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## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THÉODORE FLOURNOY TO THE DISCOVERY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

*This historical research aims to examine the contribution of Théodore Flournoy to the discovery of the unconscious mind, in the original historical context of his work but without a historiographic bias. It is for this reason that this paper focuses on the genealogy of the concept of the unconscious mind before Freud, to reveal the work in French-speaking Switzerland which led to the discovery of a creative and mythopoetic subliminal subconscious at the end of the nineteenth century.*

**Keywords:** *Théodore Flournoy, creative unconscious, subliminal and mythopoetic, Jungian psychology, occultism, sexuality, unconscious according to Freud, From India to Planet Mars, Interpretation of Dreams, medium, Hélène Smith, mythology, morality, religion.*

This historical research aims to examine the contribution of Théodore Flournoy (1854-1920) to the discovery of the unconscious mind, in the original historical context of his work but without a historiographic bias. This paper therefore focuses on the genealogy of the concept of the unconscious mind before Freud, to reveal the work in French-speaking Switzerland which led to the discovery of a creative and mythopoetic subliminal subconscious at the end of the nineteenth century.

The origin of the concept of the subconscious dates back to Régine Plas<sup>2</sup> in the mid-nineteenth century and was a convergence of the three strands of philosophy, psychophysiology and psychopathology. Indeed, before Freud, the concept of the subconscious informed the thinking of several philosophers<sup>3</sup> such as Arthur Schopenhauer<sup>4</sup> and Eduard

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Amanda Haste.

<sup>2</sup> R. Plas, « L'inconscient avant Freud », *Sciences humaines*, n° 29 June 1993, pp.18-20.

<sup>3</sup> T. Bonfanti, « L'inconscient d'hier à aujourd'hui », *Sciences humaines*, n° 52 July 1995.

<sup>4</sup> A. Schopenhauer (1788-1860), German philosopher; his pessimism led him to seek happiness in the extinction of the will to live and of all rapport with reality. We are indebted to him for his essay on free will (1839).



von Hartmann (1842-1906) who promoted the idea of a subconscious as a vital force and an unconscious perception. This is how Arthur Schopenhauer conceived of the unconscious as an attribute of the will. For him, the will is not the simple activity of the mind that we all know, notably when we comment on someone's "lack of will". It is a blind and irrational force at the root of every thing, including matter, a universal will to live which is a constituent of every being. The will is not the unconscious mind, but it is unconscious.

But the philosophical theme of the unconscious was primarily popularized by Eduard Von Hartmann. His book *Philosophy of the Unconscious*,<sup>5</sup> which appeared in 1869, aroused exceptional interest throughout Europe, and it is for that reason that this book is worthy of mention. The philosopher Hartmann was a contemporary of Freud and deserves consideration because the basis of his philosophy is precisely the existence of a psychological unconscious, conceived as a universal principle. This unconscious is a synthesis of the unconscious minds of the philosophies which preceded it, while also integrating evolutionary theories and the new approaches to the functioning of the nervous system.

Also, in the 1840s, the British doctors Thomas Laycock and William Carpenter, and the German psychiatrist Griesinger, extended the schema of reflexes, which until then had only been attributed to the spinal cord, to the functioning of the brain. A "psychophysiological" model of the unconscious was established in the nineteenth century, and found its definitive formulation courtesy of the English neurologist John Hughlings Jackson. The unconscious processes were viewed as reflex activities forged over the course of evolution, and this model would become known as the "unconscious mind".<sup>6</sup> Psychophysicologists considered that the brain, until then considered to be the seat of consciousness, was also at the origin of an automatic reflexive activity at work in the phenomena of magnetism, hysterical manifestations, somnambulism, and dreams. This new model also led to the realization of actions relating to voluntary activity in normal people, but which seem to be realized without the knowledge of the subject. A case in point is the sudden resolution of a problem after we have stopped thinking about it. In his book *L'Inconscient cérébral* [The Unconscious Mind] Marcel Gauchet demonstrates the degree to which the impact of the notion of neurological unconscious, put forward by physiologists, had been underestimated in representations of subjectivity. All the same, it is not in terms of influences, particularly on Freud, that this new model must be considered, but rather insofar as "it very effectively undermined the bases of the classic representation of the conscious subject and his strength of will".<sup>7</sup>

To sum up, the "psychopathological" source is the most visible part of this of this story, exploring the phenomena of dual (split) personality, hysteria, neuroses and so on, through those "strange states of consciousness" of hypnosis and somnambulism. The last two decades of the century saw not only an extraordinary vogue for hypnotism which spread throughout Europe,<sup>8</sup> but also a reconfiguring of the field of psychiatry, starting with a new definition of hysteria. Indeed, from 1870 onwards, Jean Martin Charcot<sup>9</sup> was opposed to a conception of hysteria as an illness which simulated all other illnesses. He endeavored to describe hysteria as a completely separate illness, characterized by a set of symptoms, even though no lesions can be discerned in the brain *post-mortem*. He provides a scientific warning about hypnosis by using it at the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris in order to reproduce hysterical symptoms experimentally. According to Jean Martin Charcot (1825-1893) only hysterics can be hypnotized, and the subjects' acting out of the hypnotist's suggestions is by definition one of the characteristics of these somnambulists.

At a time when hypnotic phenomena and dual personality were in vogue, the French psychologist Pierre Janet (1825-1893), another contemporary of Freud, thought of these phenomena as the expression of subconscious phenomena. In his thesis *L'Automatisme psychologique* (1889)<sup>10</sup> Pierre Janet studied hysterical women by using hypnosis as an experimental method and highlighted the activities which he qualified as inferior or automatic which were usually inhibited in normal subjects by superior functions. Pierre Janet was interested in the phenomena which elude the will of the subject: he studied, for example, the manner in which hypnotized subjects and spirit mediums wrote texts without

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<sup>5</sup> Eduard von Hartmann, *Philosophie de l'inconscient*, 1869. See also the reports by Charles Secrétan « Une nouvelle philosophie par E. de Hartmann », *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie et compte rendu des principales publications scientifiques à l'Étranger*, n° 2, April 1872, pp.219-257 et n° 3, July 1872, pp.345-422.

<sup>6</sup> M.Gauchet, « Du réflexe à l'inconscient », *Psychiatrie, Sciences humaines, Neurosciences*, vol.5, n°2, 2007, pp.89-96.

<sup>7</sup> M.Gauchet, *L'inconscient cérébral*, Seuil, 1992, p.32.

<sup>8</sup> See also J.Carroy, *Hypnose, suggestion et psychologie. L'invention de sujets*, PUF, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Jean-Martin Charcot was a member of the *Académie de médecine* in 1872 ; his research on hysteria was an important event.

<sup>10</sup> P.Janet (1889), *L'Automatisme psychologique*, Paris, Republished by the Pierre Janet Society, 1973.



apparently being aware, in an automatic way. For him, these facts could not be reduced to physiological causes, as in the thinking of Théodule Ribot (1825-1893), founder of French psychology, and Jean Martin Charcot, but had a psychological nature insofar as they are accompanied by a certain, if rudimentary, form of consciousness. It is for this reason that he speaks of subconscious phenomena, that is to say phenomena situated at a deeper level than normal consciousness. That of hysterics, due to their more or less congenital psychological weakness, exacerbated by emotional shocks experienced by the subject over the course of their life, can only contain and synthesize a small number of mental states. This "shrinking of the field of consciousness" as he called it explains the "dissociation" of the self which can lead to the formation of a dual personality. Pierre Janet thus attempted to account for the phenomena of duality which his contemporaries were studying. Several authors popularized this notion of a "double-self".<sup>11</sup> Pierre Janet went on to extend the research of his humanities thesis: in 1893 he published his medical thesis under the title *L'Etat mental des hystériques*,<sup>12</sup> [The Mental State of Hysterics] with a preface by Jean Martin Charcot, in which Janet focused on the notion of "field of consciousness" and "its shrinking" in patients due to their psychological weakness.

In conclusion, the subconsciousness to which Pierre Janet is referring is the site of expression of an inferior and pathological consciousness. This shows that the psychologists, even those who, like Pierre Janet, claimed priority over Sigmund Freud, were very far from considering this radically new object to be the same as the Freudian unconscious. Indeed, for Freud, the unconscious was constitutive of all human psyche, whether normal or pathological. Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet both collaborated with Jean Martin Charcot. Together they were perceived, at the end of the nineteenth century, as researchers and therapists each engaged in researching a psychology of hysteria, and later the psychasthenia of obsessive-compulsive disorders, and are often cited together. However, from this point on they each developed differing conceptions of the phenomena which eluded consciousness. From 1895, Sigmund Freud suggested a form of hysteria which results from defense mechanisms rather than from psychological weakness. This then led him to formulate the hypothesis of an unconscious, which cannot become conscious because it is repressed.

1895 is indeed the year in which Freud published his *Studies on Hysteria*.<sup>13</sup> Because it is the problem of hysteria which, through Jean Martin Charcot, Josef Breuer and Anna O., and possibly also through reading Pierre Janet's *L'automatisme psychologique* [Psychological Automatism], set Sigmund Freud on the path to his later discoveries. From 1896 onwards, he proposed a general theory of neuroses as opposed to neuroses *per se* (neurasthenia and anxiety disorders) whose origins lie in the current sex life of the patient, or psychoneuroses (hysteria and obsessive-compulsive disorder) linked to sexual trauma – whether real or imagined – in early childhood. He then applied the symbolic realizations of unconscious desires, the theoretical model he had devised for hysteria, to dreams and "faulty acts".<sup>14</sup> *The Interpretation of Dreams*<sup>15</sup> and *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*<sup>16</sup> clearly constitute a reconsideration of the primacy of the conscious mind in traditional philosophies. It is because the topic became divided that after 1900 Freud could state that "the unconscious mind is the psyche itself and its essential reality". 1900 also saw the publication of Flournoy's book *Des Indes à la Planète Mars, étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*<sup>17</sup> [From India to Planet Mars: A Study of a Case of Somnambulism with Glossolalia], which was responsible for initiating the public to the theory of the subconscious. As Pierre Bovet<sup>18</sup> pointed out in his *hommage* to Flournoy, "the subconscious to which Flournoy introduced his students lies at the meeting point between three strands of research".<sup>19</sup>

This first strand was medical, and tapped into three *de facto* orders: hypnotism, the spontaneous disaggregation of the personality, and the psychopathology of everyday life. It is certainly the axis along which Jean Martin Charcot and Sigmund Freud situated themselves, but also Flournoy's long monograph<sup>20</sup> devoted to a spirit medium, whom he called

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<sup>11</sup> E.g. the work of philosopher and doctor Max Dessoir (1867-1947), a major figure in the hypnotism movement.

<sup>12</sup> P. Janet (1893), *L'Etat mental des hystériques*, republished by L'Harmattan, 3 vol., 2007.

<sup>13</sup> S. Freud, J. Breuer (1895), *Etudes sur l'hystérie*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1956.

<sup>14</sup> *Parapraxis*, now known more colloquially as 'Freudian slips'.

<sup>15</sup> S. Freud (1899-1900), « L'interprétation des rêves », *Œuvres Complètes Psychanalyse*, IV, Presses Universitaires de France, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> S. Freud (1901), *La psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne*, Paris, Gallimard, 1988.

<sup>17</sup> T. Flournoy, *Des Indes à la Planète Mars, étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*, In-8, XII and 420p. With 44 figures. Genève 1900, Eggimann.

<sup>18</sup> P. Bovet, « L'inconscient à Genève », *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, VII, 1921, pp.129-131.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p.130.

<sup>20</sup> T. Flournoy, *op. cit.*



Hélène Smith, and whose real name was Elise Müller. This woman was a commercial employee who maintained that she was constantly guided in life by Leopold, a singularly possessive and authoritarian spirit who was her protector and advisor. He manifested himself during spiritualist séances by dictating messages or by speaking through her mouth. She “relived” and performed, in a state of somnambulism, previous existences: she had apparently had successive lives as a Hindu princess, and then Marie-Antoinette herself. To this “Hindu cycle” and “royal cycle”, as Flournoy designated them, must be added the “Martian cycle,” during which Hélène Smith entered into a relationship with the planet Mars and its inhabitants. In this cycle in particular, she presented a glossolalia: she spoke and transcribed the “Martian language”, studied by the linguist Victor Henry<sup>21</sup> from 1901. Flournoy interpreted these phenomena in psychological terms: according to him, Hélène, as all mediums, was a very suggestible subject who, influenced as much by spiritualism as by the interest Flournoy showed in her, organized her childhood daydreams into coherent narratives which were the product of her subliminal imagination. As for Leopold, he equates to a subconscious personality of the medium. As Flournoy himself pointed out, neither the Genevan spirits nor Hélène Smith agreed with his interpretations.

The second strand was metapsychical. At the end of the nineteenth century, the considerable interest in the occult which was flourishing in America also swept through Europe. If humans have hidden powers, people wanted to prove it scientifically. The Englishman Frederick Myers (1843-1901),<sup>22</sup> a personal friend of Flournoy, is an excellent example of this. Indeed, in 1903 Flournoy dedicated a major article to him in the *Archives de Psychologie*,<sup>23</sup> the journal founded in 1902 with Edouard Claparède.<sup>24</sup> Flournoy was interested in Myers’ theory of the subliminal self. For Myers, heir to the trends of magnetism and romanticism, the empirical or supraliminal self is far from an understanding of all of our conscious mind or our faculties: if deeper levels exist, there must also be a consciousness which is far greater, with unexploited faculties which are sometimes revealed in certain states such as trance or somnambulism, and of which most remain virtual. His conception of the subliminal self therefore both heightens and deepens the conventional conception of the human personality. Myers’ psychologist-metaphysician method would therefore serve to broaden the spectrum of the conscious mind; to establish a natural series of facts which, using as its starting point that which academic psychology considered to be acquired – the phenomena of hysterical dissociation for example – lead the reader, through a series of transformations, towards the manifestations of lucid ecstasy or of mediumnity, thereby demonstrating the continuity and natural affinity which exist between the most banal and the most extraordinary.

Flournoy returns to the theme of the subconscious by situating himself closer to Frédéric Myers than to Pierre Janet, even though he rejects the metaphysical aspect of Myers’ work and distances himself from some aspects of it. And so it is that Flournoy, a member of the Society for Psychic Studies in Geneva, who studied spirit and parapsychological phenomena, thought that behind the potential of certain mediums lie only the normal mechanisms, including that of the unconscious mind. With the medium Hélène Smith, he investigated and wrote his famous work *From India to Planet Mars*, in which he demonstrated the capacities of this woman to speak Sanscrit and Martian by working with Ferdinand de Saussure<sup>25</sup> to understand glossolalia.<sup>26</sup> He postulates the efficacy of a subliminal unconscious which is differentiated from the Freudian unconscious by its cryptomnesic, compensatory and, above all, mythopoetic dimensions.<sup>27</sup> According

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<sup>21</sup> V.Henry, *Le langage martien*, Paris Maisonneuve, 1901..

<sup>22</sup> F.W.H.Myers (1843-1901), author of *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903).

<sup>23</sup> T.Flournoy, « F.W.H.Myers et son œuvre posthume », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.2, 1903, pp.269-296.

<sup>24</sup> Ed Claparède (1873-1940), Genevan doctor and psychologist born into a patrician family. From the early twentieth century, he became the central person around which all psychology in Geneva was organized. Co-founder of the *Archives de psychologie* with Théodore Flournoy in 1901, he was editor from 1921. In 1912 he founded the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Institute, and in 1926 became the permanent secretary of the conferences on Psychology.

<sup>25</sup> F.de Saussure (1857-1913). See O.Flournoy, *Théodore et Léopold, de Théodore Flournoy à la psychanalyse*, A la Baconnière, Neuchâtel, 1986. See also O.Flournoy, « Sigmund Freud, le psychanalyste, Ferdinand de Saussure le linguiste. Deux contemporains de génie. Convergences, divergences. », Lecture given at the University of Geneva by Olivier Flournoy, 11 January 2007 organized by the *Centre de psychanalyse Raymond de Saussure* in Geneva.

<sup>26</sup> See also M Cifali, « Une glossolale et ses savants : Elise Muller, alias Hélène Smith », *La linguistique fantastique*, Paris, Clims-Noël, 1985, pp.236-245 ; M Cifali, « La fabrication du martien : genèse d’une langue imaginaire », *Langages*, n°91, 1988, pp.39-60. See also M Yaguello, « Introduction », in T Flournoy (1900), *Des Indes à La Planète Mars, étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1983 (reédition), pp.7-16; M Yaguello, « Postface I. Psychanalyse et linguistique, première rencontre », *Ibid*, pp.365-370 ; M Yaguello, *Les fous du langage*, Editions du Seuil, 1984.

<sup>27</sup> Mythopoetic : myth-making.



to Henri Ellenberger<sup>28</sup> It would seem that it was Myers who forged the term of the mythopoetic unconscious to describe an unconscious activity of the "subliminal self" (in other words the unconscious) in which there is a constant and strange process of story-making. These are the stories that we constantly tell ourselves, often barely imperceptibly, but which may emerge in dreams, somnambulism, hypnosis, médiumnic trances and so on, as well as in certain forms of delirium. It is precisely this mythopoetic unconscious that Flournoy explored in *From India to Planet Mars* in which he showed that it is a playful activity, distinguished from the truly creative activity of the unconscious by a particular tendency for mystification: as much self-mystification as the mystification of others. Confronted with the subliminal creations of his medium Hélène Smith, Flournoy also fell foul of "transference".<sup>29</sup> This quest drove him to quickly read Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. Even though he still had reservations regarding the Freudian discovery, and above all his theory of the sexual etiology of neuroses, he would give an account in French of several publications on psychoanalysis in the *Archives de psychologie*. In 1913, Flournoy gave a course on psychoanalysis at the University of Geneva.<sup>30</sup> There was no doubt that, from the beginning of the century until the First World War, French-speaking Switzerland was a central hub in the discovery of the unconscious and the spread of psychoanalysis in francophone countries. The *Archives de Psychologie* regularly published and discussed psychoanalytical works in German, and several original dissertations directly addressed Freudian doctrine. These were the reality for the many Swiss doctors and psychologists<sup>31</sup> who were interested in psychology in all its aspects. The principal centers of interest of this eclectic journal were psychic phenomena; the psychology of children, both normal and abnormal; and psychopathology. It is moreover by presenting and analyzing an article by the Protestant pastor Adolf Keller (1872-1963), one of the most significant representatives of the psychoanalytic school of Zurich, in the *Archives de Psychologie* in 1913, that Flournoy heralded in a premonitory fashion the rupture which was to take place between the Zurich and Vienna schools of thought.<sup>32</sup>

In rejecting spiritualist beliefs, he himself defined his attitude in two pairs of principles that he judged indispensable to working scientifically:

- in metapsychics, Hamlet's principle that "everything is possible" and that of Laplace that "the burden of proof must be proportionate to the strangeness of the facts;"
- in religious psychology, the principle of exclusion of transcendence and that of biological interpretation. The principle of the exclusion of transcendence which reproduces the Kantian distinction between *Wissen* and *Glauben* [Knowledge and Belief] is stated in his work, from his first book *Métaphysique et Psychologie* [Metaphysics and Psychology].<sup>33</sup>

The place of Flournoy in the diffusion of psychoanalysis in French-speaking Switzerland is central. Through his interest in occultism and mysticism,<sup>34</sup> he is at the heart of a questioning of the relationships between psychoanalysis and occultism which, until 1910, Freud addressed briefly, uneasily and with skepticism. How was psychoanalysis flirting with the occult? In what ways were they differentiated? The debate took place, with Jung as interlocutor, but with Flournoy nevertheless remaining in the background. It is interesting to point out to the reader the negligence of the specialists in ignoring the role played by Flournoy in Freud's relationship to occultism, notably in the evocation of the question of telepathy.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> J.Mousseau, « Entretien avec le Professeur Henri Ellenberger », *Psychologie, comprendre, savoir, agir dans le monde d'aujourd'hui*, n°27, April 1972, p.40.

<sup>29</sup> M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », *Nervure*, t.VIII, n°8, 1995, p.13. See also O.Flournoy, *Théodore et Léopold, de Théodore Flournoy à la psychanalyse*, op. cit. ; « Les Flournoy », *Tribune de Genève*, 15/10/2005.

<sup>30</sup> M.Cifali, « Les chiffres de l'intime (posface II) », *Des Indes à la Planète Mars, étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1983, reedition, pp.371-385, p.378. This course is incidentally mentioned in the Viennese journal of psychoanalysis the *Internationale zeitschrift für ärzliche psychoanalyse*, vol.2, 1914,p.297.

<sup>31</sup> A Maeder, P Menzerath, P Bovet, Ladame, C.G.Jung, for example.

<sup>32</sup> T.Flournoy, « Ad.Keller, Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse: considérations impassibles dans le combat autour de la psychanalyse (Kirchenblatt für reformierte Schweiz, 3 et 10/02/1912), *Archives de Psychologie*, t.13, 1913, pp.202-203, p.203.

<sup>33</sup> T.Flournoy, *Métaphysique et psychologie*. Genève, 1890, 1 vol.in-8, 195p.

<sup>34</sup> See T.Flournoy, « Une mystique moderne » (Documents pour la psychologie religious), *Archives de Psychologie*, t.15, 1915, pp.1-224.

<sup>35</sup> C Moreau, *Freud et l'occultisme*, Privat, Toulouse, 1976.



The third strand is theological, in which the ideas of the American philosopher William James (1842-1910), one of the founders of pragmatism and a childhood friend of Flournoy, play a major role.<sup>36</sup> In 1911 Flournoy even devoted a small book to him which he entitled *La Philosophie de William James*.<sup>37</sup> Influenced by James' pragmatism, he shared with him the need for clarity and life and above all this disgust with the construct within psychological studies for live observation. Concerning James, Flournoy also stated that: "His philosophy actually lies more in an attitude which is communicated by the contagion of sentiment, than in a doctrine which is taught through didactic means".<sup>38</sup> The Genevan tradition of religious psychology is illustrated by Flournoy's work which disseminates the theses of William James<sup>39</sup>. From 1895, the Genevan Protestants became interested in James's research. In 1904-1905, Flournoy gave a series of lectures at the University of Geneva on a newly-named discipline: "religious psychology". In his mind, this expression did not involve "any religious character, any more than antireligious". For him it was a matter of applying to the religious life the same observational processes as experimental psychology attempted to apply to psychic life in general. Moreover, his last major work, *Une mystique moderne* [A Modern Mystic], published in the *Archives de Psychologie*, is entirely devoted to religious psychology.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore it is in this second and last clinical study that he again states that:

"The overall approach of the Zurich School must be much more sympathetic than that of the Vienna School to religious people in our land, because it places more emphasis on points of contact and mutually supportive relationships than there are between Psychoanalysis and religion (particularly Christianity)".

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In "Religion et Psychoanalyse"<sup>42</sup> Flournoy explains the physiological and psychological point of view of the phenomenon of religious sentiment. This is seen as the supreme fulfilment of the human personality, the sublimation of our many instinctive drives. Flournoy therefore has a valid claim to a place in the history of psychoanalysis,<sup>43</sup> because even before Jung (1875-1961) came to represent psychoanalysis in Switzerland it was Flournoy who interested the doctors, pastors and pedagogues in the rise of the new science.<sup>44</sup>

At this point I would like to digress slightly on the subject of the tradition inherited by Oskar Pfister (1873-1956),<sup>45</sup> that of the cure of souls (*Seelsorge*).<sup>46</sup> This typically Protestant institution does not exist in the Catholic Church, which itself is more concerned with the practice of individual confession to a priest, who is strictly bound by the seal of the

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<sup>36</sup> See Théodore Flournoy's letters to William James : Flournoy T., « Letters to William James », Département Manuscript, Houghton Library of the Harvard Collège Library, Oct.15, 1890-July 20 1910. See also Théodore Flournoy's bibliographic summary on William James's book in the *Archives de Psychologie* : Flournoy T., « W.James.- The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature. London, 1902, Longmans, Green et Cie.534 p. », *Revue Philosophique*, t.2, 1902, pp.517-527. See also Ed.Claparède, « William James (1842-1910) », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.10, 1910-1911, pp.96-105.

<sup>37</sup> T.Flournoy, *La Philosophie de William James*, St-Blaise, un vol., 222 p., 1911.

<sup>38</sup> T.Flournoy, *Ibid*, p.191.

<sup>39</sup> See P.Borgeaud, « L'histoire des religions à Genève. Origines et métamorphoses », *Asdiwal*, n 1, 2006, p.20.

<sup>40</sup> T.Flournoy, « Une mystique moderne », *op. cit.*. See also H.Silberer, « Mystik und Okkultismus », *Jahbuch der Psychoanalyse*, 1914, pp.414-424, and O.Pfister, « Theodor Flournoy », *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, VII, 1921, pp.101-106.

<sup>41</sup> T.Flournoy, *Ibid*, p.220.

<sup>42</sup> T.Flournoy, « Religion et Psychanalyse ». Notes for a lecture given on 27 septembre 1916 at Sainte-Croix and 24 January 1917 at the Society of Theology and Philosophy. Published in *Bloc-notes de la Psychanalyse*, 4, 1984, pp.191-199.

<sup>43</sup> On the history of psychoanalysis in Switzerland, see the texts of H F Ellenberger, « La psychiatrie suisse », *l'Evolution psychiatrique*, n°XVI-XVIII, 1951-1953 and also *Histoire de la découverte de l'inconscient*, Fayard, Paris 1994 ; F. Meerwein, « Réflexions sur l'histoire de la Société suisse de Psychanalyse en Suisse alémanique », *Bulletin de la Société suisse de Psychanalyse*, n°9, 1979, pp.40-54.M.Roch, « A propos de l'histoire de la psychanalyse en Suisse romande », *ibid*, n°10, 1980,pp.17-30. See also A.Haynal, « Les Suisses-En psychanalyse », *Le Bloc-notes de la psychanalyse*, n°4, 1984, pp.163-170.

<sup>44</sup> See M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », *op. cit.*

<sup>45</sup> Pfister was a Swiss pastor and pedagogue and long-term friend of Sigmund Freud. We know from his correspondance with Freud (Editions Gallimard, October 1966) their discussion about religion and Pfister's rôle in the writing of Freud's 1927 book « L'avenir d'une illusion », *Œuvres complètes*, XVIII, pp.145-197.

<sup>46</sup> See J.Besson, « Freud et Pfister, des protestants sexuels », *op. cit.*, p21; M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », *op. cit.*, pp.14-15 ; H.F.Ellenberger, « La psychiatrie suisse », *op. cit.*,n°III, pp.139-142. See also M.Baron, *Oskar Pfister, pasteur à Zurich 1873-1956. Psychoanalyse et Protestantisme*, Editions du Monde Interne, 1999.





confessional. Priests thus accumulate a body of psychological knowledge, systematized to a certain extent in the manuals of moral theology, but the very nature of the rigor of the seal of the confession means this knowledge becomes abstract.

The Protestant reformers abolished compulsory confession, but among the Protestant communities a new practice and a new tradition emerged, that of the cure of souls.<sup>47</sup> Certain Protestant ministers had a particular spiritual gift which meant they were capable of receiving the confidence of a painful secret which tormented distressed souls and helped them to surmount their difficulties.

According to Henri Ellenberger,<sup>48</sup> the first doctor to work on the notion of a pathogenic secret and who systematized this as well as its intrinsic therapeutic was the Austrian doctor Moriz Benedikt (1835-1920) in Vienna. Between 1864 and 1895, he published a series of articles, in which he showed that hysteria, as well as other neuroses, are often rooted in a painful secret, most often connected with the sex life of the patient, and that many patients may be cured by confessing their pathogenic secrets and the solution of the related problems. In 1893, Sigmund Freud together with Josef Breuer indicated, in a note, that it was in certain remarks by Benedikt that he had found the closest ideas to their theoretical and therapeutic position. In the later evolution of psychoanalysis, the notion of the pathogenic secret<sup>49</sup> was gradually absorbed into those of traumatizing memories, of repression and sentiments of neurotic guilt. Jung<sup>50</sup> attached much importance to this notion, which he had probably heard about from his pastor father.

Oskar Pfister was therefore the first to apply psychoanalysis to "*Seelsorge*". He saw in psychoanalysis, to a certain point at least, a rediscovery and sophistication of the traditional cure of souls and had always considered his psychoanalytic practice to be a part of his pastoral work. Pfister was also the first to apply psychoanalysis to education.<sup>51</sup> In his Zurich parish his work involved caring for children, and he very soon asked the question: could not pedagogy inspired by psychoanalysis provide a prophylaxis for adult neuroses? And his answer was yes, and in this sense he is one of the precursors of the analytical pedagogy of which Anna Freud would later become an eminent representative.

The educator, as Pfister reiterated in his books and lectures, must eliminate the damaging inhibitions which originate from the unconscious powers, and subject these forces, once uncovered, to the mastery of the moral personality. Above all, he emphasized what was a new and revolutionary idea at the beginning of the century, that the educator would substitute the unconscious repression with a conscious repression. Therefore the educator needs to talk about sexuality, and in very precise terms, because psychoanalytical education has the essential task of prevailing over the sexual images already present, but repressed, which arrest normal development and often bring about mental illness.

The religious element must find its place in education, as Pfister stated in his *La psychanalyse au service des éducateurs*<sup>52</sup> but not in a haphazard way:

"When it's a matter of interpreting manifestations, it goes without saying that the moral judgment must not intervene, because it is essentially about determining what is, not what should be. But then, when it's a matter of adapting the forces observed to conscious life, the pedagogical purposes play an important role...I am not afraid to declare that a healthy moral and religious conception of life, which is moreover for thousands of healthy people an indispensable support and blessing, and the most powerful auxiliary of an analytical education. Psychoanalysis has profoundly moral principles which only vulgar, cynical men

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<sup>47</sup> See J.Besson, « Freud et Pfister, des protestants sexuels », *Nervure*, t.VIII,n°8, 1995, pp.20-22 ; M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », op. cit..

<sup>48</sup> H F Ellenberger, *Histoire de la découverte de l'inconscient*, op. cit..

<sup>49</sup> For the future developments of this notion see J.Dupont, « Repères sur la question du trauma : Freud, Balint, Abraham et Torok », *La psychanalyse avec Nicolas Abraham et Maria Torok*, Erès, 2001, pp.77-79 and S.Tisseron, « Toujours le secret sainte.. », *Enfances et psy*, 2, n°39, 2008, pp.88.96.

<sup>50</sup> C.G.Jung, « Psychanalyse et cure d'âme », *L'Âme et le Soi*, 1990, pp.181-189.

<sup>51</sup> See J Besson, « Freud et le pasteur Pfister », *Thèse*, Université de Lausanne, Faculté de médecine, 1986 ; D.Milhaud-Cappe, *Freud et le Mouvement de Pédagogie psychanalytique 1908-1937*, Paris Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 2007 ; A.Ohayon, « Psychanalyse et éducation, une histoire d'amour et de désamour 1908-1968 », *Revue Cliopsyn* n°1, 2009, pp.25-40 ; M.Cifali, F Imbert, *Freud et la pédagogie*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1998.

<sup>52</sup> Pfister, *La Psychanalyse au service des éducateurs*, Ernest Bircher Editeur Berne, 1921.



may sully: liberate the instinctive forces which are missing in the conscious personality and susceptible to being controlled by the spirit, destroy the illusions which sometimes mean living a lie ones whole life, spiritualize the personality, the intransigent problem of truth for an honest soul which aspires not to see themselves as they really are.... Who could deny the moral character of these demands? Life, nobly conceived as the realm of moral purposes, also opens us to a wide range of neuroses which are a powerful stimulus for their aspirations for freedom, turn the best forces of their personality towards emancipation through analysis and open them up to the life which will lead them from the dreams of neurosis to the world of realities.”<sup>53</sup>

Also, for Pfister, the prevention of neuroses is achieved through analytical education, and religion is a preferred route for the sublimations necessary in achieving a healthy and fulfilled life, and on these two points, he would never really be contradicted by Freud, as can be seen from their *Correspondance*.<sup>54</sup>

Many Swiss psychoanalysts, other than pastors, had a deep wish to create a “reformed psychoanalysis”<sup>55</sup> which was “Protestant” and stripped of its hypothesis of a sexual etiology of neuroses. Flournoy sincerely believed in a reformed psychoanalysis, as it was called at the time: in a psychology of the depths, not Aryan but culturally determined by Protestantism. He returned to these controversies around Freudian psychoanalysis in the *Archives de Psychologie* in 1913,<sup>56</sup> beginning with several reviews of articles on books on psychoanalysis and offering a precursor of the inevitable separation of the schools of Zurich and Vienna.<sup>57</sup> Flournoy would even go to the Munich Congress,<sup>58</sup> the site of this separation, to support Jung as he endured this painful process.

At the center of the quarrels was sexuality, but also the fact that at Zurich the seculars – pastors and educators – had appropriated the new therapeutics which, for the lesser of two evils, should have remained within medical circles.<sup>59</sup> This was however qualified, and at times even recognized. Freud was often spared, and only the fanatics of the Zurich school were taken to task. Although Jung was not cited by name, he felt targeted, insulted and slandered. He consulted a shrewd lawyer about defending himself, but the attack was too indirect to warrant a legal case. After three weeks, he settled for an official letter in the name of the International Psychoanalytical Association of which he was chairman.<sup>60</sup> This formal intervention really put the cat among the pigeons. Freud knew about it.<sup>61</sup> Jung had declared war on two

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<sup>53</sup> Pfister, op. cit..

<sup>54</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Correspondance de Sigmund Freud avec le pasteur Pfister 1909-1939*, Gallimard, 1966.

<sup>55</sup> M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », op. cit. See also M.Cifali « Les chiffres de l'intime », op. cit.. See also M.Cifali, « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », *Le Bloc-notes de psychanalyse*, n°4, 1984, pp.171-188.

<sup>56</sup> T.Flournoy, « Comptes rendus bibliographiques », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.XIII, 1913, pp.183-206. The collection of these ten reviews caused a great commotion according to Pfister. See Pfister, « Théodore Flournoy », op. cit.. These bibliographic reviews concern the psychoanalytic works of Bleuler, Jung, Pfister, Maeder, Keller, Rank.

<sup>57</sup> T.Flournoy, « Ad Keller, Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse », opus cite, p.203.

<sup>58</sup> See the publication of the pastor Adolf Keller who belonged to the Ortsgruppe Zürich and participated in the Munich Congress, « Aus der Frühzeit der Psychoanalytischen Bewegung : Sur le début du mouvement psychanalytique par A Keller », *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Psychologie und ihre Anwendungen*, t.XV, 1956, pp.122-125. See M.Cifali, « Les chiffres de l'intime », op. cit. et « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », op. cit..

<sup>59</sup> See for example n°3 of the *Revue d'Histoire Internationale de la Psychanalyse* devoted to the history of the exercise of psychoanalysis by non-doctors, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1990 ; C Bori, « Oskar Pfister, pasteur à Zurich et analyse laïque », *Revue internationale d'Histoire de la Psychanalyse*, n°3,1990, pp.129-143 ; M.Cifali, « De quelques remous helvétiques autour de l'analyse profane », *ibid*, pp.145-157. See also J Besson, « Freud et Pfister, des « Protestants sexuels » », op. cit.. See also S. Freud (1926), « La Question de l'analyse profane », *Œuvres complètes*, XVIII, pp.5-92. See also F Meerwein, « Réflexions sur l'histoire de la Société suisse de Psychanalyse en Suisse », op. cit..

<sup>60</sup> See « La lettre de Carl Gustav Jung » of 27/01/1912 in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* published and translated in M.Cifali, « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », op. cit., p.187 ( note 30).

<sup>61</sup> See S Freud, C G Jung, *Correspondance*, 1906-1914, Editions Gallimard,1992, p. 609 (Lettre 296 F)



fronts: he wrote *Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido*<sup>62</sup> and against his detractors in *Knowledge and Life* a long final response.<sup>63</sup> He would return to the pastor Adolf Keller,<sup>64</sup> to add the final touch.

"The great challenge issued in the press," as repugnant as it was, ended up in the *Journal of the Swiss Reformed Church*.<sup>65</sup> One cannot help wondering if the rupture between Jung and Freud did not involve the undisputed influence of Flournoy and the hoped-for perspective of a "Protestant psychoanalysis"?<sup>66</sup> Was it not the case that Adolf Keller's article "Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse" [Stable Considerations in the battle surrounding psychoanalysis]<sup>67</sup> favored Geneva, the background to the rupture between Zurich and Vienna?<sup>68</sup> In his review of this publication Flournoy wrote:

It is clear that this excellent article is inspired by the same range and scale of viewpoints as the writings of Jung, etc. We have a good sense of the contrast between the purely psychobiological and narrowly positivist inclinations of the Viennese school, and that of the Zurich school which, while in no way compromising in terms of scientific rigor, demonstrates a far greater open-mindedness, a more delicate sensitivity, and a livelier preoccupation with moral, religious and pedagogic issues, etc. One wonders if this difference in temperaments will not result in a schism between the two schools, and to a bifurcation in the subsequent development of psychoanalytical doctrines."<sup>69</sup>

It could not be more explicit: bifurcation, schism, temperamental differences. Further on, in the bibliographic summary of Jung's *Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido*, invoking common sense, Flournoy wrote: "While it is easy to say, he writes, that science does not need to preoccupy itself with its moral consequences or with public opinion, the fact remains that gratuitously causing damage gets us nowhere".<sup>70</sup> And he adds: "It will be no small service for the Zurich school in general, and Dr Jung in particular, to have made the profound truth in Freud's discoveries more easily acceptable for the common understanding".<sup>71</sup>

In his 1913 *Cours sur la psychanalyse* [Lessons in psychoanalysis] he says "Should morality be a preoccupation of the psychanalyst or not? This is the point at which the rupture occurred".<sup>72</sup> The "spiritual" is preserved, but the "materialism" of Freud criticized. Jung is charming. "I prefer the notion of the Christian Ideal – which is itself that of the Psychoanalysts of the Zurich school (Pfister, Keller, Riklin, Maede, Bleuler) – to the Jewish notion of Religion subscribed to by the Freudian school," writes Flournoy in chapter four of his notes for a paper whose title turns out to be "Religion and Psychoanalysis".<sup>73</sup> Flournoy says "I prefer" ; and he adds that they are "Protestants, metaphysicians, theologians".<sup>74</sup> So

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<sup>62</sup> See the bibliographic reviews of T.Flournoy, « Dr C.G.Jung, wandlungen und symbole der Libido : Beiträge für entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens.412p.Leipzig, Deutike 1912 », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.XIII, 1913, pp.195-199

<sup>63</sup> The protestation of C G Jung , « Zur Psychoanalyse. Letter of 28/01/1912 », *Wissen und leben*, t.IX, 1911-1912, pp.711-714. Jung's protestation is translated in M Cifali, « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », op. cit., p.187 (note 31). Jung's response marks the end of a series of polemic articles in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* which appeared in January 1912, signed by Forel, Jung et Franz Marti among others. For the whole narrative of the controversy see H F Ellenberger, *Histoire de la découverte de l'inconscient*, op. cit., pp.830-836.

<sup>64</sup> A Keller, « Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse », *Kirchenblatt für die reformierte Schweiz*, 3 et 10/02/1912(*Journal de l'Eglise Réformée Suisse*)

<sup>65</sup> A Keller, Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> M.Cifali, « Les débuts de la psychanalyse en Suisse », op. cit., p.15.

<sup>67</sup> T Flournoy, «Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse», *Kirchenblatt für die reformierte Schweiz*, 3 et 10/02/1912(*Journal de l'Eglise Réformée Suisse*),op. cit..

<sup>68</sup> M Cifali, « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg »,op. cit..

<sup>69</sup> T.Flournoy, «Ruhige Erwägungen im Kampf um die Psychoanalyse», *Kirchenblatt für die reformierte Schweiz*, 3 et 10/02/1912(*Journal de l'Eglise Réformée Suisse* ),op. cit., p.203.

<sup>70</sup> T Flournoy, « Dr C.G.Jung, wandlungen und symbole der Libido : Beiträge für entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens.412p.Leipzig, Deutike 1912 », op. cit., p.199.

<sup>71</sup> T Flournoy, ibid, p.199.

<sup>72</sup> See M Cifali, « Les chiffres de l'intime », op. cit., p.378.

<sup>73</sup> Flournoy T, « Religion et Psychoanalyse », op. cit., p.4.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p.4.



in 1916, Flournoy, the "*ami paternel*"<sup>75</sup> seems close to Jung, and who knows whether there was a link between Jung and Flournoy in which the work of Flournoy was nodal in Jung's early writings.<sup>76</sup> Also, to the extent that this connection may have had unknown implications,<sup>77</sup> did it not contribute to the rupture between Jung and Freud?

Indeed, many of the hypotheses<sup>78</sup> follow the rupture between Jung and Freud at the Munich Congress of 1913. A number of commentators who were interested in the history of the Jung-Freud schism seem to agree that this was underpinned by a series of complex problems situated, above all, at the crossroads of the three specific issues: a scientific issue, a political issue, and the challenge posed by the problem of the psychic origin of religious sentiment as well as that of the origin of religions.

The scientific issue is set against the background of the recognition of the unconscious by the psychiatric and medical community. This issue supports and strengthens those more closely linked to the interests of the two protagonists, namely metapsychology and the psychoanalytical curing of psychoses: early dementia for Jung, paranoia for Freud. In the background, but soon to come to take center stage, was the debate on child sexuality.<sup>79</sup> It led to Jung's attempt to distance himself from this in his work, preferring to favor the notions of a collective unconscious and archaic archetypes. His work entitled *Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido*, published in two parts in the *Jahrbuch* (1911-1912), was at the origin of profound theoretical divergences which would be very clearly asserted in the months preceding the rupture (1912).

The political issue<sup>80</sup> included both Freud's desire to ensure the transmission of the psychoanalytic corpus by bringing his credentials to the notice of the psychiatric and medical world, to organize his succession by appointing Jung "crown prince" and thus to attempt to liberate psychoanalysis from the Jewish "ghetto". Doctrine, fidelity to the Cause, succession and lineage, would therefore play a pivotal role in the organization of the International Association of Psychoanalysis of which Jung would become the first chairman (1910). The political issue became superimposed onto the scientific issue and thus came to compound it.

Finally, the challenge representing the psychic approach to religious phenomena, to belief and the origin of religions. We know that these issues were paramount in the redaction, between 1911 and 1913, of *Totem and Taboo*,<sup>81</sup> a text

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<sup>75</sup> In the second Preface of *Métamorphoses de l'âme et ses symboles*, Genève, Librairie de L'Université, 1993, p.41, Jung refers to Flournoy as his « ami paternel et vénéré » [revered paternal friend].

<sup>76</sup> See J.S.Witzig, « Théodore Flournoy : A Friend Indeed », *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 1982,27, pp.131-148; B Hannah (1976), *Jung, his Life and Work*, New York, G.P.Putnam's; C.G.Jung (1976), '*C.G.Jung, Letters*,2, London, Routledge &Kegan Paul; and S.Shamdasani, *Jung and the Making of Modern Psychology*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately I have found no correspondance from either Théodore Flournoy or Carl Gustav Jung, although I have found some letters from Jung addressed to Claparède at the Département des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Publique de Genève : Letters of 22/01/1906, 23/10/1907, 30/11/1907, 28/04/1911, 5/10/1916 and 01/06/1917. I have also searched for correspondance between Théodore Flournoy and Sigmund Freud but without success. Nevertheless, there is an important collection of the papers of Edouard Claparède at the Département des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Publique in Geneva and I have been able to find some letters from Flournoy addressed to Claparède: Letters of 17/01/1899, 11/03/1899, 23/07/1900, 11/08/1900, 25/03/1903, 10/07/1903, 3/08/1903, 17/08/1903, 1/04/1905 and 22/07/1915.

<sup>78</sup> See F Roustang, *Un destin si funeste*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1976; E.Roudinesco, *Histoire de la psychanalyse en France. 1 1885-1939*, Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1994 ; N.Kress-Rosen, *Trois figures de la passion*, Editions Arcanes, 1994; see no. 57 of the Freudian journal *Topique*, « Scissions psychanalytiques », Dunod, 1995. See also M.Cifali, « Le péché du désaccord », *Le Bloc-notes de la psychanalyse*, n°4, 1984, pp.119-134 ; J.Chemouni, « Savoir ou révélation : la mythologie à l'origine de la rupture entre Freud et Jung », *Kentron, Revue du monde antique et de psychologie historique*, vol.15, fasc.1, 1999, pp.5-63 ; M.Cifali, « Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », op. cit. ; E.Jones, *La vie et l'œuvre de Sigmund Freud*, t.2, Quadrige,2006, pp.134-161. From the protagonists themselves: S Freud, C.G.Jung, *Correspondance 1906-1914*, op. cit. ; S.Freud, « Contribution à l'histoire du mouvement psychanalytique », *Cinq leçons sur la psychanalyse*, Payot & Rivages, 2001 ; C G Jung, « *Ma vie* ». *Souvenirs, rêves et pensées* collected and published by Aniéla Jaffé.Paris, Gallimard, 1973.

<sup>79</sup> See J.Chemouni's 1980 thesis « Quelques aspects de la symbolisation en psychanalyse: corps, ontogénèse, philogénèse et structuralisme » supervised by Professor Meslin (Paris IV)

<sup>80</sup> In *Histoire de la psychanalyse en France. 1 1885-1939*, E Roudinesco examines precisely the political ins and outs of this dissidence.

<sup>81</sup> S Freud (1912-1913), « Totem et Tabou », *Oeuvres complètes*, XI, pp.192-385.



which aimed to establish that ‘the Oedipus complex contains the roots of religious sentiments’<sup>82</sup> and sought to demonstrate the truly instinctual character of religion. For his part Jung focused on the universality of the symbolism which he set against the universality of the Oedipus. *Totem and Taboo*, published in 1913, emphatically endorsed the fundamental theoretical opposition between the two men, an opposition which was to put an end to their relationship.

Forged at the crossroads of these different challenges, the very dense relationship which rapidly developed between the two men, and of which their correspondence provides a tangible and moving witness, shows how each of them, taking ‘one for another’,<sup>83</sup> are each trapped in the misunderstandings which result in their efforts at communication being perpetually at loggerheads.<sup>84</sup> Thus it was that Freud, who sought above all in his pupil a brilliant disciple to hold high the banner in all the battles fought in his name, seems to have had difficulty in accepting a Jung who did not position himself systematically as an unquestioning follower of the Cause (*‘in partibus infidelium’*),<sup>85</sup> and as a successor for whom the question of originality would not really apply. For his part, Jung, who wanted above all to be a brilliant leader and who was only partially seduced by a saga in which he would be no more than a ‘crown prince,’ did not want to subscribe to the position of Freud as a master in search of a disciple in order to preserve his heritage, but wanted Freud to encourage him in his originality and recognize him as different.

In the maelstrom of hypotheses and accounts, the focus was mostly on the divergences which were directly connected to psychoanalytical theory, and principally on the libido,<sup>86</sup> and on their relational difficulties,<sup>87</sup> sometimes blaming Freud for his misplaced authority with regard to his pupil, and sometimes for the latter for his unreasonable ambitions or his psychological imbalance. Regardless of the pertinence of these approaches, they ignore the undoubted influence of Flournoy’s work on the creative unconscious in the paradigmatic role that Jung granted to mythology,<sup>88</sup> the origin of the theoretical discord between himself and Freud. Indeed, the shift in Flournoy’s thinking, of a curiosity for a psychoanalytical understanding of occult manifestations,<sup>89</sup> lay at the heart of Jung’s interest in mythology.

The tension only appears to have been between Zurich and Vienna. Nevertheless, there is one detail which is worthy of our attention. Flournoy, who was never part of the *Ortsgruppe Zürich*, nonetheless participated in the Munich Congress. Jung writes about this in *Ma vie: souvenirs, rêves et pensées* [My Life: memories, dreams and thoughts].<sup>90</sup> ‘in 1912, I asked Flournoy to attend the congress at Munich during which my rupture with Freud occurred. His presence was a great comfort to me.’<sup>91</sup> Freud relates this meeting with Flournoy in a letter addressed to Edouard Claparède in 1922,<sup>92</sup> when the latter had sent him the major biography<sup>93</sup> which he had just dedicated to his recently deceased master Flournoy. Here is what Freud wrote about it: ‘I deeply regret only having spoken briefly to Flournoy on one occasion and at a period of profound gloom and dissatisfaction, in a break between papers at the awful Munich Congress. This

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<sup>82</sup> S. Freud, C. G. Jung, *Correspondance 1906-1914*, op. cit., Letter 270 F of 1 September 1911, pp.556-557.

<sup>83</sup> F Roustang, *Un destin si funeste*, op. cit..

<sup>84</sup> A de Mijolla, « Images de Freud au travers de sa correspondance », *Revue Internationale d’Histoire de la psychanalyse*, 2, 1989, pp.9-50.

<sup>85</sup> J Sédot, « D W Winnicott. Lecture du livre de C.G. Jung : « Ma vie : souvenirs, rêves et pensées », *Cliniques Méditerranéennes*, n°43-44, 1994, pp.201-202.

<sup>86</sup> See for example J. Chemouni’s thesis « Quelques aspects de la symbolisation en psychanalyse : corps, ontogénèse, philogénèse et structuralisme », op. cit.

<sup>87</sup> See: D W Winnicott « D W Winnicott. Lecture du livre de C.G. Jung : Ma vie : souvenirs, rêves et pensées », *Cliniques Méditerranéennes*, n°43-44, 1994, pp. 202-212 ; S Lebovici, « Freud et Jung », *Psychiatrie de l’enfant*, vol.IX, 1, 1966, pp.225-249 ; M Bouraux-Hartemann, « Du fils », *Topique*, n°14, 1974, pp.70 ; N Kress-Rosen, *Trois figures de la passion*, op. cit..

<sup>88</sup> In Jung’s work one cannot dissociate occultism from mythology.

<sup>89</sup> See M. Cifali, « Les chiffres de l’intime », op. cit., p.379. Cifali remarks that the same slippage operated in other European capitals. In London, the spiritualist Myers introduces Freud to England, while Sandor Férenczi and Carl Gustav Jung are interested in the occult.

<sup>90</sup> C G Jung, « *Ma vie* ». *Souvenirs, rêves et pensées* recueillis et publiés par Aniéla Jaffé, op. cit..

<sup>91</sup> C G Jung, *Ibid*, pp.590-591.

<sup>92</sup> See the reproduction of this letter from Freud in M. Cifali, « Les chiffres de l’intime », op. cit., pp.378-379.

<sup>93</sup> E Claparède, « Théodore Flournoy, sa vie et son œuvre », *Archives de Psychologie*, XVIII, 1923, pp.1-125.



perceptive man took the opportunity to congratulate me at a time when I was feeling very disappointed. We will also have the best memories of him".<sup>94</sup>

So Flournoy was there, but was he simply an observer? Flournoy was born in 1854, Freud in 1856. Only two years separated them; in the generational scheme of things, Flournoy represented more of a father figure for Jung. Their relationship was born at the beginning of the century, from the publication of *From India to Planet Mars*. Flournoy was then forty-six years old, and Jung, twenty-five. He made a great impression on him.<sup>95</sup> Two years later, Jung edited his medical thesis *Zur Psychologie und Pathologie sogenannter occulter Phänomene* [On certain 'occult' phenomena]<sup>96</sup> in which he cited Flournoy at least as much as – if not more than – Freud. Jung leant heavily on Flournoy's book to justify his thesis. In Geneva, in a review in the *Archives de Psychologie* of 1903, Flournoy<sup>97</sup> welcomes this publication as "a happy sign of the times"<sup>98</sup>: they are united by their interest in occult events. Jung asks Flournoy for his advice on more than one occasion. "I called on him from time to time, he writes, and stayed in contact with him. It was important for me to know what he thought about Freud. He shared his very intelligent reflections on the subject. First and foremost, he emphasized Freud's willingness to maintain the rationalism of the Enlightenment; that explains much of his thinking and, notably, his partiality".<sup>99</sup>

There was nothing that could not be discussed between Flournoy and Jung. Jung wrote: he meets Flournoy and speaks with him about the scientific problems related to "somnambulism, parapsychology and the psychology of religion".<sup>100</sup> What did Freud know of Flournoy's considerable influence on his successor?<sup>101</sup> And what did Jung tell him about this? If we look at their correspondence,<sup>102</sup> Jung gives Freud news from Geneva but only from the point of view of a political strategy which allows the favorable extension of psychoanalysis. This is the case in his letter of 12 June 1907 addressed to Freud, in which he talks of Flournoy's relationship to psychoanalysis:

"Your teachings have already gained a firm foothold with the psychologists in Geneva, although they still haven't been digested. I am reminded of the result of Claparède's visit, principally for me anyway: Claparède now wants to publish a big paper giving an overview of all my work in the *Archives de psychologie*. This would once again be symptomatic of the progress of the cause. Flournoy is also extraordinarily interested in it."<sup>103</sup>

Moreover, nothing is said about the meeting of minds which had come about between Flournoy and Jung; not a word about the veneration<sup>104</sup> of the "ami paternel" Flournoy had become. However, it is from Flournoy,<sup>105</sup> fittingly, that he borrows the content of an article entitled "Some instances of subconscious creative imagination. By Miss Frank Miller" which appeared in the *Archives de psychologie* in 1905, to write *Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido* which

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<sup>94</sup> S Freud, *Lettre à Edouard Claparède du 5 février 1922*, private archives of the descendants of E. Claparède.

<sup>95</sup> C G Jung, *Ma vie : Souvenirs, rêves et pensées*, op. cit., p.590.

<sup>96</sup> C G Jung (1902), « Zur Psychologie und Pathologie sogenannter okkultes Phänomene », *Gesammelte Werke*, 1, et § 1-150., Fr. transl. by Ed Godet et Y Le Lay : « A propos de certains phénomènes dits « occultes ». Etude de psychologie et de pathologie. », *Phénomènes occultes suivi de Ame et mort, Croyance aux Esprits*, Aubier, Paris, 1939, pp.1-94. See also: « Psychologie et pathologie des phénomènes dits occultes », *L'Energétique psychique*, Genève, Georg, 1956, pp.118-218.

<sup>97</sup> T Flournoy, « C G Jung, Zur Psychologie und Pathologie sogenannter occulter Phänomene. -121p.Leipzig, Mutze, 1902. », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.II, 1903, pp.85-87, p.85.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, p.85.

<sup>99</sup> C G Jung, « *Ma vie* ». *Souvenirs, rêves et pensées*, op. cit., p.590.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p.591.

<sup>101</sup> For more on this see Cifali, "Le fameux couteau de Lichtenberg », op. cit..

<sup>102</sup> S Freud, C G Jung, *Correspondance 1906-1914*, op. cit.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, pp.112-113 (Lettre 31J)

<sup>104</sup> C G Jung, « Préface de la deuxième édition », *Métamorphoses de l'âme et ses symboles*, op. cit., p.41.

<sup>105</sup> T Flournoy, « Quelques faits d'imagination créatrice subconsciente. Par Miss Frank Miller de New-York. », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.V, 1905, pp.36-51. The original English text appeared with a preface by James H. Hyslop (1854-1920), the American philosopher who in 1906 founded the American Society of Psychic Research: J H Hyslop, « Some instances of subconscious creative imagination. By Miss Frank Miller », *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, vol.1, n°6, pp.287-308, pp.287-288.



would be the book of the rupture with Freud and which would receive the approbation<sup>106</sup> of Flournoy. Indeed, *Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido* de 1912 is a broad amplification of the case of Miss Miller<sup>107</sup> published by Flournoy, presenting the imaginations and dreams of this young American woman as a document which allows us to better understand "the obscure processes of intellectual creation".<sup>108</sup> Indeed, it is about a young, somewhat romantic and neurotic woman who herself describes in the text published by Flournoy, by means of a little sentimental poem, how all of a sudden she was surprised by the coherent imaginary productions arising from the unconscious mind which broke into the consciousness. Jung utilized Miss Miller's narrative as a golden thread to reunite and classify by motifs the different mythological, religious and philosophical images and ideas originating from world history. These amplify the narrative, that is to say they give it an objective value by reconnecting it with its most archaic roots. This method of amplification<sup>109</sup> led to criticism of Jung, and the reader who ventures into *Metamorphoses of the Soul and its Symbols* may find their head spinning as they discover the study of a little poem leading them through the dawn of Christianity, to Egyptian and Jewish religions, to Hindu thought, to authors such as Goethe, Nietzsche and so on. The comparative method thus employed provides a particular approach to the history of religions.<sup>110</sup> It is valid because it allows the author to show that the apparently anodyne writings of Miss Miller conceal unconscious and involuntary references to traditional, antique themes, as is also the case with dreams. This is what was already forming in Jung's head,<sup>111</sup> the notions of collective unconscious and of archetypes, these structures of symbolic thought which exist naturally even if culture comes to leave its mark. It is for this reason that, taking all these considerations into account, I have tried to reveal the importance of Flournoy's work, not just in terms of the beginnings of psychoanalysis in Switzerland, but above all in the development of Jung's research, because Flournoy was influential for Jung, and to show the extent to which his ideas contributed to the widening of the gap between Jung and Freud.

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<sup>106</sup> C G Jung, « Préface de la deuxième édition », *Métamorphoses de l'âme et ses symboles*, op. cit., p.41.

<sup>107</sup> See S Shamdasani, « A woman called Frank », *Spring*, vol.50, 1990, pp.26-56. See C G Jung, « *Ma vie* ». *Souvenirs, rêves et pensées*, op. cit., pp.261 et al. See also S Freud, C G Jung, *Correspondance 1906-1914*, op. cit., pp.431 (Letter 199 a F). See also T. Flournoy, « Dr C.G.Jung, wandlungen und symbole der Libido : Beiträge für entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens. 412p. Leipzig, Deutike 1912 », op. cit.

<sup>108</sup> T Flournoy, « Quelques faits d'imagination créatrice subconsciente. Par Miss Frank Miller de New-York. » op. cit., p.36.

<sup>109</sup> By this method, the analysis of a dream "is supported by either the associative matter of the dreamer, or the tradition available to him, or even, to broaden the perspective, by the conventions of his historical milieu, and finally also by the fundamental conceptions shared by all men": A Agnel, *Jung. La passion de l'Autre*, Les Essentiels de Milan, p.58.

<sup>110</sup> The paranormal and mysticism play an essential rôle in Jung's later work.

<sup>111</sup> See C G Jung, « La structure de l'inconscient. Par M. le Dr C G Jung Zurich », *Archives de Psychologie*, t.XVI, 1916-1917, pp.152-179.