

sexuality, war and schizophrenia

Collected
Psychoanalytic
Papers

Victor Tausk

Edited and with an
introduction by
Paul Roazen

**SEXUALITY, WAR, AND
SCHIZOPHRENIA**

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SEXUALITY, WAR, AND SCHIZOPHRENIA

Collected Psychoanalytic Papers

Victor Tausk

Edited and with an introduction by
Paul Roazen

Translations by
Eric Mosbacher & others

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Introduction

Paul Roazen

Psychoanalysis, almost a hundred years old, has sometimes been said to have now entered on an enlightened phase of pluralism. According to this recently advanced point of view, supported by the conservative powers-that-be in the profession, the old sectarian squabbles that once were so prominent in the field would be impossible to happen again; tolerance of divergent schools of psychotherapeutic thought is now supposed to be the order of the day. In an effort to welcome outsiders to the discipline, and to reassure the self-image of practitioners of analysis, ideological fanaticism is looked upon as an aspect of the distant past.

It is, though, not the case that those thinkers whom Freud excluded as “heretics,” such as Carl G. Jung or Alfred Adler and others as well, have had their ideas taken seriously by the so-called mainstream within psychoanalysis. But we do find that at international meetings of analysts, supporters of North American ego psychology mix with adherents of Melanie Klein and advocates of Jacques Lacan, to name only three of the central streams of thinking in today’s psychoanalysis. Still, a fourth ideological tendency, the self-psychology initiated by Heinz Kohut, has acquired a fashionability all its own. Sigmund Freud’s own ideas continue to constitute the dominant paradigm, but almost everyone in the field would agree that more than fifty years after his death at least some changes have to be introduced into the framework he bequeathed.

There is a good deal of merit to the idea that contemporary psychoanalysis is broader and less doctrinaire than would have been true in the past. The early analysts, from the perspective of our own time, look unusually well-educated in the literature and

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philosophy of Western culture; ideas mattered to them, and they came to psychoanalysis at a time when Freud could approach his work in the embattled spirit of someone at odds with conventional wisdom. The general high cultural quality of the early analysts was also associated with some of the worst forms of sectarianism, for these pioneering analysts were attracted by quasi-religious motives to “the cause” that Freud fervently promoted, and precisely because of the spirituality of their objectives (which makes them especially attractive) they were willing to stigmatize “deviants” within the movement Freud had founded. Anyone Freud declared to have betrayed his calling could be combatted with more ferocity than what would be reserved for outsiders in general. And the intellectuality of the people involved meant that they had the capacity to express their opinions, including their personal preferences and dislikes, within objective-sounding terminology.

Today’s analysts are more secure in their position. Freud’s heirs no longer have the same sorts of struggles that the early analysts experienced. It is true that psychoanalysis does not now enjoy, at least in America, the medical popularity that it did in the 1950s and 1960s; a good deal of disillusionment has followed the earlier high expectations about analysis’s capacities as a therapeutic agent. And rival treatment procedures, especially aided by advances in the biochemical field, have succeeded in attracting the interest of some of the most promising qualified young therapists. Within the general culture at large, on the other hand, psychoanalytic ideas are still accorded broad respect; and analytic practitioners retain solid standing.

Recently, the story of psychoanalysis has become more a legitimate part of the academic study of intellectual history, and students of the history of ideas have increasingly accepted the responsibility for understanding the past associated with Freud’s school of thought. It is my firm belief that it is going to be impossible to make sense of what happened in those early days of analysis without taking seriously the various criticisms advanced by thinkers like Jung and Adler, among others, who presciently saw some of the key weak points in Freud’s own approach.¹ Historians are going to have to break through various taboos that still constrain practicing analysts when they ritualistically cite the

history of their discipline. Those of us in university life have nothing to fear, especially unconsciously, in terms of protecting livelihoods stemming from a clinical practice. And it should therefore be possible to examine all past controversies fearlessly and without the blinders that stem from the self-protectiveness of professional trade unionism.

It would be a mistake to underestimate how potentially explosive the study of history can be, which is why I remain skeptical about just how genuinely pluralistic organized psychoanalysis is now capable of being. All groups live by myths, and every historical search opens up the possibility of threatening some of the key sources of group cohesion. Freud was the first, in the course of a 1914 polemic against Jung and Adler, titled “On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement,”² to present his side of things; but even years earlier he had had considerable historical consciousness, as he always chose to spell out the steps by which he arrived at his latest formulations. Freud knew the power of legend, and within the field psychoanalytic articles still today spend a good amount of preliminary time on the supposed historical sequence of preceding contributions.

But Freud’s conception of what had taken place represented only what he chose to put into print; his account of things cannot be taken as any kind of impartial narrative. He was propagandizing in behalf of his new profession, and saw events in terms of what was helpful in forwarding his chosen doctrine. We now know a good deal about what lay behind what he picked to highlight, and we are partly aware of what he preferred to slide over—for he could not only present events tendentiously, but he would typically omit that which was inconvenient for the political purposes of establishing his “movement.”

In the popular accounts of the various battles with those who became his opponents Freud has done comparatively well partly by virtue of default. For his key “defecting” former pupils usually decided to remain, if not silent, at least less than publicly forthcoming about the sources of their difficulties with the creator of psychoanalysis. Quarreling with Freud was not apt to be good for their therapeutic business, even if it might have attracted a certain temporary kind of notoriety.

Freud’s capacities as a great writer were one of his most im-

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portant assets in popularizing his psychology because he not only convinced people by what he wrote about that which he considered his “discoveries,” but the subtleties of his written words were responsible for attracting a host of admirers. Those who came to him from outside of the therapeutic professions and were interested in his contributions because of a combination of personal motives and purely intellectual interest were apt to be more naive and contentious than the followers who actually knew about psychoanalysis firsthand. And, therefore, some of the most dogmatic on psychoanalytic issues have not necessarily been analysts but rather observers from the outside world. Literary critics in particular, but philosophers and social scientists as well, have done much to ensure Freud’s standing within the history of Western thought. All too often, however, they have merely echoed Freud’s own stated view of the origin of his ideas without being fully aware of the degree of their sharing in his partisanship.

If I am dubious about how truly tolerant psychoanalysis is capable of being nowadays, it is partly because of my own long-standing research interests in this area of historical inquiry. At a time when, in the Soviet Union, for example, all kinds of remarkable changes have been taking place so that history is being rewritten there more in accord with what we know actually took place over the last century, analysts have remained relatively frozen about their own past. I believe that the odds are there is more chance of Trotsky getting rehabilitated in Gorbachev’s Soviet Union than that it would be possible to cite respectfully among analysts the ideas of, say, Jung. Psychoanalytic bureaucrats seem able to swallow almost any new suggestion coming from a newcomer in the field, as long as it is unencumbered by being associated with any past heresies in the field. It would seem that there are institutional resistances that have been set up against reconsidering any of the profession’s early difficulties. If one asks any young analyst whether he or she realizes that Jung was the first to propose the idea of a personal training analysis for analysts, I am almost certain that there will be an uncomprehending blank reception of the news; and yet, despite how appallingly history is taught at our analytic training institutes, Freud himself credited Jung with that particular contribution.³

Part of the problem stems simply from the demands of different

professional hierarchies for training. For a Freudian to acknowledge indebtedness to a Jungian concept would be to question the whole basis of the different educational centers. If one gets trained at a particular psychoanalytic institute, presumably that organization has a reason for being independent—apart from historical accident and lethargy. Each training bureaucracy justifies itself in terms of its own founding leaders, and for all of them it pays off to distinguish one such organization from another. Intellectual toleration, then, is potentially damaging to the life of each of the units that have been set up to perpetuate psychoanalysis for the future.

The story of Victor Tausk's life and conflicts is an example, I think, which serves to illustrate some of the remaining obstacles to the true emancipation of the history of psychoanalysis. Because of the tragic circumstances surrounding his untimely death in 1919, Tausk's contributions still have not been accorded their proper place in the history of analysis. I first wrote about him at length in my *Brother Animal: the Story of Freud and Tausk* (1969)⁴ (that book has come out in 1990 in a second edition⁵). Even before *Brother Animal* first appeared I had tried unsuccessfully to get a publisher to bring out a collection of his psychoanalytic papers. The first appearance of *Brother Animal* set off a controversy that aroused the fiercest sorts of ideological passions.⁶ A gratifying scholarly after-effect of *Brother Animal* was the publication of volumes consisting of Tausk's hitherto uncollected psychoanalytic essays—but all of them were published abroad. In 1975, Tausk's psychoanalytic works appeared in French; by 1977 they came out in Spanish; and they were made available in Italian by 1979. Finally, a German edition of all Tausk's writings, including his literary efforts which appeared before he entered Freud's immediate circle in 1909, was published in 1983.⁷ Despite the broad-mindedness that English-speaking analysts like to think they have been capable of, it is only now with this book that Tausk's analytic papers have succeeded in appearing in a collected edition. If one travels on the Continent and talks to analysts today, I think it will be the case that analysts there are convinced that they are more cosmopolitan than in the United States, and the fate of Tausk's papers would support their contention.

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In fact, I think that most groups think of themselves as being more ideologically diverse than is in fact the case. The tale of Tausk's difficulties in remaining within psychoanalysis may have been harder to accept in North America if only because analysts here had rather more to defend than elsewhere. For although psychoanalytic ideas have been widely influential throughout the Western world, they have achieved a status and power in the United States that has remained so far unsurpassed elsewhere. Tausk's death by suicide might have been enough by itself to squelch interest in him, since psychoanalysis is supposed to be life-enhancing. In addition, there were dark rumors about his final troubles with Freud.

Tausk was in fact one of Freud's most brilliant early pupils. He was a man of great versatility—a poet and a writer, a lawyer as well as a physician and a psychoanalyst. Within philosophy he felt at ease, for example, with both Spinoza and Schopenhauer. When Lou Andreas-Salomé entered Freud's world in 1912, she had previously been on close terms with Nietzsche and Rilke, and she found Tausk to rank in those pre-World War I days in Vienna “the most prominently outstanding”⁸ among Freud's students. Freud's own three-page obituary of Tausk was to be the lengthiest one Freud ever composed. “No one . . . could escape the impression that here was a man of importance. . . . He is sure of an honorable memory,” Freud concluded, “in the history of psychoanalysis and its earliest struggles.”⁹

Brother Animal contains the most extensive account of Tausk's background. He was born in Slovakia on 12 March 1879, and he was initially trained in law. After separating from his wife in 1905, he tried to earn his living as a journalist in Berlin. Then, in the fall of 1908, Tausk went to Vienna to study medicine, already planning to become a psychoanalyst. Freud helped him from the outset by sending him patients and lending him money. Unlike Freud, who was trained as a neurologist, and in contrast to most of the figures then within Freud's movement (not all of whom were even doctors), Tausk chose to become a psychiatrist. It is historically significant that Tausk became the first member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society to try to apply Freud's concepts to the understanding of the great mental illnesses known as the psychoses. Although Jung, himself a psychiatrist trained in Switz-

erland, had long argued that Freud had not been differentiating enough between neurosis and psychosis, it was not in fact until the 1920s that Freud drew a conceptual line between these different difficulties.

Tausk's paper on the "influencing machine" has become a classic in the psychological undersanding of schizophrenia. It only appeared in print, however, at the same time as Freud's official obituary of him. Tausk's original concept of "ego boundaries" was to be developed in modern psychotherapy by Paul Federn and others.¹⁰ Tausk was also responsible for introducing the term "identity" into the psychoanalytic literature.¹¹

Each of these papers by Tausk must be read in historical context. So many years have passed since these essays were first written that the formulations of that era are bound to sound alien, and sometimes antiquated, to our ears. Nevertheless, Tausk was as talented in presenting clinical cases as he was adept in using Freud's abstract theories (his metapsychology), and each of these papers still has something to teach. In addition, for the purpose of understanding the development of Freud's own ideas it is always helpful to be familiar with the writings of the best in his circle.

In general, Tausk stood for broadening the scope of Freud's psychology, and Freud was sometimes irritated by what he considered Tausk's impetuosity. Lou Andreas-Salomé's diary records how difficult Freud could find dealing with someone of Tausk's capacities. Tausk was, as a therapist, unusual at the time for being interested in problems of technique; one of the last presentations he made at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, unfortunately unrecorded except for the title and date, was on "Problems Connected with Psychoanalytic Technique." Tausk was also concerned with the psychology of art, wrote about the philosophic implications of psychoanalysis, and even anticipated some of Freud's ideas on the death instinct.¹² For a full understanding of the scope of Tausk's ambitions, the reader should consult the *Minutes* of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.¹³ Lou Andreas-Salomé's diary is also especially informative about the extent of Tausk's unusual capacities.

For Freud, Tausk's originality was a key part of the problem he posed. In contrast to the famous "dissidents," Tausk's loyalty

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to Freud was not in question. In these psychoanalytic papers one will find him, for example, going out of his way in distinguishing Freud's psychology from that of Adler. And at the Munich Congress in 1913, where Tausk's intimate friend Lou Andreas-Salomé sat "right by" Freud's side at the final public confrontation between Freud and Jung,¹⁴ she reported: "Tausk consequently also sat very close by, despite the fact that Freud plainly held him off now, although he himself admitted that in this new situation Tausk was the right man ('clever and dangerous,' said Freud, 'he can bark and bite')."¹⁵

So far as Lou could tell, part of the problem between the two men was that Tausk was so devoted to the problems that particularly intrigued Freud at the time. It troubled Freud because of old anxieties he had had about priorities in his work; Freud felt uncomfortable at the idea that Tausk might anticipate his own evolving work. According to Lou in 1913,

There is no doubt about it that Freud acts with complete conviction when he proceeds so sharply against Tausk. But along with this "psychoanalytic" fact (that is, bearing in mind Tausk's original neurotic disposition), it is also clear that any independence around Freud, especially when it is marked by aggression and display of temperament, worries him and wounds him quite automatically in his noble egoism as investigator, forcing him to premature discussion, and so forth. The value to analysis of an independent mind can only be established in the future, and that must result in probably unavoidable battles of the present. Certain it is that for Freud it is all an annoyance.¹⁶

From Tausk's own point of view, Lou remains a key witness in having seen him as exceptionally devoted to Freud. In late 1912, she had observed after a lecture of Tausk's (he was the first in Vienna to give a course on psychoanalysis for the lay public), that "an occasional malicious reference to Adler might do harm to Tausk himself. . . ."^{*} She got "the impression" from listening to Tausk "not only of classical Freudian theory but also of an unusually loving and reverent approach to the essential discov-

^{*}Tausk and Wilhelm Stekel were also "enemies" within the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.

eries of Freud. . . .”¹⁷ She thought that Tausk “carried the banner of leadership well. In many of his observations . . . I found him *too* precisely Freudian; in any case, he is never likely to be reproached with the contrary.”¹⁸ Yet she also spotted how irritated by Tausk Freud could be: “Freud’s rejoinders were more severe than usual and yet no other person presents his papers to him with such evident reverence. I think that Tausk is of all the most unconditionally devoted to Freud and at the same time the most prominently outstanding.”¹⁹

As early as 1913 Lou thought she understood “the whole tragedy of Tausk’s relation to Freud”:

I realize now that he will always tackle the same problems, the same attempts at solution, that Freud is engaged in. This is no accident, but signifies his “making himself a son” as violently as he “hates the father for it.” As if by a thought transference he will always be busy with the same thing as Freud, never taking one step aside to make room for himself.

Lou also thought that Tausk was deceiving himself about the possibilities he might have with her; he was too enmeshed, she thought, in the emotional involvements from his earliest years.

In the long run no helpful relationship is possible; there can be none when reality is cluttered by the wraiths of unabreacted primal reminiscences. An impure tone resonates through everything, buzzing as it were with murmurings from within.

Yet from the very beginning I realized it was this very struggle in Tausk that most deeply moved me—the struggle of the human creature. Brother-animal. You.²⁰

World War I disrupted Tausk’s life just as he was about to get securely established on his new professional feet as an analyst. Although he practiced while attending the University of Vienna, he only completed his medical studies in June 1914. The wartime hostilities complicated the possibilities of analysis; in August 1915 he was called up as an army psychiatrist. Throughout the war he continued his psychoanalytic investigations, returning to Vienna for occasional meetings of Freud’s Society. Tausk’s papers collected here record some of his specific wartime work: for example,

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his essay on “The War Deserter” and his inquiry into the symptomatology of the “War Psychoses.”

At the conclusion of the war Tausk returned to Vienna and undertook to resume his psychoanalytic practice. He also then turned to Freud for a personal psychoanalysis. (He had just recently, along with Otto Rank, successfully opposed the idea that a training analysis be made mandatory for future analysts.²¹) Tausk knew he had unresolved problems, especially in establishing a stable relationship with a woman. Freud, however, refused Tausk’s request for an analysis. Ludwig Jekels, one of the other analysts in Vienna, also asked Freud to analyze Tausk, but Freud reportedly had replied: “He is going to kill me!”²²

Instead, Freud sent Tausk for an analysis to Helene Deutsch, then a young psychiatrist just starting out as an analyst and at the time already undergoing an analysis with Freud. In sending Tausk to her as a patient, Freud explained that Tausk made an “uncanny” impression on him; Freud thought Tausk could take some of Freud’s ideas before Freud had finished with them, and then come to think they were Tausk’s own. Freud refused Tausk an analysis because of discomfort in his presence. Tausk, though, grieved over Freud’s standoffishness toward him, and thought he would never be able to assert his own independent thoughts in Freud’s world, but that Freud would always put his own mark on anything Tausk succeeded in coming up with. After three months of Tausk’s being in analysis with Helene Deutsch while she was herself with Freud, Freud called a halt to the arrangement. Tausk’s obsession with Freud was being fed by being in treatment with an analyst then being analyzed by Freud. Freud told Helene Deutsch that her own analysis with him was being threatened by her fascination with Tausk, and that either she had to interrupt treating Tausk or break off her analysis with Freud. She immediately chose to terminate Tausk as a patient and stayed on with Freud herself.

From Tausk’s standpoint, things were now worse than ever. He had alienated official psychiatry in behalf of his championing psychoanalysis, and now Freud was decisively through with him. Tausk had sought therapeutic help only to have his efforts aborted. According to a close friend of his, Paul Federn, writing the day he found out about Tausk’s suicide a few months after his analysis was broken off, Tausk finally “at the end . . . drove his psycho-

logical patients away, apparently in order to demonstrate the uselessness of the method, out of rancor against Freud.” Federn, living in Vienna himself, knew what a tough time it was for the practice of analysis. No matter how dedicated to psychoanalysis Federn was, he had retained his old practice in internal medicine and was not wholly dependent either on analysis or Freud’s favor. To Federn the explanation for Tausk’s suicide was straightforward:

the motivation was Freud’s turning away from him. . . . If Freud had shown him a human interest, not simply recognition and support, he might have continued to bear longer his martyr-like existence. Because for a man of his sensitivity of mind, this kind of looking for bread was martyrdom. . . . But *he* was not *kind* as little as Freud is kind, i.e. Freud possesses so much love for people that he can be kind, but in his old age he became increasingly harder—and this is understandable with Freud because he, too, had to live a life unworthy of his greatness.—That we could not keep Tausk is our shame.²³

It was typical of Federn’s reaction to Tausk’s suicide to see it in terms of imputing the power of life and death to Freud. Helene Deutsch, too, put all the responsibility for what had happened on Freud—although she acknowledged some of her own guilt feelings for having ended Tausk’s analysis with her, she saw the suicide as not her own therapeutic responsibility but that of Freud. Freud’s coldness about Tausk’s death came in several of his letters to followers, in which Freud blamed what happened on the upheaval of the war. And as Freud wrote to Lou Andreas-Salomé, in sharp contrast to his high public praise for Tausk’s capacities: “I confess I do not really miss him; I had long taken him to be useless, indeed a threat to the future.”²⁴

The particular circumstances of Tausk’s death were especially cruel. According to an obituary in a Viennese newspaper for which Tausk had once worked, he had fastened to a nail in his room a cord which he twisted into a noose, put his head in it and then fired a bullet from a Browning pistol through his right temple. As his body fell he strangled himself; he had placed the gun so carefully that a female servant sleeping in the apartment did not hear the shot. The savagery of Tausk’s suicide was in sharp contrast to the serene benevolence of the suicide note that Tausk wrote to Freud.²⁵

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Freud suspected that other feelings lay behind what Tausk had written him. Freud saw the struggle within Tausk in terms of a father-son conflict; as Freud wrote Lou after Tausk's suicide: "So he fought out his day of life with the father ghost." Just a few months after Tausk's death Freud wrote in a paper:

probably no one finds the mental energy required to kill himself unless, in the first place, in doing so he is at the same time killing an object with whom he has identified himself, and, in the second place, is turning against himself a death-wish which has been directed against someone else.²⁶

In the same letter in which Freud reported to Lou about Tausk's suicide, he also wrote her about having come across a new feature to the "death theme," "an amazing idea hailing from the instincts." Freud was now to go on to formulate his concept of a death instinct.

Tausk had been coping with his own private difficulties for years. He had, for example, been singularly unsuccessful in establishing a stable tie with a woman. A frustrated love affair led in 1907 to a brief stay in a sanatorium. And just before committing suicide, he had found himself, as on several prior occasions, unable to go through with an intention once again to marry. Tausk's efforts to alleviate his problems through his involvement in psychoanalysis had not solved his emotional problems; the brief personal analysis with Helene Deutsch had probably made his difficulties worse, and the tortured bond to Freud remained more frustrating than ever. By the most rigorous standards of rational conduct, Tausk ought to have been able simply to dismiss his fascination with Freud, and leave for Berlin, for instance, or go back to Belgrade or Zagreb. But the tragedy of his life lay in his inability to detach himself from his worst dilemmas.

The story of Tausk's conflict with Freud remained a closely guarded secret among Freud's most intimate disciples, and they exaggerated Freud's role in Tausk's final undoing. It was characteristically true of Freud's followers that they came to attribute to him all possible power. Quarreling with the master meant to them all the worst possible eventuality; and therefore they obliterated from their memory Tausk's personal problems and saw his

inner struggle solely in terms of what Freud had come to mean for him. In future years Freud's followers, when reflecting on the natural deaths of other of his disciples, such as Sandor Ferenczi, Karl Abraham, and Otto Rank, would suggest that each of these men in some sense chose death rather than face up to a conflict with Freud.²⁷

Freud achieved a kind of standing in the lives of his students that may be hard to imagine today, except that it ought to be striking how prescient they all were in anticipating what Freud's stature would be in intellectual history. As Tausk had written Freud in his suicide note: "Your work is genuine and great, I shall take leave of this life knowing that I was one of those who witnessed the triumph of one of the greatest ideas of mankind."

In reflecting on the particulars of Tausk's contribution to psychoanalytic thinking, it should go almost without saying that all Tausk's work was bounded by the circumference of Freud's framework. Tausk always took pains to specify where Freud's own most characteristic points needed to be acknowledged; and yet Tausk also sought to express his own observations and reflections in the course of his theorizing. Freud himself, both in his writings and his obituary of Tausk, acknowledged the originality of his brilliant follower.

Tausk's Papers

1. Tausk's paper "On Masturbation" was occasioned by an extended 1912 discussion on the subject at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, which was collected together to appear as a book. Freud had started out in the 1890s distinguishing between an "actual neurosis," stemming from the physiological consequences of disturbed sexuality, as opposed to psychogenic neuroses. It was the latter which came to be the special province of psychoanalytic inquiry. In Tausk's view, however, and here he was at odds with other of Freud's pupils at the time, "a purely toxic neurosis on a masturbatory basis—termed by Freud *actual neurosis*—cannot, in my opinion, be found as such."

Within Freud's school, the 1912 exchange of views on mastur-

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bation was deemed important enough for it to be reconsidered twice, once in 1928 and then again in 1950. Although now-famous figures like Ferenczi, Rank, and Stekel were among the original contributors, Dr. Annie Reich (Wilhelm Reich's first wife), in reviewing the discussion for a volume of *The Psychoanalytic Study of The Child* in the light of views that were "present-day" as of 1950, observed of Tausk's essay that it "appears in many respects the most brilliant."²⁸

One of the advantages of putting effort into trying to understand what any early psychoanalytic paper is trying to talk about is that it should force the reader to put aside all later theoretical developments. In 1912, for example, Freud's theory of narcissism had yet to be worked out; Tausk's own thinking was working in that direction, and Lou's diary records how significant the topic was to both her and Tausk. By 1912 Freud's notion of the superego had also not yet been introduced. As Dr. Annie Reich pointed out, Tausk was the "only one of the authors" who "connected the guilt feeling with the internalized figure of the father, thus anticipating Freud's concept of the super-ego."²⁹

It is still now, as in Tausk's time, an open question, considered by therapists unanswerable even today: "Under what conditions does masturbation become harmful?" Analysts continue to feel unsure, when patients ask about masturbating, whether their task is to ally with the patient's conscience or to ease guilt feelings. Although Tausk had only been in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society since 1909, and was some two years away from graduating from medical school, he was still enough of a practicing analyst to be able to generalize his conclusions on the basis of work with eighteen patients.

Tausk was approaching the problem of masturbation not just as a therapist but as part of the Freudian program of trying to create a science of sexuality. Tausk therefore was concerned with the earliest signs of masturbatory activity, including the role of fantasy as well as the part in seduction that servants then frequently played. He was concerning himself with masturbation, incidentally, almost entirely from the point of view of the male; it would not be until the 1920's that Freud and his followers directly addressed themselves to female sexuality. But he was hardly unaware of the role of the social environment and would

up his paper with a critique of hypocritical moralism and the excessive constraints of traditional patriarchal family life.

2. “Compensation As A Means of Discounting the Motive of Repression” (1913), an important paper, was discussed at a meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society—the minutes of which do not survive—and also succeeded in entering the later analytic literature. Tausk was addressing himself initially here to the logic of memory: why do we succeed in remembering certain forgotten ideas? According to Freud’s thinking, we repress that which is in conflict with our self-esteem. Tausk was proposing also that “there occurs in very many cases, immediately before the reproduction of a forgotten idea, an association which is accompanied by a pleasurable affect.” We are in such circumstances compensating ourselves before revealing something that lowers our sense of dignity. Tausk also said, “This compensation has the effect of discounting the motive for repression and weakening the resistance against the painful reproduction of the idea, so that he finally succumbs to the tendency to continue the train of thought without interruption.” In 1924 Freud added a note to his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, in which he refers to this paper of Tausk’s: “An excellent paper by Tausk gives good examples of how the forgotten name becomes accessible once more if one succeeds in connecting it with a pleasurable association, which can counterbalance the displeasure to be expected from the reproduction of the name.”³⁰

The implications of Tausk’s argument were far-reaching. For why should, according to psychoanalytic thinking, anyone ever give up a resistance to self-knowledge? In 1926 Sandor Ferenczi remarked on being “involuntarily reminded of a very fruitful work by Victor Tausk, an analyst whose too early death we all deplore. In his ‘Compensation As a Means of Discounting the Motive of Repression’ he adduced the weakening of the motives of repression by compensation as a condition of the cure.”³¹ Although the concept of transference was not as much discussed in those days as it would be later on, the patient’s relationship with an analyst can function as a compensation. In the course of treatment a patient should learn to give up neurotic repetitions; the analytic situation then is compensatory. Transference can mobilize the hope of the realization of repressed fantasies. Treatment may

look in one sense like a repetition of an unaccepted situation of frustration; but it is also a profoundly gratifying setup, in that the interest and sympathy of the analyst is a compensation.

In a training analysis, for example, a candidate has the promise of becoming a future analyst, which compensates for the difficulties of undergoing the treatment itself. Identifying with the analyst is one ultimate goal of the treatment. The concept of compensation can also help explain certain aspects of psychological development as well; one does not give up one phase of gratification without achieving the promise of the pleasure to be gained from another period. Development is not just a matter of biological frustrations, but contains a psychological factor in the possibility of new compensations. All such reasoning would be in line with a 1908 pronouncement of Freud's own: "whoever understands the human mind knows that hardly anything is harder for a man than to give up a pleasure which he has once experienced. Actually, we can never give anything up; we only exchange one thing for another. What appears to be a renunciation is really the formation of a substitute or a surrogate."³²

Tausk did not spend enough time exploring the implications of his concept of compensation. His paper was burdened by competitiveness with Freud, which took away some of the flavor of Tausk's own individual thinking. He weakened the paper by going into too many details, as if he found it necessary to prove to himself that he was right. He seemed to think he had to say everything he knew, and in a hurry, before Freud said more about it. He undermined his argument by bringing in elements that were not quite relevant. Tausk even thought he had to put in a footnote polemicizing against Adler. Freud, in Tausk's obituary, alluded to this side of Tausk's character: "His passionate temperament found expression in sharp, and sometimes too sharp, criticisms, which however were combined with a brilliant gift for exposition. These personal qualities exercised a great attraction on many people, and some, too, may have been repelled by them."

3. "A Contribution to the Psychology of Child Sexuality" (1913) was part of the psychoanalytic concern with documenting early developmental phenomena. Freud cited the paper both in 1914 and 1916, in additions to his *Interpretation of Dreams*.³³ Perhaps the most enduring aspect of this paper, however, is that it has