traumatic aspects of birth. These traumatic aspects of birth may lead to a collapse of experience that can be felt to be like a death (Janus, 2015a). I assume it is the shadow of a perinatal death experience that influenced Freud's thinking, and his later speculations are based on a death drive.

It is strange and moving how Freud and Rank, who stood in the closest personal communication, travel at the beginning of the twenties in the same direction on the issue of prenatal and perinatal maternal experience, starting with Freud's (1919) essay, *Das Unheimliche* (The Uncanny), which he characterized as a womb symbolism "cysta mystica" with the meaning of "birth cave." Rank made explicit what remained latent in Freud, namely the possible near-death experience at birth, the significance of which was described in various ways by Rank, whereas as in Freud it appears as a myth-like death drive. The development came to a head in the years 1923 and 1924, when Freud in his work *Zum ökonomischen Problem des Masochismus* (*On the Economic Problems of Masochism*) (1924) describes the tormenting aspects of the birth experience, an internal sensation of being gagged, forced, beaten painfully, abused in some way, coerced into unconditional obedience, besmirched, and humiliated. Here the obvious connection for prenatal psychologists with the matrix II birth, described by Grof (1983) as experiencing the expulsion phase, remains completely concealed.

This dimension is, however, made explicit in every facet of Rank's (1924) *Trauma der Geburt* (*Trauma of Birth*). Despite the obviousness of the interrelationships, this was not perceived due to the limitations of the era of the two protagonists. For this reason, it could not be reflected upon. Instead, the dissonance of the different perceptions was "solved" by breaking up. These comments and considerations make it clear that the so-called theory of drives is not actually, as the term drive would suggest, a biological or bio-psychological theory, but rather is essentially seeking a theory in order to reflect and to formulate the psychological experience. In this sense it is possible to understand Freud's statement, "The drives are mythical beings, magnificent in their vagueness" (Freud, 1933, p. 101).

This is probably also a reason why neither Freud nor subsequent analysts have seriously attempted to reconcile drive theory with biological observations and concepts. A few exceptions are the now quite forgotten, i.e., Swiss analyst, Rudolf Brun, in his theory of neurosis and Bowlby in relation to bonding processes, which were then felt to be non-analytic.

Psychologically, the Freudian expression "drive," in fact, describes the special intensity that may be related to a biological drive process in *Homo sapiens* because ultimately a holistic experience, as existent before birth, is sought in surrendering to the drive process. This is the numinosum that Freud saw in sexual experience. It is this "numinous" undertow of the drive event which is expressed in blissful or tormenting and self-tormenting sexual experience. One could also say that in experiencing sexuality the urge of the biological drive is contaminated by lingering fetal feelings. This aspect is also expressed in the fact that early in psychoanalysis there was talk of the prenatal primal libido, particularly, of course, by Jung. However, these relationships could not be sufficiently reflected upon due to the limitations of the time. The consequence of this is that in psychoanalysis one speaks as a matter of course of a drive theory which is meant to suggest a biological grounding, although its pseudo-biological character is only too obvious. This applies particularly to the death drive – in the name there resonates a foreshadowing knowledge of the numinous undertow of a near-death experience. This near-death experience is then, in a more than unclear manner, given a sort of biological grounding as the so-called aggression drive or destruction drive but which clearly cannot be biologically tenable as has been demonstrated by neurobiology in many experiments. The "aggression apparatus" is an "auxiliary system of the motivation system" that is activated by pain or danger to life (Bauer, 2013; Thomashoff, 2009) but does not possess drive character. Therefore, the unquestioned concept in wide areas of psychoanalysis of an alleged biologically grounded aggression drive is such a problematic curtailment because the concepts of aggression in early psychoanalysis possessed psychological depth and a genuine psychological basis. For Adler the power and aggression drive resulted from the elementary experience of helplessness during the early maternal relationship and for Freud the early mother was present, even if in an abstract way as the Nirvana principle and death drive (Janus, 1989a) but foreshadowed as a mythical background. A simple concept of an innate aggression drive is truncated with respect to this dimension and thus can lead to mechanical misinterpretation.

## **The Pre- and Perinatal Dimension in the Concept of the Superego**

The so-called structural theory of the id-ego-superego in *Ich und das Es* (The Ego and The Id) has the aspect of a denial of prenatal and perinatal connections in the formation of the emotional structure, as does the sexual theory. The id takes the place of the earlier drive and has an associative relation to childishness which is not given substance. This makes it possible to discount the primary influence of the early mother as Freud had already done in *Totem und Tabu* (Totem and Taboo) on the collective psychological level, but always with a very remarkable honesty: "I cannot explain where the place for the great mother deities, who possibly preceded the father deities, in this development is" (Freud, 1913, p. 180). And in a discussion with Romain Rolland, when dealing with the oceanic feeling as a reflection of an early maternal feeling, he formulates equally openly: "I can't think of an earlier feeling than that of paternal protection" (Freud, 1930, p. 430).

As sympathetic and touching as these remarks are in their authenticity, so fatal are these limitations of inner perception in a theoretical context such as the structural theory. In it, the paternal significance of the superego is inflated in a mythical manner in order to mask the banal reality, from today's point of view, which Rank (1927) later formulated that the formation of the superego occurs in the early relationship to the mother. This corresponded completely with the zeitgeist of the twenties in which society was still internally under the influence of the hierarchical structure of the empire, which again broke through during the Nazi era. The initial formation of the superego during the maternal relationship also explains the reflex impulse of self-punishment when an internal prohibition is broken. Freud had attempted to explain the immediacy of the superego reactions by means of his tribal historical speculation about the castrating father of the primal horde and their genetic anchoring.

In 1924 Rank already formulated about this, "We can do without the assumption of an inherited emotional content since the perinatal emotion, the real unconscious, proves to be the unchanging surviving embryonic aspect in the growing ego which psychoanalysis has combined as the last meta-psychological unit in the concept of the gender neutral id" (1924, p. 186). Here Rank gives Freud's formulation an idiosyncratic interpretation in terms of Rank's psychoanalysis which was extended by the female dimension. In Rank's understanding, we are dealing with the ego, not with a different word for drive, but with the prenatal primal vitality and the prenatal primal self whose momentum can live on in the incredible energy of human ideals and undertakings. For Rank the ego ideal had crucial significance compared to the superego. This corresponds to the democratic and liberal structures of his time, in which the independent design of lives is important and no longer the classification in a hierarchical system of authority. This also gives the experiencing of personal vitality a new meaning. It is no longer something that must be seen as a dangerous drive, endangering the relationship to authority, but rather as a source and a force for structuring life in agreement with social relationships. This also frees the view of the actual problem of human identity: it is the problem of integrating and balancing the different experience and identity structures of the fetus, the baby, the toddler, the child, the teenager, and the adult in a constructive manner.

It could be said that Rank's perspective was too modern for a bourgeoisie still bound to authority, whereas Freud's structural theory depicted exactly this authoritarian control but as a general theory of psychological structure, whose period dependency is clear from today's standpoint as demonstrated in Kilian's remarks (2013). As reflection was not possible earlier due to this period dependency, later additions to the psychological structure remain piecemeal. For example, Melanie Klein's addition of the dimension of the postnatal mother with its determinations of the schizoid and depressive position, which, resulting from Rank's "dissidence," edited out the reality of prenatal and perinatal life in order to maintain contact with the Freudian theory. The same is true of the later self-psychology, the early roots of self-organization that Adler and Jung had already described which was edited out for the same reasons. Unfortunately, this limitation also applies to the otherwise meritorious modern direction of relational psychoanalysis which out of loyalty to Freud and contrary to the evidence edits out the continuing influence of prenatal interconnectedness.

## The Defensive Aspects of the Concept of Signal Anxiety

Although Freud initially welcomed Rank's systematizing of his theory in *Trauma der Geburt* (*The Trauma of Birth*) (1924), in the end he decisively disqualified the significance of Rank's observations and conclusions in *Hemmung, Symptom und Angst* (*Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*) (1926). He had recognized that Rank's systematizing threatened to undermine his own concept of the centrality of the fear of castration (castration anxiety). In my opinion, his ambivalence on this topic stems from the insufficiently acknowledged phobic structural element in Freud, which I will discuss in the next section. From this it could be supposed that the derivation of phobic anxieties by Rank from incomplete birth trauma affected Freud particularly personally, which also explains his violent reaction to the new ideas put forward by Rank (Kramer, 2015). Striking is the contradictoriness in the comments about Rank, whose *Trauma der Geburt* (*The Trauma of Birth*) Freud initially celebrated as the greatest insight since the founding of psychoanalysis only to retract these comments in successive to-ing and fro-ing (Jones 1962, p. 78). From this, the theory of signal anxiety can be interpreted as a defensively motivated disguising of the fundamental importance of traumatic birth anxieties. The theory formulation becomes heterogeneous, because a developed concept of the "bad mother" is missing in Freud due to the phobic structural element. This is explained below.

### The Significance of the Phobic Structural Element in Freud for the Theory Formulation of Psychoanalysis

Of particular importance here are Freud's well-known railway phobia and fainting fits as described by Jones (1962) and Schur (1973). The separation of the three-year-old Freud from his home town of Freiberg is associated with his first railway journey during which the gas lamps put him in mind of "burning spirits in hell." He called this railway journey and the associated separation from his home town that first catastrophe "... for the rest of life." In a letter to Flies from 21/12/1899 (12/21/1899), Freud explained the frightening element of the railway journey with the memory of a much earlier fantasy, "My phobia was a fantasy of becoming poor or better a hunger phobia dependent on my infantile gluttony and caused by my wife's (of whom I am proud) lack of dowry" (Freud, 1950, p. 262). It is quite possible to interpret the railway phobia in terms of an underlying perinatal layer. Then the railway becomes the train of birth with its onwards motion and taking along and the hellish flames can be explained as typical memories from Grof's (1983) perinatal matrix III, as typical sensory phenomena in the expulsion phase of birth (ring of fire, wall of fire, etc.). The fantasy of infantile gluttony could have postnatal origins but it could be speculated about an intrauterine connection of guilt between swallowing and triggering birth. It is a very widespread motif triggered by an impulsive action or a catastrophe (such as a traumatic birth). It fits here that Freud once fainted when persuading Jung to drink alcohol against his will during the American journey.

Without wishing to cite even more biographical evidence, I want to express the supposition that Freud's birth was encumbered by a traumatic dissociation and collapse of his experience that was felt like a death. Such an experience can lead to phobic anxieties as has been ascertained in many clinical observations (Käppeli, 2013; Hochauf, 2014; Hollweg, 1995). This relationship can now be considered to be clinically verified on the basis of diverse experiences (Janus, 2015a).

Based on these observations and reflections, I see in the so-called death drive an abstract imagination of perinatal near death experience. "It must be an old, an original state that life has once left, and to which it strives to regain through all the stages of development. If we may regard it as an invariable experience that all living things strive for internal reasons to withdraw into an inorganic state, then we can only say: the goal of all life is death. And reaching back: the inanimate was earlier than the animate" (Freud, 1920, p. 40).

This can be understood as a far-reaching philosophical speculation that has little relation to the reality of one's own life. But the profound evidence for Freud was rooted, I suspect, in an overwhelming personal death experience at birth, which is elevated into the cosmic realm through the speculation of the death drive. A similar elevation of one's own birth into the cosmic realm, but in a different form, is known from Goethe, who elevates his birth in the work *West-östlicher Divan* (*West-Eastern Divan*) in the poem *Wiederfinden* (Reunion) in a comparable manner. The commentator Trunz writes: "Goethe was accustomed to see his ego in relation to the cosmos and this was especially true for great moments in life

[such as birth]. A picture of the creation of the world is given ... The world is imperfect because it is separation ... Love reunites the separated.”(Trunz 1967, p. 606).

In our context, it is important that, to my knowledge, all these aspects of a relationship of the phobic elements in Freud’s personality structure with particular aspects of his theory formulation have never before been really discussed. However, the theory of the death drive found little response due to its philosophical nature, the background never being discussed. This is why the earlier parts of his theory stand like strange-looking blocks because they reflect the problems of an earlier, still authoritarian-bound era which are nowadays no longer really communicable.

All this has serious consequences. For one thing, many analysts have “quietly” turned their backs on their relation to the fundamental work of Freud and follow so-called “more modern” orientations, as described in detail by various authors in the anthology edited by Michael Ermann (2009) entitled, *Was Freud noch nicht wusste (What Freud Didn’t Know)*. A real categorization of these “newer” developments, such as infant research, apprehension of the significance of the procedural memory, bonding research, the significance of “psychoanalysis as a relationship process” amongst others in the overall concept of psychoanalysis can, in my opinion, only succeed on the basis of such reflection on the history of psychoanalysis and its breaches, as I have tried to do here. But all the innovations and widening of psychoanalysis have in common the denial of perinatal aspects, which corresponds to a curtailed tradition. In this unrecognized mindset, the various psychoanalytic societies continue to be committed to Freud and his perspectives. This is one reason for the church-like aspects of these societies (Pollack, 2014).

Secondly, the curtailment of the reality of life by the maternal-feminine dimension of life through the suppression of prenatal and perinatal experiences in Freud’s theory, or their distortion, has been carried on through the decades. Rank had formulated succinctly on the superego formation, “Thus the ‘strict mother’ forms the actual core of the superego or, better said, the early superego formation created by the inhibitions imposed by the maternal privations is seen objectified in the image of the strict punitive mother and later seen as masochistic gratification.” (Rank, 1927, p. 94). And elsewhere, “The ‘wicked mother’ Freud has never seen” (Rank in the review of *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* from 1926; Kramer 2015). This suppression had, in my view, exactly the aforementioned traumatic birth background, leading to the various described theoretical distortions that still determine the psychoanalytic tradition.

Thirdly, the known divisions in psychoanalysis are essentially based on this curtailment of the dimension of the maternal-female reality of life. As one, Freud’s pupils made this dimension explicit, schematically simplified: Adler the “bad” mother, Jung the “good” mother, Rank the “birth mother,” Ferenczi the early “relationship mother,” Melanie Klein the “stilling mother,” etc. All these dissociative fields are still latently authority-based, and so often hardly do justice to the reality of actual patients. Unfortunately I, therefore, often see patients in my practice where obviously birth-related symptoms have been ignored in the course of different therapies to the detriment of the patients and the blockage of the therapeutic process. Only a few psychoanalysts, such as Wolfgang Hollweg (1995), Tilmann Moser (1994), Alfons Reiter (2013), Franz Renggli (2013), Ursula Volz (2008), and some others, have concerned themselves with these issues in psychotherapeutic practice.

## Conclusion

To me it seems obvious that it is a responsibility of the present time to integrate the experiences from the dissociated psychotherapeutic fields in order to be able to be more responsive to differing aspects of the concrete reality of a patient’s life. Otherwise there is a risk that the dissociative aspects of the patient’s illness are in a way perpetuated by a dissociative curtailed psychotherapeutic setting. I would like to conclude with a remark of Einstein’s: “We cannot solve a problem with the same mindset that created the problem.” I think that was the situation of psychoanalysis in the twenties. But today through the changing course of time we really do have another “mindset” and should be able to provide a solution to the problems that were not solvable then.

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