

# **The Devil Underneath the Couch**

**The Secret Story of Jung's Twin Brother**

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“I have only mixed with anarchists and declare myself to be an anarchist,” Otto Gross said in 1913. “I am a psychoanalyst and from my experience I have gained the insight that the existing order . . . is a bad one. . . . [A]nd since I want everything changed, I am an anarchist” (Berze/Stelzer 1999/2000, p. 24)”. He was the first psychoanalyst to link analysis with radical politics and wrote: “The psychology of the unconscious is the philosophy of the revolution” (Gross 1913c, col. 385). So, when Coline Covington recently wrote, “Analysis is essentially a tool for revolution (Covington 2001, p.331)”, she was just echoing something that Gross said nearly 90 years before. He was not just a psycho-*analyst* - he was a psycho-*anarchist* and thus stands for the subversive potential of analysis - which earned him the epithet of the “devil underneath the couch” (Raulff 1993).

Although Gross played a pivotal role in the birth of what today we are calling modernity, with wide-ranging influences in psychoanalysis, psychiatry, philosophy, radical politics, sociology, literature, and ethics, he has remained virtually unknown to this day. Already in 1921, less than a year after Gross’ death, the Austrian writer Anton Kuh wrote of him as, ‘a man known only to very few by name - apart from a handful of psychiatrists and secret policemen - and among those few only to those who plucked his feathers to adorn their own posteriors’ (Kuh 1921, pp. 16 - 17). Today, still, most analysts have never heard of Otto Gross, or their knowledge is confined to, ‘Isn’t that the one who became schizophrenic?’ To a large extent this is the result of an analytic historiography which Erich Fromm has rightly called “Stalinistic” (Fromm 1957, p. 133): dissidents become non-persons and vanish from the records. This practice of purging history makes the story of Otto Gross a secret one: it was hoped that we would never know.

Yet Adam Philips recently said,

There is no future for psychoanalysis if it doesn’t want to look in other places for regeneration, and particularly if it doesn’t look to the places it wants to exclude. By its own logic, that’s where the life is, that’s where the action is (Philips 1997, p. 164).

Psychoanalysis was created as a tool to create a better future by turning from the present to the past. It is a “looking backwards to the future” (Handy 2002). What was repressed, powerfully returns, and thus the past gets continually created anew. History has exactly the same function on the collective level. The historian Edmund Jacobitti calls it “composing useful pasts - history as contemporary politics” (Jacobitti 2000). Mindful of this, let me take you “where the action is” - to look at the repressed aspect of analytic history that is Otto Gross.

Of course, his story was not always a secret one. There was a time, in the first decade of the last century, when the greatest minds in psychoanalysis were full of the highest praise for Otto Gross. In 1908 Freud wrote to Jung, “You are really the only one capable of making an original contribution; except perhaps O. Gross” (Freud/Jung 1974, p. 126). A few months later, after Gross had been in an analysis with Jung that at times became what we would today call a mutual analysis, Jung replied to Freud, “In Gross I discovered many aspects of my own nature, so that he often seemed like

my twin brother” (ibid., p. 156). Thomas Kirsch (Kirsch 2000) in his recent study of “The Jungians” does not mention Gross, although, in view of these feelings expressed by Jung, Gross might well be called the first Jungian. The writer Emil Szittyá (1886 - 1964) even went as far as calling Gross “a friend of Dr. Freud and the intellectual father of Professor Jung” (Szittyá n.d., p. 211). As late as 1986 the eminent scholar of psychoanalysis Johannes Cremerius wrote about the C.G. Jung of 1909, ‘He is still completely and entirely the pupil of Otto Gross’ (Cremerius 1986, p. 20). So we might as well call Jung an early Grossian. In 1910 Ferenczi wrote to Freud about Gross, “There is no doubt that among those who have followed you up to now he is the most significant” (Freud/Ferenczi 1993, p. 154). Ernest Jones in his autobiography wrote: Gross “was my first instructor in the technique of psychoanalysis” (Jones, 1990, p. 173 - 174) and he called him “the nearest approach to the romantic ideal of a genius I have ever met” (ibid.).

In this contribution I want to show how Gross influenced the evolution of analytic theory and clinical practice to the present day, posing questions which we continue to struggle with. He was an “enthusiast for life-experiment” (Green, 1999, p. XX) who lived his radical ideas in both his personal and his professional life which he refused to separate. Thus he became unacceptable for those trying to establish the credibility of analysis as a science in the eyes of society and academe in the early years of the last century.

I have divided my paper into three parts: a *Biographical Survey* of Otto Gross’ life, his *Contributions to Analytic Theory and Clinical Practice* and *Recent and Future Developments of Gross Studies*.

# Biographical Survey

Otto Gross was born 17 March 1877 in Gniebing in Styria, Austria. His father Hans Gross (1847 – 1915) was a professor of criminology and one of the leading authorities worldwide in this field. His mother was Adele, née Raymann (1854 – 1942).

Educated mostly privately, Gross became a medical doctor in 1899 and in 1901 travelled as a naval doctor to South America at which time he became addicted to drugs. In 1901 - 02 he worked as a psychiatrist and physician, published his first papers and had his first treatment - possibly from Jung - for drug addiction at the Burghölzli Clinic, Zürich. Around the same time he came into contact with Freud.

In 1903 Gross married and was offered a chair in psychopathology at Graz university in 1906. Gross and his wife Frieda (née Schloffer, 1876 – 1950) moved to Munich and also lived in Ascona, Switzerland. In 1907 their son Peter († 1946) was born as well as a second son, also named Peter († 1915), from his relationship with a close friend of his wife, Else Jaffé, neé von Richthofen. In the same year Gross also had an passionate liaison with Else's sister, Frieda Weekley, who later married D.H. Lawrence. Gross spoke at the 1<sup>st</sup>. International Psychoanalytic Congress in Salzburg in 1908 and had further treatment at the Burghölzli where he was analysed by C.G. Jung - and, in turn, analysed Jung. Gross broke off the analysis and Jung - apparently in revenge - diagnosed him as schizophrenic. This was in contradiction to both Freud's and Jung's original diagnosis of an obsessional neurosis (Freud/Jung 1974, pp. 151 – 152). It also differs from Stekel's diagnosis, who analysed Gross in 1914 (Stekel 1925). Recently Emanuel Hurwitz, Gross' first biographer, who for years held Jung's post at the Burghölzli as psychiatric chief registrar, went through all the available case notes and reports not only by Jung and Stekel, but also those by the psychiatrists who assessed Gross in 1913 (Berze/Stelzer 1999/2000) and concluded that there is nothing in these documents that warrants the diagnosis of schizophrenia (Hurwitz 2002). His conclusion is

that Jung's treatment of Gross was not successful and, rather than admit defeat, Jung tried to blame Gross' illness, not his own treatment, for the failure. Instead of accepting the original diagnosis of a neurosis, with which Freud agreed, Jung said that Gross had an incurable mental illness<sup>1</sup>, which

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<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Gross' father Hans Gross, that has only recently been discovered by a psychiatrist currently working at the Burghölzli, apparently written by Jung and signed by Bleuler, dated 30 June 1908, just one week after Gross' flight from the clinic, Jung's diagnosis of Gross' as suffering from *dementia praecox* is called "incurable" (*unheilbar*; in Küchenhoff 2002, pp. 55 - 56). As an incurable

branded Gross for life with the stigma of mental disease (in Michaels 1983, p. 63).

The depth of Jung's continuing negative feelings still seem palpable in the letter he wrote to Wittels over 25 years later (in Heuer 2001, pp. 670, 681 – 682).<sup>2</sup>

In the 1908 Gross' daughter Camilla († 2000) was born from his relationship to the Swiss writer Regina Ullmann, who later was a protégé of Rilke's.

Gross had an important influence on a whole generation of writers, among them Franz Kafka, Robert Musil and Franz Werfel. In 1913 in Berlin his father, using C.G. Jung's diagnosis, had Gross arrested and interned in a psychiatric institution in Austria. By the time of his release, following an international press campaign initiated by his friends, Gross had started working as a psychiatrist at the hospital. He was placed under the guardianship of his father who died in 1915, when Gross was an army doctor in Eastern Europe. Together with Franz Jung and others, Gross published a journal called "*Die freie Strasse*" (The Free Road) as a "preparatory work for the revolution" and influenced Raoul Hausman, Hannah Höch and the other artists who created Berlin Dada. He had begun a relationship with Marianne Kuh, and in 1916 they had a daughter, Sophie. Gross died of pneumonia on 13 February 1920 in Berlin after having been found in the street near-starved and frozen. Franz Jung wrote, "The star of a great fighter against the social order - the star has exploded, is extinguished, has gone down. The time has not been ripe" (F.Jung 1991, p. 91). Otto Kaus, another friend, commented, "Germany's best revolutionary spirits have been educated and directly inspired by him" (1920, p. 55). In the psychoanalytic world only Wilhelm Stekel - by that time an outcast himself - wrote a brief eulogy (Stekel, 1920). Four years later Ernest Jones made a mere announcement of Gross' death at the 8th International Psycho-Analytical Congress in Salzburg (Jones 1924, p. 403).

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disease it could be – and later was – used in court by the father against his son to put him under guardianship.

<sup>2</sup> When Emanuel Hurwitz wrote the first biography of Gross, he knew of the existence of this letter from Jolande Jacobi, but was unable to obtain a copy (Eissler /Hurwitz 1979/80). When Kurt Eissler started corresponding with him, defending Freud against a criticism he had perceived in Hurwitz' book, he was in possession of a copy of this letter, but ignored Hurwitz' repeated requests for sending him a copy (ibid.). When Eissler later wrote his study of "Victor Tausk's Suicide" (Eissler 1983), which contains long passages on Gross, he did not have permission to reproduce the letter and could only paraphrase from it. For the first time, this letter is reproduced in full in Heuer 2001.

# Contributions to Analytic Theory and Clinical Practice

Gross saw Freud's psychoanalysis as a continuation of Nietzsche's philosophy. For example, he credited Nietzsche with the realization of society's pathogenic influence on the individual – what Gross termed the conflict between that which is one's own and that which is the other's. In Gross' view, Freud then developed Nietzsche's insight further by discovering the pathogenic influence of repressed affects (Gross 1907, pp. 47 – 48). He soon came to question Freud's emphasis on sexuality as the sole root of the neuroses and saw pathologies as being rooted in more creative and teleological tendencies in the unconscious.

Gross [. . .] saw bisexuality as a given and held that no man could know why he was loveable for a woman if he did not know about his own homosexual component. His respect of the sovereign freedom of human beings went so far that he did not only recognise their right for illness as an expression of a legitimate protest against a repressive society [. . .] but their death wishes as well, and as a physician he helped with the realization of those, too. He was prosecuted [. . .] for assisting suicide (Sombart 1991, p. 111).

In his struggle against patriarchy in all its manifestations, Gross apparently was influenced by Bachofen's ideas on matriarchy. "The coming revolution is a revolution for the mother-right," he wrote in 1913 (Gross 1913c, Col. 387). Gross wrote in favour of the freedom and equality of women and advocated free choice of partners and new forms of relationships which he envisaged as free from the use of force and violence. He made links between these issues and the hierarchical structures within the wider context of society. For Gross, psychoanalysis was a weapon in a countercultural revolution to overthrow the existing order - not a means to force people to adapt better to it. He wrote, that psychoanalysis "is called upon to enable an inner freedom, called upon as *preparation* for the revolution" (Gross 1913c, col. 385, emphasis O.G.).

A whole generation before Wilhelm Reich, "and forty years before Herbert Marcuse, Otto Gross was the man who developed in his psychotherapeutic practice the theoretical bases of the 'sexual revolution', (the term [is said to] come from him, [Werfel 1990 p. 349]) - the theory of the freeing of the erotic potential of the human being as a precondition of any social or political emancipation" (Sombart 1991, pp. 109 - 110). Gross emphasized the dialectical interdependence between individual inner and collective political change. The cultural analyst Nicolaus Sombart summarises:

[Gross'] first thesis was: The realization of the anarchist alternative to the patriarchal order of society has to begin with the destruction of the latter. Without hesitation, [he] owned up to practicing this -in accordance with anarchist principles - by the propaganda of the "example", first by an exemplary way of life aimed at destroying the limitations of society within himself; second as a psychotherapist by trying to realize new forms of social life experimentally in founding unconventional relationships and communes (for example in Ascona from where he was expelled as an instigator of "orgies") . . .

His second thesis: Whoever wants to change the structures of power (and production) in a repressive society, has to start by changing these structures in himself and to eradicate the "authority that has infiltrated one's own inner being" (Sombart 1991, pp. 110 - 111).

Gross recognised the way in which family structures that violate the individual reflect those of patriarchal society and was the first to empathize deeply with the child in this conflict.

His lifelong concern with ethical issues culminated for Gross in the concept of an "inborn 'i n s t i n c t o f m u t u a l a i d' (Gross 1919a, p. 682)" which he described as the "basic ethical instinct (Gross 1914, p. 529)". In 1919, Gross published "Protest and Morality in the Unconscious" (Gross 1919a). Jung only published on that subject towards the end of his life in the late 50's (Jung 1958; 1959). Gross was explicitly referring to Kropotkin and his discovery of the principle of mutual aid in the field of biology. Mutuality is a core concept of anarchist thought. 150 years previously Proudhon had used the term "mutualism" for the free relationship of groups of equals that exist through mutual exchange. Kropotkin elaborated this concept in his book "Mutual Aid, a Factor of Evolution" (Kropotkin 1904), first published in England in 1902. Contemporary researchers in biology, anthropology and genetics seem to confirm this theory, according to a recent article in the Guardian, where Natalie Angier writes about "Why we can't help helping each other": "It's not simply noble to be nice to our fellow man – it's hardwired into our genes" (Angier 2001). Gross was the first analyst to introduce this ethical concept into psychoanalytic theory and practice.

[I]nnate among man's most powerful strivings towards his fellow men, beginning in the earliest years and even months of life, is an essentially psychotherapeutic striving. The tiny percentage of human beings who devote their professional careers to the practice of psychoanalysis . . . are only giving explicit expression to a therapeutic devotion which all human beings share.

This is neither Kropotkin nor Gross, but Harold Searles (1979, p. 380) writing in 1975 on "The Patient as Therapist to His Analyst".



With the radical philosopher Max Stirner Gross saw the core conflict between self and other. He challenged the way psychoanalytic practice was beholden to the medical model in its attempt at a non-engaged objectivity in terms of the interpersonal relationship between analyst and patient. In opposition to Freud's recommendation that the analyst work as if he were an "opaque mirror" (Freud 1912, p. 118), Gross referred to what he called "the will to relating". For him this stood "in opposition to the will to power, and it needs to be uncovered as the elementary contrast between the revolutionary and the adjusted - bourgeois - psyche and it has to be presented as the highest and true goal of the revolution" (Gross 1919b). These ideas need to be regarded in the light of early developments in what was later to become object relations theory (cf. Suttie 1933; Fairbairn 1952). Gross' position anticipates those of Suttie and Fairbairn and he can be understood as a pioneer in this field.

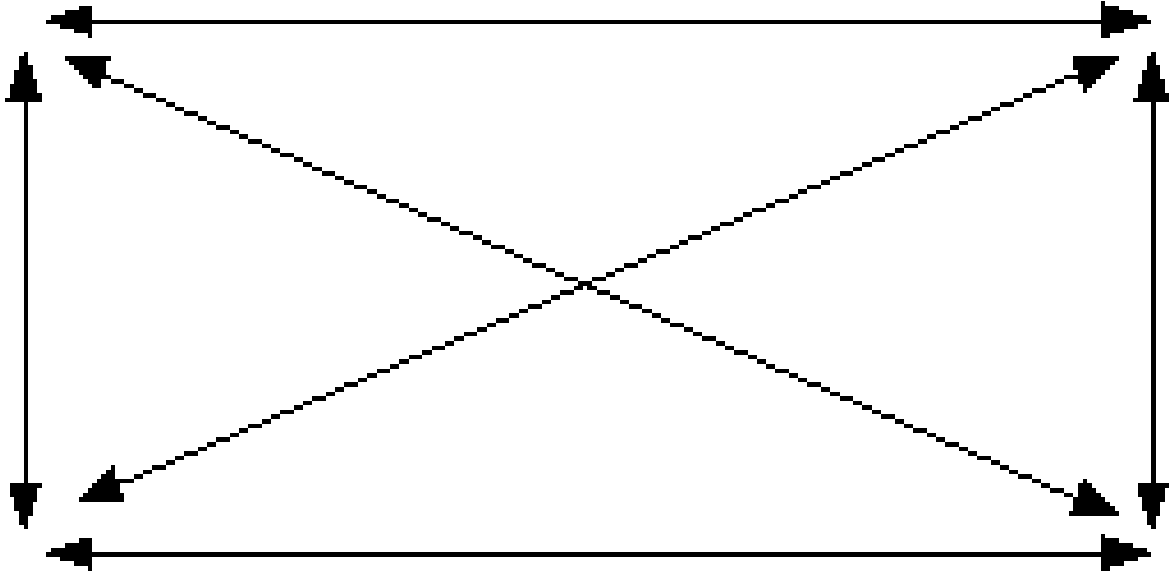
Gross' influence specifically on C.G. Jung is considerable. Following his analysis of Gross in 1908, which at times developed into a mutual one, Jung wrote *The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual* together with Gross - although in later editions he denied Gross' collaboration (Jung 1909/1949, p. 304, n.8). Jung also based his differentiation of the extraverted and the introverted character types on concepts that Gross had published twenty years earlier (Jung 1920, pp. 273 - 77, 279 - 86, 418, 508).

Paraphrasing Nietzsche, Jung said that "every psychological theory [is] in the first instance [. . .] subjective confession" (Jung 1934, para 1025). It is my contention that the "confession" of a personal experience contained in Jung's "Psychology of the Transference" is the mutual analysis with Gross twenty years before he started his alchemical studies that led to his concept of mutuality. How deeply this affected him was apparent from the letters he wrote to Freud at the time and is illustrated by Jung's language: "in Gross I discovered many aspects of my own nature, so that he often seemed like a twin brother" (Freud/Jung 1974, p. 156). Do not these words resemble those he would use later to unravel the clinical implications of the alchemical treatises in which the experience of relationship between alchemist and his or her 'other' (adept, soror) is described?

In an individual analysis, important issues may first emerge from the unconscious in the form of enactments, before being consciously grasped and integrated. The mutual analysis between Jung and Gross may well have been such a seminal enactment, an acting out leading, in time, to Jung's later radical formulation of the transference relationship as a dialectical procedure in which both partners are engaged as equals, culminating in the diagram of 1944 (Jung 1946, p. 221).

Adept (Analyst, Conscioueness) \_\_\_\_\_ Soror (Patient, Consciousness)

Anima (Analyst, Unconscious) \_\_\_\_\_ Animus (Patient, Unconscious)



In this diagram, consciousness and unconscious of both analyst and patient are in constant communication as equals on an interpersonal as well as an intrapersonal level.

Thus, within the development of theory about the essence of the analytic relationship, there are lines that unmistakably spring on from Gross' mutual analysis with Jung. These lines, linked, in Gross' case, to the anarchist concept of mutual aid (Kropotkin 1904), lead via Ferenczi to what is now called intersubjectivity by some psychoanalysts (Dunn 1995).

I believe that the experience of his mutual analysis with Gross also played an important role in Jung's break with Freud. In his memories, as a turning point in his relationship with Freud, Jung recalls the moment, when, just over a year after his experience of the mutual analysis with Gross, Freud refuses just such a mutuality (Jung 1961, pp. 181 – 182).

The influence of Gross' ideas on mutuality is not confined to the realm of analysis. I have recently discovered that Martin Buber knew Gross' work – and thoroughly condemned it (Buber 1911) – before he developed his own dialogic principle of the I-Thou relationship (Heuer 2003b). There is also an obvious connection to Habermas' "ideal speech situation".

There are a number of other cornerstones of Analytical Psychology of which we can find initial traces and formulations in Gross' work. That they had a direct influence on Jung is not proveable in the sense that there is no acknowledgement of Gross by Jung in relation to these thoughts. But can that be expected, if, as I have mentioned, Jung even later removed the reference to Gross that acknowledged his co-authorship in the ideas expressed in *The Influence of the Father . . .* (cf. above), thus intentionally falsifying the record? And, of course, these traces and first formulations that I point

out, are just that and not fully worked out concepts as in Jung's later works. Until full access to all of Jung's papers is permitted, all that may be stated here is a similarity predating Jung's thinking.

Gross took his ideas about relationship towards a realm that Jung much later would call the *unus mundus*, or the *mundus imaginalis* (Samuels 1989, pp. 161 – 172), the underlying interconnectedness of all beings, what Samuels, referring to Winnicott, calls “the third area” (ibid., p. 167). This term, also “the analytic third” is used to describe the area of experience between those who constitute the relationship. Given the influence Gross had on Buber, it is interesting to note that Samuels refers to Buber, too, in this context (ibid.). Like Buber after him, Gross made no distinction between interpersonal relating and relating in the religious realm. In fact, he spoke of relating as constituting the numinous. In 1913 Gross wrote of “relationship as a third, taken as religion” (Gross 1913b, col. 1180). He continues to say that, understood in this way, relationship

contains the obligation [almost: compulsion] towards individualising. This obligation is an automatic showing up of all possibilities of experience, the capacities to maintain all psychological warmth that strives towards general, all-embracing psychological warmth (ibid.).

Gross concludes this short text with:

The obligation to this relating that results from the purity of experience *is both organically and psychically the basis of a new form of living*, of faith, of desire and a life-community (*Lebensgemeinschaft*) that is going to fill out the future (ibid., col. 1181; my emphasis, G.H.).

In the same year, Gross had stated that sexuality was “not identical with the individual, but the pure great third” (Gross 1913a, col. 1142).

Related to Jung's concept of the *unus mundus* are two further key principles of analytical psychology that we can also find preformulated in Gross' thoughts. The first of these is the identity of the personally private and the collectively political, as it is for example expressed in the term “sexual revolution” itself, coined by Gross some fifty years before this thought re-emerged in the feminism of the 70's. In C.G. Jung's work this thought finds expression in the diagram of the Tavistock lectures of 1935, where he depicts the psyche in concentric circles from its outer layers – the “ectopsychic sphere” as he called it – to the innermost area – the so-called “endopsychic sphere”. In this diagram the personal *as well as* the collective unconscious are located right in the centre of the diagram, occupying the same space (C.G. Jung 1935, par. 91, Fig. 4).

The second important concept linked to the *unus mundus* in Jung's work is the “acausal connecting principle” that he came to call synchronicity (C.G. Jung 1952). In his summary of Gross' psychology some thirty years earlier, Franz Jung wrote, “Illness and *even fate and coincidence become a symbol* whose overarching conditions we can pursue analytically” (F.Jung 1921, p. 203; my emphasis, G.H.). It seems evident that Gross' thoughts went in a similar direction as Jung's did decades later.

Gross was also the first to link analysis with the religious and spiritual realm. Johannes Nohl (Heuer 2003a), an anarchist pupil of Otto Gross and later one of Hermann Hesse's analysts, said already in 1911 that psychoanalysis was useless if it did not culminate in prayer (Nohl 1911, pp. 83 - 84). For Gross the concept of the orgy described the space in which individual and collective liberation could become possible within the framework of a matriarchal ritual. Thus the idea of the orgy became his term for a sacralization of radical politics.

Gross saw body and mind as one, inseparable, writing that, "each psychical process is at the same time a physiological one" (Gross 1907, p. 7). He thus "joins the ranks of those researchers who refute a division of the world into physical and spiritual-intellectual realms. For them body and soul are the expressions of one and the same process, and therefore a human being can only be seen holistically and as a whole" (Hurwitz 1979, p. 66).

Some of Gross' ideas on the role of language were later taken up by Lacanian analysts. But his influence was not confined to psychoanalysis. From his psychiatric writings links have been made to Laing and Cooper's Anti-Psychiatry - Gross himself has been called an Anti-Psychiatrist (Hurwitz 1978, S. 111; Dvorak 1978, S. 53) - , to Foucault's work and Judith Butler's gender theories (cf. Choluj 2000). There was a heated argument between Gross and Max Weber and he thus also had an impact on sociology.

# Recent and Future Developments of Gross Studies.

In 1998, my research has led to the founding of the *International Otto Gross Society* (<http://www.ottogross.org/>) of which Gross' only surviving daughter Sophie is the Honorary President. All of Gross' descendants and nearly all scholars who have seriously engaged with Gross are members. I have established the *Otto Gross Archive* in London. This already contains the largest collection of original documents, texts, films, audio tapes and internet documents relating to Otto Gross in 17 languages<sup>1</sup>. Together with Anthony Templer, Gross' grandson, I have begun to publish the first complete edition of "The Collected Works of Otto Gross" on the internet (*ibid.*). I have co-organised three International Otto Gross Congresses in Berlin 1999, the Burghölzli, Zürich 2000 and Munich 2002. In June 2000, with the Erich-Mühsam<sup>2</sup>-Gesellschaft, we co-hosted an international conference in Malente, northern Germany, under the title, "Anarchism and Psychoanalysis at the Start of the 20th Century". These gatherings attracted participants from ten European countries, five US States and Japan and the proceedings have been published in book form (Dehmlow & Heuer 2000; Erich-Mühsam-Gesellschaft 2000; Heuer 2002; Dehmlow & Heuer 2003). Preparations for the 4th International Otto Gross Congress from 24 - 26 October 2003 for which we have been invited to Graz are under way. This will coincide with a large exhibition on Gross and his father in the *StadtMUSEUM*, and the local *WERKRAUMtheater* will stage its own play of "The Death of an Anarchist: The Case of Otto Gross".

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<sup>1</sup> Mainly German, English, French and Italian, but also Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Kroat, Spanish, Swedish and Vietnamese

<sup>2</sup> German-Jewish anarchist writer and friend of Otto Gross', murdered 1934 by the Gestapo at Oranienburg concentration camp near Berlin.

# Conclusion

As a contribution towards the return of the repressed, I have presented a brief introduction to the life and work of Otto Gross and his influence on analytic theory and clinical practice. C.G. Jung has mostly been excluded from the history of psychoanalytic ideas and their contemporary discourse. Otto Gross, in turn, does not figure in either psychoanalysis nor analytical psychology. Nearly forty years ago, when Jung's so-called autobiography was published, Winnicott wrote in his review that it 'provides psychoanalysts with a chance, perhaps the last chance they will have, to come to terms with Jung. If we fail to come to terms with Jung we are self-proclaimed partisans, partisans in a false cause' (Winnicott, 1964, p. 450). Psychoanalysis has yet to come to terms with Jung. When will both Freudians as well as Jungians take the chance at last to come to terms with Otto Gross?

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A critique of his ideas & actions.



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