

## Article

# Rage and Anxiety in the Split between Freud and Jung

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**Abstract:** This article focuses on the period of the historic rupture between Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, approximately the period from 1909 to 1913. It examines the relevance of rage and anxiety in the process of escalating conflict culminating in a definitive separation. Their estrangement led to a theoretical parting of the ways, signified by the divergence between psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. This study begins from the understanding that, for both Freud and Jung, private life experiences, personal relationships and conflicts, and their emotional responses were deeply intertwined with the processes of theorising and writing. The rift and final split were accompanied by large amounts of rage and anxiety on both sides, which continued to have emotional reverberations on the two famous psychologists for the rest of their lives. This paper will look at how the emotional pressures generated by the feud influenced the theoretical work on the emotional life they produced during this period: Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913) and "The History of the Psycho-analytic Movement" (1914), and Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912).

**Keywords:** Freud; Jung; psychoanalysis; analytical psychology; anxiety; anger

## 1. Introduction

In December 1912, in a letter to Freud, Jung spat the dummy.

You go around sniffing out all the symptomatic actions in your vicinity, thus reducing everyone to the level of sons and daughters who blushingly admit the existence of their faults. Meanwhile you remain on top as the father, sitting pretty. For sheer obsequiousness nobody dares to pluck the prophet by the beard. (McGuire 1974, p. 535, Jung to Freud 18 December 1912)

Jung said he could see through this "little trick." This was the most aggressive and offensive letter from Jung, who usually adopted a respectful, slightly subservient tone in his correspondence with his colleague and mentor. With this letter Jung simultaneously burned his bridges and crossed the Rubicon. Jung was 37 at the time; Freud was 56, and had been complaining about encroaching old age for nearly twenty years.

Four days later Freud penned a reply which he never sent. Then twelve days after that Freud wrote a tougher one that he did send, and that pushed things even further towards an ultimate break between them. Freud stated that "one who while behaving abnormally keeps shouting that he is normal gives ground for the suspicion that he lacks insight into his illness" (McGuire 1974, p. 539, Freud to Jung 3 January 1913). Freud proposed that they

abandon our personal relations entirely. I shall lose nothing by it, for my only emotional tie with you has long been a thin thread—the lingering effect of past disappointments. (McGuire 1974, p. 539, Freud to Jung 3 January 1913)

He suggested that Jung take his “full freedom.”

The immediate provocation for Jung’s dummy spit was that Freud had pointed out a Freudian slip of the pen in the previous letter from Jung. Freud indicated to Jung that he had written “Even Adler’s cronies do not regard me as one of *yours*” when he had probably meant to write “Even Adler’s cronies do not regard me as one of *theirs*” (McGuire 1974, p. 534, Freud to Jung 16 December). The mistake was the difference between a capital letter and lower case in German. Freud was suggesting that unconsciously Jung was no longer loyal to him. Freud also questioned whether Jung was “objective” enough to consider the slip without anger. Judging by the tone and content of Jung’s response, the answer was “no.” Freud found Jung’s letter in response insolent and intolerable.

The first thing to notice is that the lexicon and framework of meaning in which the dissolution of this relationship was played out was that of psychoanalysis. The early analysts did not hold back from psychoanalysing each other, and themselves, and just as frequently psychoanalysed their colleagues to third parties. Epithets such as neurotic, paranoid, homosexual, obsessional, hysterical, narcissistic, psychopath, in danger of a psychosis and so on were bandied about among themselves, and the attribution of various complexes was a regular part of their interpersonal communications. When the movement began to fissure seriously in the early 1900s, it became usual to brand political and theoretical opponents with various psychiatric dysfunctions. Both Freud and Jung did this as frequently as their colleagues, although both deprecated this behaviour. For instance, in December 1912, when it was already too late to heal the damage that had been caused between him and Freud, Jung admitted that he had been “forced to the painful conclusion” that the majority of analysts “misuse” psychoanalysis “for the purpose of devaluing others and their progress by insinuations about complexes (as though that explained anything. A wretched theory!)” (McGuire 1974, p. 526, Jung to Freud 3 December 1912). Around the same time, Freud wrote that he too was disturbed by the “abuse” of psychoanalysis in polemics, and especially to counter new ideas; he then suggested, wise too late, “let each of us pay more attention to his own than to his neighbour’s neurosis” (McGuire 1974, p. 529, Freud to Jung 5 December 1912). Yet both Freud and Jung continued to impute psychological disorders to each other for many, many years after their split, Freud mostly privately and Jung often publicly.

This paper investigates the roles of rage and anxiety in the growing estrangement and eventual rupture between Freud and Jung. It focuses on the period of the unravelling of their relationship, from approximately 1909 to early 1913, considering the relevance of anger and fear in the process of escalating conflict culminating in a definitive separation. Their separation was of great significance for the history of psychology, because their historic rupture led to a theoretical parting of the ways, signified by the divergence between psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. The rift and final split were accompanied by large amounts of rage and anxiety on both sides, which continued to have emotional reverberations on the two famous psychologists for the rest of their lives.

The paper gives an overview of their six-year friendship and collaboration, looking in particular at the main areas of disagreement that emerged between them, and focusing especially on the many causes of anxiety within the relationship. The story of their gradual estrangement and eventual split has been rehearsed many times, with many different emphases. It has often been recounted by scholars with a strong pre-existing commitment to one or the other of their theoretical positions. For example, there is Peter Gay’s admirable, and overwhelmingly admiring, biography of Freud (Gay 1989); while Marie-Louise von Franz’s biography of Jung is the work of an acolyte (Von Franz 1998). Some studies have shown a marked inclination towards or a bias or even aversion against one of the protagonists. For instance, George Hogenson (Hogenson 1983) is intensely critical of Freud, whereas Frank McLynn (McLynn 1997) and Richard Noll (Noll 1996) show signs of an aversion towards both Jung’s personality and his psychology. On the other hand, some writers, such as Linda Donn (Donn 1988), have adopted an uncritical or even reverential approach towards both. This study attempts to take an even-handed approach; while remaining respectful of the range and intensity of emotions involved on both sides, and of the two men’s unusual candour in acknowledging them. Some existing studies, notably Hogenson (1983) and McLynn (1997), have provided in-depth psychoanalytical interpretations in

terms of the unconscious dynamics of the relationship and rift between Freud and Jung. Their analyses, based largely on the correspondence between the two, are characteristically extensive and involved. This paper is not intended to offer a psychoanalytic interpretation, for several reasons. I am not a trained or qualified psychoanalyst; nor am I an adherent of psychoanalysis or other forms of depth psychology. Indeed I am dubious about the procedure of giving psychoanalytic interpretations of individuals one has never met. In the conclusion of the paper I do offer some tentative suggestions about what might have been at stake in the relationship psychologically for Freud and for Jung.

This study begins from the understanding that, for both Freud and Jung, private life experiences, personal relationships and conflicts, and emotional responses were deeply intertwined with the processes of theorising and writing. This was not something that would have come as a surprise to either of the two psychologists. As Freud ruefully commented, “How the ‘personal complex’ casts its shadow on all purely logical thought!” (McGuire 1974, p. 28, Freud to Jung 7 April 1907). The paper examines the intertwining of the personal and the theoretical in three major works produced during the period of crisis near the end of their relationship: Jung’s *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912) (Jung 2002), and Freud’s *Totem and Taboo* (1913) (Freud 1960) and “On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement” (Freud 1924).

## 2. A Brief History of the Relationship

Their correspondence began in 1906, at first mainly to exchange their publications. They met for the first time in Vienna at Freud’s home in March 1907. This was the famous first encounter when they talked virtually non-stop for thirteen hours. As well as theoretical and clinical talk, Jung sought advice from Freud about an extramarital relationship he was involved in. After this first meeting the tone of Jung’s letters to Freud became one of veneration, and he was soon referring to it as a religious “crush” (McGuire 1974, p. 95, Jung to Freud 28 October 1907), much to the discomfort of the atheist Freud. The meeting apparently had a deep impact on Freud as well, because by April 1907, just a month after first meeting him, Freud felt ready to designate Jung as his heir apparent for leadership of the psychoanalytic movement (McGuire 1974, p. 27, Freud to Jung 7 April 1907). They met for the second time in September 1908 when Freud visited Zurich. After that, they met face-to-face perhaps half a dozen times at various conferences. Their relationship developed mainly through correspondence, and what we know about it comes principally from that correspondence, virtually all of which has been preserved (McGuire 1974). This paper is based mainly on the Freud-Jung correspondence.

It can be said that they fell for each other. They were both highly intelligent, imaginative and creative, and they both had personal charisma. Their relationship quickly became intense. Seven months after meeting Freud, Jung was writing to confess that he had a “religious” crush on him. In the same letter he also explained that his feelings for Freud made him anxious because of a previous experience when, at the age of eighteen, he had been sexually assaulted by a man whom he held in high regard. Freud was generally more circumspect about expressing his feelings. But he designated Jung as his successor soon after meeting him, and soon began referring to him as his son. Freud often appeared to be dependent on letters from Jung, and frequently scolded him if there was any delay. Both Freud and Jung ruminated about the homosexual aspects of their feelings for each other. However, their relationship was always full of anxiety; there were virtually no periods when they were just happy, secure, stable or peaceful. There were always fundamental differences of opinion between them. The possibility of a breakdown of relations was virtually always in the air. The friendship became increasingly strained from 1909. Its dissolution “was foreshadowed in 1911, overt in 1912, and final in 1913” (Storr 1973, p. 19). After the split, the two men hated each other, and continued to hate each other for the rest of their lives. Though they never saw each other again, a good deal of their later research and publications was the continuation of an unacknowledged and acrimonious dialogue between them (Donn 1988, pp. 182–83). I would suggest that the degree and persistence of the animosity between them was a reflection of the intensity of the relationship.

### 3. What did Freud and Jung disagree about?

A major cause of dissension could be summed up as sex versus religion. Jung claimed that Freud's feelings about sex were religious in nature (Jung 1956a, p. 173). Freud said that Jung's feelings about religion were reducible to sex. Freud characterised himself as a "godless Jew" and could fairly be described as a militant atheist. Jung's views on religion and Christianity were harder to pin down and varied over time, but in any case his position with respect to Christianity was heretical.

Throughout his career Freud remained steadfast in his position maintaining "the sexual core of our psychological theories" (McGuire 1974, p. 196, Freud to Jung 17 January 1909). As early as his first letter to Freud, Jung was already indicating his dissension from Freud's view that psychopathology was always due to sexual factors:

it seems to me that though the genesis of hysteria is predominantly, it is not exclusively, sexual. I take the same view of your sexual theory (McGuire 1974, pp. 4–5, Jung to Freud 5 October 1906).

In his reply Freud acknowledged their difference of opinion, but hoped that over time their views would converge. Jung then yielded to Freud's more extensive clinical experience: "it is possible that my reservations about your far-reaching views are due to lack of experience" (McGuire 1974, p. 7, Jung to Freud 23 October 1906). This was a conciliatory move that allowed their collaboration to develop. Jung reiterated his relative lack of experience many times. But the truth was that Jung never reconciled himself to what he saw as Freud's exclusive focus on sexuality as the originating factor in psychological disorders.

At the same time Freud did not want to leave the study of religion to others, in particular Jung. In his "On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement" (hereafter History), Freud made a claim to precedence in this field, stating that he had "ventured the first approach to the problems of the psychology of religion" (Freud 1924, p. 322). In his view myth and neurosis had a common core, there were parallels between religious ritual and the ceremonials of neurotics, and the foundations of religion, like psychopathology, lay in human infantile helplessness. In other words his approach attempted to explain religious phenomena by means of psychoanalysis. On the other hand, Jung gave religion more of the status of an independent variable. As Freud put it in the History, "In the latest works of the Zurich school we find analysis permeated with religious ideas rather than the opposite, as is intended" (Freud 1924, p. 322).

A second major divergence was in the realm of methodology, but also with strong links to matters of intellectual temperament or cast of mind. This second principal area of discord could be summed up as speculation versus empiricism. An important early influence on Freud at the University of Vienna was the philosopher Franz Brentano (1838–1917), who encouraged his students to break with philosophical tradition and think for themselves, but always to take a careful, methodical approach. His ideas were summed up in his major work, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874). Freud was also very attracted to the British empiricist tradition—Tyndall, Huxley, Lyell and especially Charles Darwin. In his biography of Freud, Peter Gay interprets Freud's working life in terms of an internal tension between the need for self-discipline in the interests of science and Freud's strong impulses towards speculation and theoretical flights of fancy. Gay sees Freud as "a man engaged in a titanic subterranean struggle between the urge to speculate and the need for self-discipline" (Gay 1989, p. 768). Freud prided himself on having learned to restrain speculative tendencies (Freud 1924, p. 304). As will be seen below in the discussion about *Totem and Taboo*, Freud was kidding himself on this point. Freud reprimanded Jung many times for over-indulgence in imaginative speculation, for not being objective, empirical or scientific enough.

For his part, Jung always claimed the status of science for his work, but I think any objective observer would have to say that Jung was more inclined to speculation and had fewer reservations about following where his imagination led. For instance, Jung advocated the use of what he called "active imagination" as a methodology for research. As is often said, "Jung makes Freud look scientific."

Perhaps one way of characterising their differences regarding science is that Freud defined science in terms of “science-or,” whereas Jung was willing to think in terms of “science-and.”

#### 4. What Were Freud and Jung Anxious about?

I have entitled this paper “Rage and Anxiety in the Split between Freud and Jung” for reasons of euphony, but chronologically speaking the anxiety came first, followed by the rage in the last stages of the relationship. So what were Freud and Jung anxious about? Of course during this period they were both worried about the everyday issues of money, health, relationships, overwork and administrative matters. Regarding relationships, Jung had problems because of his promiscuous sexual affairs with women, including patients, and the effects this had on his relationship with his wife. Freud was concerned about the after-effects and the possibility of a repetition of his failed relationship with his friend and colleague, Wilhelm Fliess, and with the growing tensions within the psychoanalytic camp between him and Alfred Adler and his supporters. There were also other causes of anxiety which played out more directly in the Freud-Jung relationship.

Freud was anxious about the future of psychoanalysis as a movement. He was also anxious that psychoanalysis not be seen as a “Jewish science.” His cultivation of Jung as a Protestant Swiss was in part an attempt to widen the cultural base of the movement in order better to ensure its survival. These anxieties about the future fate of his ideas were tied together with Freud’s preoccupations about ageing. Freud recognised this as his “old-age” complex (McGuire 1974, p. 419, Freud to Jung 27 April 1911).

A sign of the intensity of Freud’s anxieties was his fainting on two occasions in Jung’s presence: in Bremen in 1909 and in Munich in 1912. On both occasions Jung had been talking about topics relating to death: peat-bog corpses in Bremen and ancient Egyptian conflicts between fathers and sons in Munich. After fainting in Bremen, Freud indicated to Jung his belief that Jung had a death wish against him. For the record, Jung said that this idea came as a surprise to him and that he had been alarmed by the intensity of Freud’s anxious fantasies (Jung 1956a, p. 180). In 1912, no doubt trying to save face, Freud attributed these fainting episodes to migraine, but also admitted some psychic involvement, which he was not inclined to follow up on (McGuire 1974, p. 524, Freud to Jung 29 November 1912). Various and sometimes convoluted psychoanalytic explanations have been put forward to explain these episodes (for example, (Hogenson 1983, p. 162; McLynn 1997, p. 136)). However, I think the conflict between Freud’s desire to see Jung as his heir and anointed son and his perception of Jung as a dangerous rival for leadership of the movement was enough to lead Freud to escape into unconsciousness.

Jung, on his side, was anxious to make his way in the world and develop his career. Just to mention one example of the degree of his anxiety in this respect, in 1911 he cut short a bicycle trip in northern Italy after he had a dream that made him feel humiliated; when he awoke, he had such intense feelings of inferiority that he broke off the bicycle ride and immediately took the train home in order to work on his book, *Psychology of the Unconscious* (Jung 1956a, p. 338). In joining Freud’s nascent but still professionally outcast movement, Jung believed that he had sacrificed the esteem of colleagues who might have advanced his career: “the leading lights of psychiatry have already given me up for lost. It is enough for them to read in a report that I have championed your standpoint” (McGuire 1974, p. 15, Jung to Freud 29 December 1906).

Jung was also anxious about Freud. After Jung confessed to Freud his religious crush on him, and at the same time told Freud that as a child he had endured a sexual assault by a man he had previously worshipped, Jung reinterpreted a dream he had had about Freud when he was a visitor in Vienna. In the dream Jung was walking beside Freud and Freud was in the guise of a very frail old man. Freud had interpreted the dream as a “rivalry complex” indicating that Jung wished to dethrone him. This interpretation was consistent with Freud’s sense of rivalry with Jung and with his obsessive concerns about ageing. But within days of revealing his crush and his childhood sexual assault, Jung believed that he had found the meaning of the dream: it was a compensation for Jung’s sense of Freud’s “dangerousness” (McGuire 1974, p. 96, Jung to Freud 2 November 1907).



Jung often referred to his “father complex” with respect to Freud. This is the way Jung initially chose to set up their close relationship. When Freud began to address his letters to Jung as “Dear Friend,” after their first meeting in 1907, Jung said: “let me enjoy your friendship not as one between equals but as that of father and son” (McGuire 1974, p. 122, Jung to Freud 20 February 1908). Of all people, Freud, the discoverer of the Oedipus complex, would have known the danger of that. By referring to a “father complex” Jung was acknowledging the ambivalence of his feelings towards Freud.

Jung became even more anxious when Freud began to research and publish in the area of mythology and religion. He wrote candidly:

the outlook for me is very gloomy if you too get into the psychology of religion. You are a dangerous rival (McGuire 1974, p. 460, Jung to Freud 14 November 1911).

In another letter Jung admitted to a feeling of inferiority with respect to Freud (McGuire 1974, p. 437, Jung to Freud 26 July 1911). Jung became extremely anxious before he published ideas that contradicted some of Freud's, in particular in his *Psychology of the Unconscious*, published in 1912. Having burnt his bridges with other fields of psychiatry by championing Freud, Jung felt anxious at the thought of losing the attachment to psychoanalysis as well. Jung suffered frequent anxiety attacks while he was working on the book and his anxiety culminated in writer's block when it came to the final sections:

For two months I was unable to touch my pen, so tormented was I by the conflict. Should I keep my thoughts to myself, or should I risk the loss of so important a friendship? At last I resolved to go ahead with the writing—and it did indeed cost me Freud's friendship (Jung 1956a, p. 191).

In the event Jung's fears were confirmed. As well as losing Freud, Jung also found himself socially isolated as other friends and acquaintances associated with psychoanalysis dropped away, which precipitated a period of intense psychological distress.

As can be seen, the relationship was from the beginning fraught with anxieties, associated especially with professional, academic and political rivalries between the two men. I will now turn to Freud and Jung's major publications during the period when their relationship reached crisis point: Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*, Freud's *Totem and Taboo* and his “On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement.” The emphasis will be on how the ideas developed in these works were in discernible ways reflections of issues in the relationship between the two writers. Because both Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* and Freud's *Totem and Taboo* were published in instalments, their production and publication overlapped. Their most significant theoretical divergences appeared in the last sections of the books, Jung's published just before the break with Freud, and Freud's soon after.

## 5. *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912)

Jung's book, *Psychology of the Unconscious*, has a reputation for obscurity, which is richly deserved. The book is highly digressive, as well as disjointed. It represents a blend of psychoanalysis with comparative world mythology, comparative philology and evolutionary biology. It includes a dense accumulation of mythological references and is over 500 pages long. Jung himself later commented that because of “its imperfections and its incompleteness it laid down the programme to be followed for the next few decades of my life” (Jung 1956b, p. xxiv). Freud clearly had the advantage of Jung as a persuasive writer. Some of the cultural keys to understanding the work can be found in Richard Noll's highly sceptical study of *fin-de-siècle* anti-rationalist *volkisch* and occult movements in Germany (Noll 1996).

Jung's work came out in two instalments. The shorter first part was fairly innocuous in terms of maintaining a relationship with Freud and psychoanalysis; the much longer second part was relatively incendiary. Jung began working on the book in early 1910; he gave a lecture on the first part in May 1910 and sent Freud a transcript. Freud responded with critical notes and commented that “Despite all its beauty, I think, the essay lacks ultimate clarity.” But at this stage Freud could add

that nevertheless “everything essential in your essay is right” (McGuire 1974, p. 335, Freud to Jung undated). Jung was writing the second part in late 1911 and early 1912. He finished it in February 1912, but this section of the book was not published until September of that year, when he was in America delivering the Fordham lectures. The book and the lectures made it clear to Freud and his supporters that Jung’s ideas had developed in directions that represented a significant and unacceptable deviation from the orthodoxy of psychoanalysis. As Jung put it, the “book became a landmark, set up on the spot where two ways divided” (Jung 1956b, p. xxiv).

According to Jung’s own account, it was Freud’s negative reaction to Jung’s immersion in research into mythology that prompted him to undertake the study (Jung 1956a, p. 178). Jung was also inspired to write the book by reading the fantasies and visions of an American woman, Frank Miller, a lecturer and theatrical performer. Jung believed that Miller was in the early stages of schizophrenia, mistakenly as it turned out. He saw in her fantasies parallels with imagery from the mythologies of a range of ancient cultures.

In the book Jung made it clear that he differed from Freud regarding the nature of the libido. In Jung’s view the libido was not an exclusively sexual drive. Jung’s theoretical innovation was to suggest a redefinition and expansion of the meaning of libido to refer more broadly to psychic energy, rather than strictly to sexuality. For example, Jung wrote of the libido as “one’s own vital force” (Jung 2002, p. 96) and “that driving strength of our own soul” (Jung 2002, p. 128). In addition, the book foreshadowed Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious—the idea that some of the contents of the individual unconscious have their source in the collective history and evolution of humankind. Jung also added, probably mischievously in view of his knowledge of Freud’s “old-age complex” and worries about retaining his primacy within psychoanalysis:

To be fruitful means, indeed, to destroy one’s self, because with the rise of the succeeding generation the previous one has passed beyond its highest point; thus our descendants are our most dangerous enemies, whom we cannot overcome, for they will outlive us, and, therefore, without fail, will take the power from our enfeebled hands. The anxiety in the face of the erotic fate is wholly understandable, for there is something immeasurable therein (Jung 2002, p. 117).

Jung also differed from Freud on the significance of incest. Regarding incest, the first thing to note is that during the period of their friendship neither Freud nor Jung thought about incestuous desire as anything other than the desire of children to have a sexual relationship with their parents. They did not consider the desires of parents or other relatives to have sex with children. Today, of course, we see incest in a very different way. Jung was more in line with current thinking on the subject in that he thought that in reality incestuous desires on the part of children to have actual sexual relations with their relatives were very rare:

the fundamental basis of the “incestuous” desire does not aim at cohabitation, but at the special thought of becoming a child again, of turning back to the parent’s protection, of coming into the mother once more in order to be born again (Jung 2002, p. 251).

Incestuous desire is therefore a regressive impulse, and on the whole Jung recommends that it be overcome in the interests of maturation and what he would later call individuation:

it is necessary for the well-being of the adult individual, who in his childhood was merely an atom revolving in a rotary system, to become himself the centre of a new system. That such a step implies the solution or, at least, the energetic treatment of the individual sexual problem is obvious, for unless this is done the unemployed libido will inexorably remain fixed in the incestuous bond, and will prevent individual freedom in essential matters (Jung 2002, p. 454).

Jung conceptualised incestuous urges as symbolic of resistance against individual maturation. He wrote that the “sexuality of the unconscious is not what it seems to be; it is *merely a symbol*” (Jung 2002, p. 433,

emphasis in original). This was certainly a major departure from psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the centrality of the Oedipus complex, conceived as a thoroughly sexual desire for consummation with a parent.

In *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung investigated the myth of the hero. In Jung's own words, the book "dealt with the hero's struggle for freedom" (Jung 1956a, p. 178). It is not too much of a stretch to suggest that Jung identified himself with the mythical figure of the hero. The hero has the mission to cast off external impediments and propel himself on his own individual trajectory. As John Kerr put it, the "hero became the embodiment of Jung's own critical intelligence, the myth the saga of his own intellectual adventure" (Kerr 1988, p. 43). Jung cast his conflict with Freud in these terms of the struggle of a hero to gain liberation and to pursue his own individual path (Jung 1956a, pp. 191–92). Jung presented this process of liberation as the ultimate aim of psychoanalysis: "The object of psychoanalysis has frequently been wrongly understood to mean the renunciation or the gratification of the ordinary sexual wish, while, in reality, the problem is the sublimation of the infantile personality, or, expressed mythologically, a sacrifice and rebirth of the infantile hero" (Jung 2002, p. 479).

The basic line of argument in *Psychology of the Unconscious* is that at critical points in life the individual turns inward and from the unconscious can find helpful mythological images to guide them through the crisis and towards a higher level of integration. There are dangers in the process, however; if it goes wrong it can send the person into a psychosis where they lose touch with reality. Jung went through just such a crisis immediately after his break with Freud. He felt disoriented, without a firm grounding, and there began a period of several years that he identified in his autobiography as a "confrontation with the unconscious." I would suggest that a secondary gain of this process was to bolster Jung's legitimacy as a searcher into the nether regions of depth psychology. It mirrored a similar period in Freud's life when he performed a self-analysis using his own dreams as raw material, which was likewise an essential part of his claims to legitimacy, primacy and authority.

With regard to theorising about anxiety, divergent views on the role of anxiety were a touchstone of the theoretical divide between Freud and Jung at this time. In his research for *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung put forward the idea that originally there was a great deal of what he called "free-floating anxiety" in early humans, which led to the creation of taboos and totems, including the incest taboo:

incest is forbidden *not because it is desired* but because the free-floating anxiety regressively reactivates infantile material and turns it into a ceremony of atonement (as though incest had been, or might have been, desired). Psychologically, the incest prohibition doesn't have the significance which one must ascribe to it if one assumes the existence of a particularly strong incest wish (McGuire 1974, pp. 505–6, Jung to Freud 17 May 1912, emphasis in original).

Similarly, in *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung wrote that "Incest prohibition can be understood, therefore, as a result of regression, and as the result of a libidinous anxiety . . . Naturally, it is difficult or impossible to say from whence this anxiety may have come" (Jung 2002, p. 464). Freud responded to Jung's theoretical innovation by underlining its deviation from psychoanalysis: "I believe we have held up to now that anxiety originated in the prohibition of incest; now you say on the contrary that the prohibition of incest originated in anxiety, which is very similar to what was said before the days of" psychoanalysis (McGuire 1974, p. 507, Freud to Jung 23 May 1912). According to Freud's theory of the sexual aetiology of neurosis, anxiety was derived from sexual life and was associated with sexual wishes that have been repressed (Hogenson 1983, p. 75). For Freud, anxiety was something to be explained by his theory, whereas Jung took it as a given.

## 6. Totem and Taboo (1913)

*Totem and Taboo* seems to have been born out of a spirit of competition on the part of Freud, directed in particular against Jung. From 1910 Jung had made it very clear that he was taking on



the psychology of religion and immersing himself in loads of literature on mythology. Yet this was the very field that Freud chose to develop at this time, publishing essays on it in 1912–1913 and finally a book dated 1913. Despite the fact that he found research on religion uncongenial to him (McGuire 1974, p. 469, Freud to Jung 30 November 1911), Freud worked on the book from February 1911 to May 1913. Freud apparently wanted to overshadow Jung's efforts in this field by formulating what he called "a larger synthesis" (McGuire 1974, p. 391, Freud to Jung 12 February 1911). In *Totem and Taboo* Freud threw caution to the winds and let his speculative impulses run free.

It is difficult to give a summary of the argument in *Totem and Taboo*. Its brilliance lies in how it weaves together many different lines of argument. The book is made up of four essays dealing with various aspects of totemism and cultural taboos, as well as other topics such as incest and animism. Much of the discussion is anthropological, an exposition of the views of a number of prominent writers on the meaning attached to totems and taboos in a variety of cultures throughout the world. To their contributions to the literature, Freud added psychoanalytical interpretations. Freud enters a thicket of rival interpretations, and his writing is fairly flat until the final three sections of the fourth essay, the last twenty pages or so. In these pages his writing reaches a higher emotional intensity, as he brings his lines of argument to a culmination. Here Freud expounds his own speculative narrative regarding a critical episode in early human history, a turning point in the formative period of human society.

Freud developed upon Charles Darwin's speculative idea that early human societies were dominated by a male head, who was surrounded by a bevy of females to whom he had exclusive access. Freud then conjectured that at some point in history the other males, the sons who had been exiled by the violent and jealous father, joined together to depose, kill and then eat the dominant leader, the primal father. This was the Oedipus complex enacted as historical fact rather than fantasy. The totem was then a representation of the murdered father, who had been both feared and respected. The totemic meal became the foundation of religion. At the basis of religion was guilt about the murder of the father, the original sin. According to Freud this event was also the beginning of civilisation as we know it.

This narrative gave centrality to motives of sexuality in that the rebellious sons wanted to gain access to the women surrounding the primal father. It foregrounded the Oedipal rage of children towards their parents and the Oedipus complex as a basic tenet of psychoanalysis: as Freud put it, "the beginnings of religion, morals, society and art converge in the Oedipus complex" (Freud 1960, p. 156). Freud pointed out that his discussion of the far-reaching implications of this deadly deed was founded upon "the existence of a collective mind" (Freud 1960, p. 157), an idea similar to Jung's subsequently developed concept of the "collective unconscious." As Freud explained, in the story he told "the sense of guilt for an action has persisted for many thousands of years and has remained operative in generations which can have had no knowledge of that action" (Freud 1960, p. 158). In this story rage came first; it led to the deed, which resulted in guilt. In Freud's thinking guilt was always closely bound up with anxiety. So, put simply, in this account rage was the precursor of anxiety. Freud acknowledged the extravagant cast of his narrative, but justified giving "a glimpse of a hypothesis which may seem fantastic but which offers the advantage of establishing an unsuspected correlation between groups of phenomena that have hitherto been disconnected" (Freud 1960, p. 141).

Freud offered his own assessment of the significance of *Totem and Taboo* in the History:

I have made an attempt to deal with the problems of race-psychology in the light of analysis; this line of investigation leads direct to the origins of the most important institutions of our civilization, of state organization, morality and religion, and, moreover, of the prohibition against incest and of the conscience (Freud 1924, p. 322).

*Totem and Taboo* has been criticised from innumerable different angles and has been roundly condemned by most current day anthropologists. There were serious critiques from anthropologists during Freud's lifetime, but he stuck to his theory. He came back to it and elaborated it further in his last published work, *Moses and Monotheism*.

In *Totem and Taboo* Freud offered a foundational myth of human society. It should be noted, however, that this was not Freud's intention, since he believed he was recounting actual historical events, albeit conjectural. Freud was a skilled writer with notable literary talent. When his writing gets going he can be a riveting story teller and the effect of his story is quite mesmerising. His story is intellectually exciting because of the brilliant way he ties together all the ends neatly, deftly weaving the diverse strands of his arguments concerning aggressive Oedipal urges, sexual competition, anxiety, guilt, morality, conscience and religion. However, looking through the spell binding effects of Freud's literary skills, the story he recounts is not in any sense an appealing one. None of the characters in it is attractive. The tyrannical primal father is not an engaging figure. The murderous band of brothers have no appeal about them. The women in the story are just chattels. The deed at the centre of the narrative, the murder, has nothing glamorous about it. The outcome is that Freud presents a picture of human life racked by anxiety and guilt. Furthermore, he predicts that these distressing emotions, only partially consoled by religion, will continue to haunt humankind down through the generations, without end or relief, as a poisonous phylogenetic inheritance. It is true that in his story the deed also gave rise to state organisation, morality and religion but, as is shown mainly in his later works such as *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930), Freud was at best ambivalent about the benefits of these features of civilisation. He saw them as necessary to prevent violent rebellion and murderous aggression and thus to allow civil society to survive, but he thought they came at great psychic cost. In the end Freud's myth of origins is an extremely pessimistic one.

I think it is most probable that this account was self-referential, in that Freud identified himself with the primal father and significant aspects of his situation had parallels within the story. He was, at times, aware of his dogmatic and controlling tendencies, though sometimes he denied them and sometimes he tried to overcome them; he certainly tried at various times to mollify Jung in order to preserve the relationship, which would have made him more angry and inflexible when the friendship finally broke down and Jung accused him of being domineering. Freud imputed murderous intent to some of his colleagues, Jung in particular; this was so strong a feeling that it caused Freud to faint on several occasions. Freud might have gained some satisfaction from the thought that after he was killed the primal father was deified.

## 7. "On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement" (1914)

One of the main ways that Freud employed to deal with his fury over the break with Jung was to work on his long article, "On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement" (hereafter History). According to Peter Gay, it became a "vessel to contain his rage" (Gay 1989, p. 240). Freud envisaged it as an historical overview of the origins and development of psychoanalysis at approximately the twenty year mark, but with emphasis given to an outspoken critique of both Jung and Adler. By early 1914 Freud was able to report that he was "working furiously at the history" (Gay 1989, pp. 240–41). Furiously was the right word. Freud referred to it as his "bomb," an official declaration of hostilities. In it Freud staked out his definitive claim to be the originator of psychoanalysis. He also spelled out what he saw as wrong in the thinking of the principal dissenters, notably Adler and Jung. In the History Freud was able to set out what he considered the distinctive tenets of psychoanalysis, and to argue that the works of Jung should no longer be included under that rubric. When Freud finished work on his "bomb" in July 1914, his mood was ecstatic. The pamphlet provided an outlet for his rage and finishing it brought a sense of relief at finally being rid of "the brutal holy Jung and his pious parrots" (Gay 1989, p. 241).

Freud managed, with difficulty, to control his anger sufficiently to write the History. Ernest Jones commented: "It cost him an inward struggle to control his emotions firmly enough to enable him to say calmly what he felt he had to say" (Jones 1955, pp. 366–67). But Freud did not entirely succeed in sublimating his anger, and not all of what he wrote was said calmly. Although acknowledging in the first sentence the "subjective element" in his paper, Freud claimed that he would avoid provocative statements (Freud 1924, p. 337) and that he was not actuated by revengeful motives (Freud 1924, p. 336).

Yet he also admitted that “I can rave and revile as well as anybody,” and could refer to psychoanalysis and its detractors as opposing “sides in time of war” (Freud 1924, p. 324). Throughout the History, Freud’s tone with regard to Jung—both his personality and his contributions to theory—was dismissive and at times contemptuous. In an insidious undercurrent that runs through the whole essay, Freud belittled Jung’s contributions as insignificant or harmful to the movement, and implicitly diminished Jung’s theoretical work by comparison with that of other adherents. Because of this deliberate bias in the telling of the story, Freud’s “On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement” is of extremely limited value as history, if by history you mean a reasonably balanced and comprehensive account of how things happened.

When it came to addressing Jung’s work directly, Freud’s treatment was scathing. While false, at least Adler’s modification of psychoanalytic theory was consistent and coherent:

Jung’s modification, on the other hand, disconnects the phenomena from their relation with impulse-life; and further, as its critics (Abraham, Ferenczi, Jones) have pointed out, it is so unintelligible, obscure, and confused that it is difficult to take up any standpoint in regard to it. Wherever one lays hold of anything, one must be prepared to hear that one has misunderstood it, and it is impossible to know how to arrive at a correct understanding of it. It is put forward too in a peculiarly vacillating manner (Freud 1924, p. 350).

Freud was just as snide about Jung’s person as about his work. Though acknowledging in one breath Jung’s “exceptional talents,” his contributions to psychoanalytic theory, his independent position and “the impression of energy and assurance which his personality conveyed,” Freud then went on to demolish the admirable picture he had sketched. Referring to his choice of Jung as his heir apparent, Freud wrote:

I had no inkling at that time that in spite of all these advantages the choice was a most unfortunate one, that I had lighted upon a person who was incapable of tolerating the authority of another, who was still less fitted himself to wield it, and whose energies were ruthlessly devoted to the furtherance of his own interests (Freud 1924, p. 329).

While listing Jung’s advantages, Freud also managed to throw out a back-handed reference to Jung’s supposed racist views, implicitly an imputation of anti-Semitism. Freud wrote that early in their relationship Jung had been ready “for my sake to give up certain prejudices in regard to race which he had previously permitted himself” (Freud 1924, p. 329). Indeed issues of race, in particular Semites versus Aryans, run through the whole correspondence, mainly on Freud’s part. For example, writing of Ernest Jones, later Freud’s biographer and a stalwart supporter of psychoanalysis, and Welsh, Freud commented: “he is a Celt and consequently not quite accessible to us, the Teuton and the Mediterranean man” (McGuire 1974, p. 165, Freud to Jung 18 July 1908). Jung occasionally wrote in a similar mode up to the late 1930s, which has been made much of by the Freudian camp in their argument that Jung was a fellow traveller of the Nazis (Gay 1989, p. 639).

The way the History worked as an anti-Jung polemic was sometimes subtle and would have been understood fully only by those in Freud and Jung’s close circle. This was also true of two other articles published around the same time, one by Freud and the other by Ernest Jones. Jones’ paper of 1913, with the English translation “The God Complex: The Belief That One Is God and the Resulting Character Traits” and Freud’s 1914 article “On Narcissism” were both aimed, in part, at Jung and amounted to character demolition for those in the know. The use, or abuse, of psychoanalysis to discredit one’s enemies continued apace.

Finally, I will mention two other examples of Freud’s disguised venom in the History. From an early age Jung was fascinated by Goethe and to an extent identified himself closely with Goethe and with Faust (Von Franz 1998, pp. 34–36). There was a family tradition that his grandfather was an illegitimate son of Goethe, and in his early life Jung gave credence to this myth (Jung 1956a, p. 262). When he allowed himself to be made the subject of the dissertation experiments of a colleague in 1907,

Jung's most important complex was found to be his "Goethe complex" (McLynn 1997, p. 83). In the History Freud inserted the following meaningful "parable," aimed at Jung's apocryphal ancestry:

Suppose that in a certain district there lived an upstart who boasted of ancient descent from a noble family living far off. It was proved to him, however, that his parents lived somewhere in the neighbourhood and were quite simple people. There was only one way out of the difficulty and he seized upon it. He could not any longer repudiate his parentage, so he asserted that they themselves were of an ancient noble strain, but that their fortunes had declined; and he proceeded to procure from some obliging office a document showing their descent. I think the Swiss must have behaved in much the same way (Freud 1924, pp. 352–53).

Furthermore, at the head of the section of his History dealing with the rebels Adler and Jung, Freud placed an epigraph from Goethe in German. The joke was that the epigraph meant something like "the Jung-est day is only a fart" (Freud 1924, p. 328). Like Jung with his taunting of Freud's "old-age complex," Freud was not above mischievous digs at his former friend. In his History Freud revealed himself to be a dangerous opponent. He was certainly not the continually imposed upon victim that he often portrayed himself to be; or at least not only that.

## 8. Conclusions

There was a great deal of anxiety in the relationship between Freud and Jung, and increasingly rage developed on both sides. This paper has investigated how the emotional pressures generated by the feud influenced the theoretical work on the emotional life they produced during this period: Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913) and "On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement" (1914), and Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912). Anxiety and anger played important roles in the theorising of both psychologists at this time. Their differing accounts of anxiety became a touchstone of the theoretical divisions between them. Jung thought that human life took place against a background of free-floating anxiety. This anxiety was the motive force behind the creation of totems and taboos, including the incest taboo, which was symbolic of unconscious internal pressures towards self-development. For Freud anxiety was closely associated with guilt, whether for prohibited incestuous desires and murderous fantasies in the classic version of the Oedipus complex, or as a collective unconscious memory of the historic murder of the primal father as in *Totem and Taboo*. In the myths that Jung recounted, anger fuelled the resistance of the hero against subjugation and drove him towards self-realisation. According to Freud, rage motivated the primal murder and had to be brought under control to make civilisation possible. Freud thought he had sublimated his rage in writing his History, but in this he was at best only partially successful.

Both Freud and Jung deliberately set up their relationship as an unequal one. I would like to suggest that perhaps this was, unconsciously, a way for them to work through certain psychological issues that preoccupied them. However, they were very different issues. For Freud it was issues of authority, politics, rivalry and ageing; these were given expression in his peculiar myth of the deposition of the primal father, featuring the Oedipus complex, the originary criminal deed and the subsequent institution of civil order. It is worth emphasising that it was during the period of their friendship that Freud was consolidating and elaborating the concept of the Oedipus complex and making it a central tenet of psychoanalysis (Gay 1989, p. 332). For Jung, on the other hand, the foremost issues concerned resistance to oppression and individual liberation and maturation; these became the main themes in his mythological imagery of the struggle of the hero. The personal myths they fashioned during the crisis period of their relationship were simply incommensurable, and the outcome was that they went their separate ways.

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