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SIGMUND FREUD

# THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

TRANSLATED BY  
A. A. BRILL, PH. B., M. D.

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## FOREWORD

### TO THE THIRD ENGLISH EDITION

IN 1909 G. Stanley Hall invited me to Clark University, in Worcester, to give the first lectures on psychoanalysis. In the same year Dr. Brill published the first of his translations of my writings, which were soon followed by further ones. If psychoanalysis now plays a rôle in American intellectual life, or if it does so in the future, a large part of this result will have to be attributed to this and other activities of Dr. Brill's.

His first translation of *The Interpretation of Dreams* appeared in 1913. Since then much has taken place in the world, and much has been changed in our views about the neuroses. This book, with the new contribution to psychology which surprised the world when it was published (1900), remains essentially unaltered. It contains, even according to my present-day judgment, the most valuable of all the discoveries it has been my good fortune to make. Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime.

FREUD

VIENNA

March 15, 1931

## PREFACE

### TO THE THIRD (GERMAN) EDITION

WHEREAS there was a space of nine years between the first and second editions of this book, the need of a third edition was apparent when little more than a year had elapsed. I ought to be gratified by this change; but if I was unwilling previously to attribute the neglect of my work to its small value, I cannot take the interest which is now making its appearance as proof of its quality.

The advance of scientific knowledge has not left *The Interpretation of Dreams* untouched. When I wrote this book in 1899 there was as yet no "sexual theory," and the analysis of the more complicated forms of the psychoneuroses was still in its infancy. The interpretation of dreams was intended as an expedient to facilitate the psychological analysis of the neuroses; but since then a profounder understanding of the neuroses has contributed towards the comprehension of the dream. The doctrine of dream-interpretation itself has evolved in a direction which was insufficiently emphasized in the first edition of this book. From my own experience, and the works of Stekel and other writers,<sup>1</sup> I have since learned to appreciate more accurately the significance of symbolism in dreams (or rather, in unconscious thought). In the course of years a mass of data has accumulated which demands consideration. I have endeavoured to deal with these innovations by interpolations in the text and footnotes. If these additions do not always quite adjust themselves to the framework of the treatise, or if the earlier text does not everywhere come up to the standard of our present knowledge, I must beg indulgence for this deficiency, since it is only the result and indication of the increasingly rapid advance of our science. I will even venture to predict the directions in which further editions of this book—should there be a demand for them—may diverge from previous editions. Dream-interpretation must seek a closer union with the rich material of poetry, myth and popular idiom, and it must deal more faithfully than has hitherto

<sup>1</sup> Omitted in subsequent editions.



been possible with the relations of dreams to the neuroses and to mental derangement.

Herr Otto Rank has afforded me valuable assistance in the selection of supplementary examples, and has revised the proofs of this edition. I have to thank him and many other colleagues for their contributions and corrections.

VIENNA, 1911

## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND (GERMAN) EDITION

THAT there should have been a demand for a second edition of this book—a book which cannot be described as easy to read—before the completion of its first decade is not to be explained by the interest of the professional circles to which I was addressing myself. My psychiatric colleagues have not, apparently, attempted to look beyond the astonishment which may at first have been aroused by my novel conception of the dream; and the professional philosophers, who are anyhow accustomed to disposing of the dream in a few sentences—mostly the same—as a supplement to the states of consciousness, have evidently failed to realize that precisely in this connection it was possible to make all manner of deductions, such as must lead to a fundamental modification of our psychological doctrines. The attitude of the scientific reviewers was such as to lead me to expect that the fate of the book would be to fall into oblivion; and the little flock of faithful adherents, who follow my lead in the therapeutic application of psychoanalysis, and interpret dreams by my method, could not have exhausted the first edition of this book. I feel, therefore, that my thanks are due to the wider circle of cultured and inquiring readers whose sympathy has induced me, after the lapse of nine years, once more to take up this difficult work, which has so many fundamental bearings.

I am glad to be able to say that I found little in the book