

HERBERT ROSENFELD— THEN AND NOW

The Significance of His Work for
Contemporary Psychoanalysis

Edited by
Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts
Wolfgang Hegener

Preface to the German edition by Irma Brenman Pick
Preface to the English edition by John Steiner



First published in German by Psychosozial-Verlag in 2020 as *Herbert Rosenfeld und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse. Leben—Werk—Wirkung* edited by Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts, Wolfgang Hegener, and Johann Georg Reicheneder

First published in English in 2024 by
Karnac Books Limited
62 Bucknell Road
Bicester
Oxfordshire OX26 2DS

Copyright © 2024 to Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts and Wolfgang Hegener for the edited collection, and to the individual authors for their contributions.

The rights of the contributors to be identified as the authors of this work have been asserted in accordance with §§ 77 and 78 of the Copyright Design and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A C.I.P. for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80013-193-4 (paperback)

ISBN: 978-1-80013-194-1 (e-book)

ISBN: 978-1-80013-195-8 (PDF)

Typeset by vPrompt eServices Pvt Ltd, India



www.firingthemind.com

Dedicated to Herbert Rosenfeld and his contribution to psychoanalysis

Contents

Permissions	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
About the editors and contributors	xv
Preface to the German edition <i>Irma Brenman Pick</i>	xix
Preface to the English edition <i>John Steiner</i>	xxi
Introduction	xxv

Part I

Historical perspectives: biographical, conceptual–historical, and clinical–theoretical roots

1. On the biography of Herbert Rosenfeld <i>Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts</i>	3
2. My father Herbert Rosenfeld: a personal view on his life <i>Angela Rosenfeld</i>	53
3. Herbert Rosenfeld and the distinction between “defensive” and “destructive” narcissism <i>Ronald Britton</i>	71
4. Melanie Klein’s “inner Hitler” and Herbert Rosenfeld’s “Mafia”: on figures of thought [Denk-Figuren] in transference and countertransference <i>Claudia Frank</i>	81

Part II

Supervision with Herbert Rosenfeld in Europe: Italy, Germany, and France

5. Herbert Rosenfeld's contributions to psychoanalysis in light of his supervisions in Italy 97
Riccardo Steiner
6. Herbert Rosenfeld's significance for German psychoanalysts 105
Klaus Wilde
7. Supervision with Herbert Rosenfeld: reminiscences and afterthoughts 115
Angela Goyena

Part III

On the clinical significance of Herbert Rosenfeld: implications and further developments

8. Herbert Rosenfeld and the therapy of psychoses: a complex course 121
Franco De Masi
9. Adhesive transference—"The almost physical type of connection with the patient": Herbert Rosenfeld's pioneering understanding of primitive mental organisations and their transformations 129
Hans-Jürgen Eilts
10. A tale of scorpions and frogs: clinical considerations and the social dynamics of destructive narcissism 147
Carolin Haas and Nils F. Töpfer

Part IV

Sociopolitical applications of Herbert Rosenfeld's concept of destructive narcissism

11. Applying my theory of psychosis to the Nazi phenomenon 159
Herbert Rosenfeld
12. Herbert Rosenfeld's transposition of the individual into the collective: critical spurs to further thinking 163
Interview with Hermann Beland

13. How Herbert Rosenfeld can help us to understand Nazi perpetrators: the example of Adolf Eichmann <i>Wolfgang Hegener</i>	173
14. Destructive narcissism and the susceptibility to “perverted containing” using the example of destructive populism: further psychoanalytical considerations <i>Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts</i>	195
Bibliography	207
Appendix	211
Index	237

Permissions

The following have been reprinted with permission and were originally published in: Zienert-Eilts, Karin Johanna, Hegener, Wolfgang, & Reicheneder, Johann Georg (Eds.): Herbert Rosenfeld und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse. *Psychosozial-Verlag*, 2020. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

The cover figure, all figures in Chapter 2, and the Appendix figures on pages 211, 212, 215–221, 222, 223–229, 230, 232, 233 and 235–236. Copyright © Angela Rosenfeld.

Chapter 11: Applying my theory of psychosis to the Nazi phenomenon by Herbert Rosenfeld. Copyright © Herbert Rosenfeld. Reproduced with the kind permission of the translators, Dr Stefanie Sedlacek and Vic Sedlak.

Appendix: Herbert's grandmother Mathilde Rosenfeld, née Sternheim (p. 213) and Herbert Rosenfeld's mother Lilli with his brother-in-law Kurd E. Heyne in Elmau (p. 214). Copyright © Andreas K. Heyne.

Appendix: Herbert Rosenfeld and me in front of Schloss Elmau (p. 231). Copyright © Bettina Mühlinghaus-Kahleyss.

Acknowledgements

First, our thanks go to our publisher Kate Pearce, who has taken on the task of publishing this book about Herbert Rosenfeld, and to Karnac Books.

Irma Brenman Pick, Angela Rosenfeld, Christine Glombitza, and Jennifer Langham have, through their mediation, established contact with Karnac Books, thereby opening up the possibility of this volume being published in an English translation—for which they too are warmly thanked.

We are very grateful to Angela Rosenfeld (Sheffield), who provided valuable information about her father in a long interview and tirelessly searched for and found important documents both in her private collection and in archives and made them available to us for publication.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Riccardo Steiner (London), Hermann Beland (Berlin), Irma Brenman Pick (London), Otto F. Kernberg (New York), and Ronald Britton (London) for their extensive interviews, which contributed valuable information to the state of knowledge of research on Herbert Rosenfeld.

We would like to thank all the authors who have enriched this volume either with their works translated from German or with original contributions.

Thanks to the late Paul Schatzberger (Sheffield), who always supported us with his technical expertise with great kindness and patience in all questions.

We are grateful to Gregorio Kohon (London), who contributed in a detailed email correspondence with valuable information on the question of the whereabouts of Herbert Rosenfeld's library.

We would also like to thank all contemporary witnesses who willingly provided their memories, assessments, and biographical details in a variety of emails, personal conversations, and telephone calls.

Special thanks go to Andreas K. Heyne (Ettingen-Basel/Vienna), who answered all questions openly and with great interest and contributed to further important insights.

We are grateful to Victor Sedlak (Leeds) for the numerous and varied ways he helped so willingly with the research on Herbert Rosenfeld.

We would also like to express our special gratitude to our publisher Hans-Jürgen Wirth and Christian Flierl of Psychosozial-Verlag, who published the original German edition, for their extraordinary generosity in granting to Karnac Books not only the English language publication rights of this book but also extending their generosity to grant permission to use all the photographs from the original German edition.

Our thanks also go to the translator Julie Hall, who has carefully, attentively, and thoroughly reviewed and corrected most of the contributions in this volume.

Last but not least, we thank our families, who have accompanied the progress of this book with patience and interest.

About the editors and contributors

Hermann Beland is a psychoanalyst in private practice, a training and supervising analyst of the DPV/IPA at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute—Karl Abraham Institute, and holds leading positions in the German and International Psychoanalytical Association. He has a particular interest in the psychoanalytic interpretation of ancient, classical, and modern poetry and has published numerous publications on the theory of psychoanalysis, especially on personality structure, dreams, and psychosomatics. He works on the treatment of narcissistic and psychotic disorders, on collective prejudices, on anti-Semitism, on projection in outbreaks of war and violence, and on mourning in collective traumas. He is the co-organiser of international group conferences for national and international groups in conflict and a member of Partners in Confronting Collective Atrocities (PCCA).

Ronald Britton, born 1932, has continued to teach, supervise, and write since retirement in 2022. He first trained as a doctor, and, as a child psychiatrist, was chair of the Department of Children and Parents at the Tavistock Clinic. He is a Distinguished Fellow of the British Psychoanalytical Society and Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He was president of the British Society and a vice president of the International Psychoanalytical Association. He was given the IPA Award for distinguished scientific work and the Sigmund Award for distinguished work in psychoanalysis in 2013. Additionally, he brings his own wide interests, including philosophy, theology, science, and particularly his passion for English literature and poetry, which he uses as a basis for psychological understanding. His latest publications are *Psychoanalytic Approaches to Forgiveness and Mental Health* (co-edited with Aleksandra Novakovic) and the second edition of *Sex, Death and the Superego* (Routledge, 2021).

Franco De Masi is an analyst of the Italian Psychoanalytical Society, former president of the Centro Milanese di Psicoanalisi and secretary of the Training Institute of Milan. His main

interests have been focused on the theoretical and technical psychoanalytical issues related to severely ill or psychotic patients. Besides a large number of publications, he edited *Herbert Rosenfeld at Work: The Italian Seminars* (Karnac, 2001).

Hans-Jürgen Eilts, Dr med, is a specialist in internal medicine and psychosomatic medicine, and a psychoanalyst. From 1998 to 2004 he was the head of the Psychosomatic Department at Wenckebach Hospital in Berlin. His publications are on psychoanalytical and ornithological issues.

Claudia Frank, Priv-Doz Dr med, is a psychoanalyst in private practice in Stuttgart, Germany, and a training analyst of the DPV/IPA. From 1988 to 2001 she was at the Department for Psychoanalysis, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, University of Tübingen. She is a guest member of the British Psychoanalytical Society and former chair of the Central Training Committee of the DPV (2016–2018). She has published various papers on her research on the history, technique, and theory of Kleinian analysis, as well as papers in applied psychoanalysis. She was co-editor of *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse* from 2002 to 2013. Together with Heinz Weiß, she is the editor of various books on Kleinian psychoanalysis in German, most recently volumes 1 and 2 of Roger Money-Kyrle's *Ausgewählte Schriften* (Brandes & Apsel, 2022), the German edition of the *Collected Papers of Roger Money-Kyrle*.

Angela Goyena is a *membre adhérent honoraire* of the Paris Psychoanalytical Society (SPP) and an associate member of the International Psychoanalytical Association. She began her psychoanalytic training at the SPP in the 1980s, qualifying in 1992, and she worked in private practice with adults and adolescents until moving to England with her husband in 2012. In her professional development, she was particularly influenced by the work of Herbert Rosenfeld and Wilfred Bion. She co-chaired a *Groupe d'études sur les idées psychanalytiques de Bion* at the SPP for nine years with Dr Florence Leclerc. Together with her husband Dr José Luis Goyena, she wrote the preface to the French edition of *The Tavistock Seminars* by W. R. Bion.

Carolin Haas, MEd, is a Germanist and licensed psychoanalyst. She completed her psychoanalytic training at the Psychoanalytic Institute of Berlin. Currently, she treats patients in a psychoanalytic practice in Berlin.

Wolfgang Hegener, Priv-Doz Dr phil, is a psychoanalyst in private practice in Berlin, a training analyst (DPG, IPV, DGPT), and a university lecturer in cultural studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin. His main areas of interest are the Jewish roots of psychoanalysis, the psychoanalysis of anti-Semitism, and the relationship between psychoanalysis and philosophy. He has published a number of books and journal articles, and is co-editor of *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse*. His most recent book is *Im Anfang war die Schrift. Sigmund Freud und die Jüdische Bibel* (2023).

Angela Rosenfeld, LGSMT, CQSW, MInstGA, worked initially as a music therapist in a therapeutic community and with children with learning difficulties including autism. She later trained as a group analytic psychotherapist leading therapeutic groups in the National Health

Service in Sheffield, England, and in independent psychotherapy practice. She is a founder member of a specialist service working with women who were sexually abused in childhood. She was a training group analyst and faculty member of a qualifying course for the Institute of Group Analysis, London, where she supervised and trained others in group analysis. She is a former chair of the Board of Admissions and a member of the Ethics Committee at the Institute of Group Analysis. She has now retired but offers occasional supervision to organisational development professionals.

Riccardo Steiner is a psychoanalyst in private practice in London, and a member and distinguished fellow of the British Psychoanalytical Society. He teaches at various universities in the UK and abroad. He has published widely on clinical theory, sociopolitical issues, and on the history of psychoanalysis. He has received several international prizes for his services to psychoanalysis: the American Association Prize (1994), the Paris Psychoanalytic Society Prize *Livre de l'Année* (1995), the Sigourney Award (2000), and the book of the year of the European Psychoanalytical Federation (EPF) (2003).

Nils F. Töpfer, PhD, is a licensed psychotherapist and psychoanalyst. He completed his psychoanalytic training at the Psychoanalytic Institute of Berlin. He works as a research assistant in the Department of Counselling and Clinical Intervention at the Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena. He is author of a number of journal articles.

Klaus Wilde, Dr med, is a psychoanalyst in private practice in Stuttgart and a training analyst of the DPV/IPA.

Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts, Dr phil, Dipl-Psych, is a psychoanalyst (DPG/IPV) in private practice in Berlin and a lecturer at the Psychoanalytisches Institut Berlin. She works on the topics of psychoanalytic theory development, history of psychoanalysis, processes in groups as well as sociopolitical topics and has published books and many journal articles on her research.

Preface to the German edition

*Irma Brenman Pick*¹

I am honoured to have been invited to contribute a few reflections, and to be able to acknowledge the significance of this timely and welcome new work. The life and work of Herbert Rosenfeld certainly deserve to be widely known. I hope this rich and interesting book will extend his readership still further, and that it may even one day be translated into English.

Herbert Rosenfeld was an important person in my professional development. Later he was also a friend. I met him in 1961, at that time in his role as supervisor to my first husband Abe Pick. This first meeting with him came at a shocking and sad moment for us, as Abe, still in his mid-thirties, was suddenly dying of cancer. Herbert showed great compassion to us both, and spoke most movingly at Abe's funeral. Later, Herbert was to supervise me on my first adult training case.

I had already completed the child psychotherapy training when my supervisions with Rosenfeld began. The emphasis of much of the Kleinian teaching at that time—the late 1950s and early 1960s—was placed strongly upon the child's phantasies, building on the crucial work that Melanie Klein had pioneered, and her first circle of followers had elaborated. I experienced Rosenfeld's approach as a little different. Although steeped in and committed to Kleinian thought, he seemed to retain his own perspective; I thought he saw more of a whole person; in other words, seeking to link whatever one could intuit, in the material about unconscious phantasy, to many other elements of the patient's history, character, and self-presentation. He also thought about the person of the analyst. I recall vividly my first supervision meeting with him. In the initial Friday session with my patient, the material suggested that he, the patient, imagined that I would be with my husband at the weekend. Rosenfeld said very gently to me—you will need to

¹ We are very sad following Irma's death in August this year 2023—also because she can no longer hold in her "two hands" this book about her esteemed supervisor and friend, Herbert Rosenfeld.

take this up. He was clearly thinking of the painful implications for me of such an assumption. As it happens I had in fact spoken about this. But the tenor of his comment enabled further thinking for me about how I was personally affected; it was my first experience of a supervisor acknowledging that I (as the analyst) might well feel affected by the material (that it might, say, be especially painful to me at this time given that my husband was no longer there).

I felt his brief comment, simple though it may now sound, was important, in that Rosenfeld acknowledged that what came from the patient might touch the analyst in different ways, and raise difficulties personally, to which the patient may also be alert. For the supervisor to recognise that the analyst's own feelings, or particular vulnerabilities, at a given time, was important. It resonated with developments that were taking place in the 1950s, controversially, not least in relation to Paula Heimann's landmark paper on countertransference at the start of that decade. Odd though it may now sound, for a supervisor to take that up was an entirely new experience for me. It seemed to give permission for me to think about how the work with patients might touch on the analyst's feelings too. And further, how that awareness might in turn be put to work in thinking about the session.

With Rosenfeld, one often felt in the presence of a person who was engaged in understanding the patient, and the patient–analyst (or analytic trainee) relationship in a way that was not judgemental towards either. He was a gifted supervisor, and a most intuitive analyst. Later I saw more of him, and the Rosenfeld family socially; my second husband, Eric Brenman, was a friend of his, and had also helped him when he (Herbert) was himself going through an emotionally difficult time. My son reminds me that Eric told him that when Eric and Herbert went on walks together Herbert would love to discuss clinical material; he had a great appetite for psychoanalysis and could get utterly immersed in exploring a case with a colleague, in thinking about the session.

They also often played tennis together at the weekend. I recall, some years before Eric and I got together, being phoned on a Sunday morning, with an appeal that I join them, and another colleague, Bernie Brandschaft, for a game of tennis, as their fourth player had not shown up. I obliged, without giving it much thought, only to realise that they were quite serious about the game; to my embarrassment—I could not reliably get the ball over the net! I was not up to the task!

I also remember Herbert and his wife Lottie as most elegant ballroom dancers. They both loved their summer holidays in Germany and, I have no doubt at all, would have been delighted to know that this book will now be available in German.

Rosenfeld's ideas frequently come to my mind when I supervise now, not least his famous metaphor of a kind of internal psychic "Mafia". This was one of his ways of conceptualising the power of what came to be much theorised since—pathological organisations of defences, not just single defences. He was highly alert to the way malign or creative forces can take hold; in this case he drew on the notion of an internal "gang" that threatens, co-opts, and takes possession, gaining a lethal purchase inside the mind. I think often too of his indispensable work on psychotic and non-psychotic parts of the personality, and also his important work on destructive narcissism.

And I welcome the fact that, thanks to this book, more of these ideas will now reach a readership in Germany, and in the language that was, of course, also his own native tongue.

Preface to the English edition

John Steiner

Rosenfeld remembered

Herbert Rosenfeld had an enormous influence on my generation of psychoanalysts and perhaps through the work of Wilfred R. Bion, Hanna Segal, Henri Rey, Michael Feldman, and Ron Britton remains influential even though he is not so often quoted these days. His ideas were fundamental to my own concept of psychic retreats and pathological organisations and his teaching especially on technique have significantly made contemporary analysts more receptive to the patient's experience. Some of our concerns about a lack of balance in his late work should not detract from his contribution when he was at his best. Indeed, I would say that at the time I went to him for supervision his work was the finest of any analyst I have known. It was particularly his ability to put himself into the mind of his patient, to use his imagination to formulate an interpretation and then to listen with great care to the patient's response that I found so impressive.

In April 2000 I chaired a conference dedicated to his work and the papers from that day were later published (Steiner, 2008). I think the hope that this book might restore his influence was not fully realised and I welcome the present work with great pleasure in the hope that an interest in him will be fostered.

Many of us remember him as a towering figure, engaging in discussions in scientific meetings and impressing us with his clinical flair in seminars and supervisions. It was in fact when he failed to come upstairs for a clinical seminar that the students found him slumped over his desk following a stroke from which he died shortly after, in 1986.

Rosenfeld was a tall friendly man with a warm smile but always with a serious purpose even though expressed with a twinkle in his eye. He was renowned for his long sentences and for the way he repeated things over and over again, which sometimes made for hard but still worthwhile listening. I remember one occasion in supervision when I complained that he had repeated

something to me four times that I had already understood the first time. He patiently repeated it again and it was only then that I realised that I had not quite understood it. His propensity to talk a lot led to a joke in which a candidate phoned to say that he would be late for his supervision and added: "Don't start until I get there!"

He was a recognised authority on the treatment of psychotic states using psychoanalysis, and with Bion (1956, 1957, 1959) and Segal (1950, 1956) he created an atmosphere of initiative and experimentation in which a new understanding of psychosis could develop without requiring a change in the setting or in the analytic attitude towards patients. I always likened these pioneers to the enthusiasm of settlers moving with their covered wagons into California, and some of us who analysed psychotic patients found that the task was much more difficult and more stressful than we were led to believe.

I continued to attend Rosenfeld's seminar and had supervision for many years, and developed a personal fondness and admiration for him. He helped me survive the analysis of two very psychotic patients and encouraged me to continue when I was close to despair. I remember one session in which the patient had what seemed to me to be a hypnotic power which would send me into a reverie and then a deep sleep. The patient brought a dream in which he was lying in a meadow when he was attacked by a swarm of bees. Rosenfeld pointed out the fragmentation that was represented by the swarm but added that perhaps the Bzzz-Bzzz was what put me to sleep. Whether correct or not his remarks were so vivid that they helped me to listen anew to the material. He brought the supervisions to life with his humour, often in the gestures that accompanied his words. I remember some material that was sickly sweet in its sentimentality, to which he said "Pfew" and putting his fingers to his mouth made a gesture of disgust. On another occasion I remember he explained that I had not understood an erotic transference. I had interpreted the patient's sexual impulses but had not realised that the deeper phantasy was that I was in love with the patient rather than the patient with me.

I was especially impressed that he was able to explore a patient's view of the analyst and this helped me to formulate what I called analyst-centred interpretations (Steiner, 1994). In a famous example (Rosenfeld, 1949), he described a dream in which a famous surgeon was operating on his patient with great skill. The patient admired the intense concentration on his work when suddenly the surgeon lost his balance and fell right into the inside of the patient, with whom he got entangled. The patient's fear of being taken over by the analyst was in part a projection of his own intrusiveness but it also reflected a correct perception of Rosenfeld's intense interest in his work.

In the final years of his life Rosenfeld became convinced that many patients had been traumatised in childhood and that they were in danger of being retraumatised in their analysis unless the analyst took special care to avoid this. In particular he believed that envy should not be too frequently interpreted and that the patient's idealisation of his analyst should not be prematurely interfered with by interpretation. In his last book, Rosenfeld (1987) concentrated his interest on the errors which analysts can make which he believed led traumatised patients to feel retraumatised. In his concern to protect the patient from bad analysis he does seem to

have emphasised one type of danger without balancing it sufficiently by stressing the danger of encouraging idealisation which often goes with a reluctance on the analyst's part to allow himself to be experienced as a bad object.

A recent publication of Klein's lectures on technique (Klein, 2017) has allowed us to recognise how important a balance was to her approach. Her elaboration of what she calls the psychoanalytic attitude calls for an even attention to both the positive and negative transference. I hope that the translation of this book into English can help us to re-evaluate Rosenfeld's contribution and find an approach that is equally balanced.

References

- Bion, W. R. (1956). Development of schizophrenic thought. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 37: 344–346.
- Bion, W. R. (1957). Differentiation of the psychotic from the non-psychotic personalities. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 38: 266–275.
- Bion, W. R. (1959). Attacks on linking. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 40: 308–315.
- Klein, M. (2017). *Lectures on Technique by Melanie Klein*. Edited with Critical Review by John Steiner. London: Routledge.
- Rosenfeld, H. A. (1949). Remarks on the relation of male homosexuality to paranoia, paranoid anxiety and narcissism. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 30: 36–47.
- Rosenfeld, H. A. (1987). *Impasse and Interpretation: Therapeutic and Anti-therapeutic Factors in the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Psychotic, Borderline and Neurotic Patients*. London: Routledge.
- Segal, H. (1950). Some aspects of the analysis of a schizophrenic. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 31: 132–137.
- Segal, H. (1956). Depression in the schizophrenic. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 37: 339–343.
- Steiner, J. (1994). Patient-centered and analyst-centered interpretations: Some implications of containment and countertransference. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 14: 406–422.
- Steiner, J. (Ed.) (2008). *Rosenfeld in Retrospect: Some Essays on His Clinical Influence*. London: Routledge.

Introduction

Herbert Alexander Rosenfeld is one of the most important psychoanalysts of our time and a pioneer of psychoanalytic treatments for psychotic patients. Born on 2 July 1910 in Nuremberg, raised in a well-off, upper middle class Jewish family, expelled from Nazi Germany immediately after his medical state examination in 1935, he began working with psychotically ill patients in London. After his experiences in his training analysis with Melanie Klein, who made a deep impression on him, a completely new world opened up for him in understanding early psychological processes and the unconscious phantasies that determine them.¹ He then developed a *psychoanalytic* approach to the treatment of psychotic patients—a milestone in Rosenfeld’s work and in the history of psychoanalysis in general.

Rosenfeld’s understanding of destructive narcissism is one of the most impressive and theoretically and clinically helpful concepts for the treatment of psychotic, narcissistic, and borderline patients. A central starting point for Rosenfeld was that he never lost sight of the mostly hidden libidinous, life-sustaining forces in the individual. Of equally far-reaching importance is his discovery of the “Mafia gang”, which regularly appears in cases of severe destructive narcissistic pathologies as an inner image for their structural core. This destructive inner-psychoic organisation is characterised by an idealisation of cruelty and omnipotence and is directed primarily against any dependence on libidinous objects, seducing and overpowering healthy parts of the personality. In a significant lecture at a conference of the German Psychoanalytical Association (DPV) in 1984, which was extremely controversial at the time and long unrecognised, Rosenfeld showed that at the level of society as a whole, an analogous structure had been effective in a more

¹ Editor’s note: in Kleinian literature, a distinction is made between unconscious *phantasies* and conscious or preconscious fantasies. Here and in all the contributions to this volume, the spelling phantasy is used throughout.

extreme totalitarian system such as that of National Socialism and had put an entire population into a delusional state.

It is perhaps no coincidence that Rosenfeld's work and his supervisions are particularly appreciated by a large number of psychoanalysts in Italy (supervisions from 1978 onwards) and in Germany (supervisions from 1981 onwards)—both countries marked in their history by fascism and National Socialism respectively.

Rosenfeld was honoured on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday in 2000 in London with a *Memorial Meeting* and in 2014 for the first time in Germany with a commemorative conference of the German Psychoanalytical Society (DPG) in Nuremberg (see <https://dpg-psa.de/rosenfeld.html>), Rosenfeld's birthplace. In 2018 in Berlin the symposium "Herbert Rosenfeld. Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Clinic and Culture" was held, initiated and organised by the editors of the German edition of this volume (Zienert-Eilts, Hegener, & Reicheneder, 2020).

The contributions of all three of Herbert Rosenfeld's tributes have been published: in 2008, the volume edited by John Steiner *Rosenfeld in Retrospect. Essays on His Clinical Influence*, which contains the texts of the lectures given at the tribute in London; in 2014, an overview of the Nuremberg conference organised by Marco Conci and Harald Kamm was made available online (Conci & Kamm, 2014); in 2015, the conference papers were published in the journal *Luzifer-Amor*, and the German version of this book, published in 2020, contains the papers of the Berlin conference, enriched by contributions from other authors dealing with Rosenfeld's clinical and theoretical work.

In her foreword to the German edition of the book, Irma Brenman Pick, who was in supervision with Herbert Rosenfeld and later became friends with him, describes the importance he had for her personally and also for her professional development. John Steiner, in his foreword for this English edition, also describes his personal memories of Herbert Rosenfeld and his importance for his professional development.

The first part of the present volume comprises several contributions that illuminate Herbert Rosenfeld's personal life as well as his conceptual–historical and clinical–theoretical roots from different perspectives.

Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts gives a detailed overview of Herbert Rosenfeld's biography and provides a picture of his life story as well as his importance as a theoretician, clinician, and supervisor. In doing so, the author also includes the controversy that arose in Rosenfeld's later years from his differentiation of his treatment technique. Based on the statements of many contemporary witnesses and hitherto unknown documents, new light is shed in particular on Rosenfeld's relationship to Germany and the significance that the forced emigration from Nazi Germany and the loss of his homeland had for him.

Angela Rosenfeld, Herbert Rosenfeld's daughter, unfolds a vivid picture of her father's history: from his origins in Nuremberg, to his forced emigration to England, to his settlement and establishment as a psychoanalyst in London. This portrait gains its special charm from the daughter's perspective, through which we can get to know Herbert Rosenfeld in

a very personal way. A large number of photographs from the family estate illustrate this perspective.

In his contribution, Ronald Britton discusses the question of whether libidinous narcissism can be distinguished from destructive narcissism. Unlike Hanna Segal, he still considers this distinction to be meaningful following Herbert Rosenfeld and discusses these concepts on the basis of two case histories.

In her chapter, Claudia Frank understands both Melanie Klein's "inner Hitler" and Rosenfeld's "Mafia gang" as iconic figures of thought that are effective in Kleinian thinking and enable us to better understand the constellations of specific inner worlds and states of mind that take shape in transference and countertransference. Such figures of thought emerge from intensive analytical experiences (and Frank describes one such experience); they thus relate to the specificity of the respective case and yet at the same time also develop their significance for understanding supra-individual phenomena.

In the second part, the authors give a lively insight into Rosenfeld's work as a supervisor in Europe. Riccardo Steiner, who has close professional and personal ties with Herbert Rosenfeld, describes him impressively and vividly in a multitude of observations and assessments, both as a psychoanalyst and supervisor in Italy and as a person. In addition, the author describes Rosenfeld's discoveries and concepts and their implementation in his supervisions in an easily comprehensible way. He emphasises Rosenfeld's special clinical ability to find understanding for and access to severely disturbed patients, so that analytic treatments in crisis could develop further. In his clinical work, Rosenfeld placed particular emphasis on the attentive and critical viewing of the supervisee's interventions and the emphasised role of the use of his countertransference.

Klaus Wilde, who was a participant in Rosenfeld's Heidelberg supervision group, reports on his experience with Herbert Rosenfeld as a supervisor in (West) Germany in the 1980s. For German psychoanalysts, who at that time had not yet sufficiently absorbed the more recent international developments and had little treatment experience with severely disturbed patients, Rosenfeld's theories on destructive narcissism and on central psychotic mechanisms offered for the first time the possibility to orientate themselves in the complex and challenging dynamics of such pathologies and to treat them successfully.

Angela Goyena, a participant in Herbert Rosenfeld's French supervision group, describes him as a particularly adept and warm-hearted clinician who, in supervision, was able to make the treating psychoanalysts aware of the misunderstood parts of the patient and thus contribute to the removal of blockages in the treatments. In personal encounters, Angela Goyena experienced Rosenfeld as very friendly and devoted to the joys of life.

The third part addresses and illustrates the clinical significance of Herbert Rosenfeld's theories, their concrete implications, and their continuing relevance. Franco De Masi, who documented Rosenfeld's work as a supervisor in Italy (De Masi, 2001), traces in his work the development of Rosenfeld's views on the subject of psychosis and its psychoanalytic therapy. At the beginning of his work with psychotic patients, Rosenfeld, like other authors influenced by

the work of Melanie Klein, tried to show that psychotic illnesses could be cured by using a strict psychoanalytic method, that is, without accompanying supportive measures. In the course of time, however, this approach proved to be too limited, and in his later work Rosenfeld described in an original way and on the basis of his psychoanalytic understanding the special features of the analytical treatment of psychotic patients.

Hans-Jürgen Eilts traces step by step the account of a psychoanalytic treatment supervised by Rosenfeld in the early 1980s of an early traumatised patient with psychotic, adhesive transference. Rosenfeld's special ability to empathise with the (transference) messages still *preceding* the developmentally primitive projective identifications becomes clear. Rosenfeld's therapeutic interventions are fundamentally geared towards promoting the development of the patient's bodily-mental, subjective self-experience, and this is not done primarily by illuminating the current transference-countertransference process, but by focusing concisely on the patient's *body-mind relationship* to himself and to his analyst, which is dependent on the process and oscillates between integration and dissociation. The book also describes references to contemporary as well as concurring views of current authors who theoretically conceptualise Rosenfeld's clinical model.

Carolyn Haas and Nils Töpfer both take as their starting point the fable *The Scorpion and the Frog*, in which a scorpion plays a cruel and deadly game with a frog, and understand this story as an apt illustration of destructive narcissism in Rosenfeld's sense. While Töpfer explores its implications for cultural studies (he demonstrates its effectiveness in National Socialist Germany as well as in the difficult and ongoing confrontation with persistent Nazi introspection in post-war society), Haas is dedicated to the retrospective understanding of the dynamics of a treatment in which a severe narcissistic-destructive pathology led to a termination of therapy.

The fourth part is devoted to the sociopolitical application of the concept of destructive narcissism. Herbert Rosenfeld's text "Narcissism and Aggression", which he delivered at the autumn conference of the German Psychoanalytical Association in Wiesbaden in 1984, has not been translated into English until now. The first part contains a brief summary of his concept of destructive narcissism and is already known. Due to the importance of the second part of the text² for the discussion of National Socialism, we present it here in an English translation under the title "Applying my Theory of Psychosis to the Nazi Phenomenon".

In the interview the editors conducted with him, Hermann Beland reflects on the possibility of transferring insights psychoanalytically gained in individual pathologies to the collective, following Rosenfeld's reflections on the narcissistic-destructive structure of the Führer state in National Socialism. On the one hand, Beland emphasises Rosenfeld's pioneering work, but on the other hand he critically notes that the model of the Mafia gang with a leader is only a possible model, which in this respect has no paradigmatic value. He considers it an urgent desideratum of research to arrive at further differentiations here.

² This part was first published in an English translation in the German edition of this book on Herbert Rosenfeld (Zienert-Eilts et al., 2020). In 2022 it then appeared in *The Omnipotent State of Mind. Psychoanalytic Perspectives* (Arundale, 2022, pp. 217–219).

In his contribution, Wolfgang Hegener shows how Rosenfeld's reflections on destructive narcissism and its application to Nazi Germany can help us to better understand National Socialist perpetrators. He examines in detail the development of Adolf Eichmann during the Nazi era and in exile and, based on this, makes it plausible that the common assumption that National Socialist perpetrators were "completely normal men" is untenable and merely serves to ward off the horror.

Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts develops a new, psychoanalytical perspective on the sociopolitically pressing and frightening phenomenon of populism in its destructive form. She combines Sigmund Freud's reflections in "Mass Psychology and Ego Analysis", Melanie Klein's concept of the paranoid-schizoid position, Herbert Rosenfeld's insights into destructive narcissism and its Mafia gang as well as Wilfred Bion's concept of containing, and derives from this the understanding of "destructive populism" as a "perverted container". On this basis, she drafts theses on two questions using the example of Donald Trump: what is it about a destructive populist that affects his followers and certain groups/populations, and what does he appeal to and what does he trigger? And second: how do individuals become susceptible to perverted containing and conspiracy narratives that lead to unconditional adherence to a destructive populist and become encapsulated and entrenched in a group or mass?

Herbert Rosenfeld's bibliography compiles his most important writings—with the exception of the reviews he wrote.

Finally, the appendix contains more photographs, some of Rosenfeld's notes, three previously unpublished letters, and other documents that are of historical importance and allow a deeper insight into Rosenfeld's personality.

We are very pleased that, following the past decades when literature by and about Herbert Rosenfeld had been published mainly in the United Kingdom and had come from there to Germany, a book originally published in German has now found its way back to the UK. Both versions of the book are dedicated to Herbert Rosenfeld's life's work, his humanity, and his innovative courage.

Berlin, December 2022

Karin Johanna Zienert-Eilts & Wolfgang Hegener

References

- Arundale, J. (Ed.) (2022). *The Omnipotent State of Mind: Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- De Masi, F. (Ed.). (2001). *Herbert Rosenfeld at Work: The Italian Seminars*. London: Karnac.
- DPG-Psa. Rückblick auf die Tagung zum Gedenken an Herbert Rosenfeld, Nürnberg 1910—London 1986. <https://dpg-psa.de/rosenfeld.html> (last accessed 2 December, 2019).
- Luzifer-Amor. Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Psychoanalyse*. Herbert Rosenfeld. Issue 56 (Vol. 28, 2015). Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Brandes & Apsel.
- Steiner, J. (Ed.) (2008). *Rosenfeld in Retrospect. Essays on His Clinical Influence*. London: Routledge.
- Zienert-Eilts, K. J., Hegener, W., & Reicheneder, J. G. (Eds.) (2020). *Herbert Rosenfeld und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse. Leben—Werk—Wirkung*. Gießen, Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag.