

**GRODDECK AND HIS MOTHER.
CAROLINE KOBERSTEIN.**

BIRTH: May have been born in October or November.



Georg Groddeck was born in Bad Kösen the 13 of October of 1866. He was the last son of Karl Groddeck and Caroline Koberstein. Karl Groddeck was doctor. During the time in which it studied in Pforte, Caroline attended it before a cardiac disease that suffered. Soon they were committed in 1850 and they married in 1852.

After the wedding, the young marriage settled down in Bad Kösen where it had mounted an establishment of salt baths. There they were so that Caroline could follow near its father, Augusto Koberstein, historian of German Literature. Karl turned to his house a literary intellectual center. He thus wanted to enter the family and to gain to his woman, but never he could arrive to be a Koberstein, nor to compete with the father of Caroline to that it wanted very many.

The six children were born there; first he died soon after being born. In 1855 Karl was born, soon Hans, in 1861 Wolf and 1864, Lina. A year and means later Georg was born, that it had to support several days of hunger because the airplane substitute was only twice going per day to give him to suck. The mother of Groddeck only gave him to suck to her first son Karl.

Soon they contracted Bertha, that remained with the boy during three years. Remembering it in the “Book of It”, Groddeck says: “The nursing that it has been fed by a master for is always condemned the doubt. The mother or the airplane whom it must love? with which of the two to remain? . The doubt therefore throws it towards the fantasy. And what another thing is science but a variant of the fantasy “.

Here is an interesting quote about Caroline Koberstein in the book Reading Psychoanalysis: Freud, Rand, Ferenczi, Groddeck by Peter L. Rudnytsky.

“4.- The profundity of Groddeck’s exploration of the mother-child relationship prompts one to wonder about its roots in his personal experience. Beginning with Freud’s self-analysis, as I have argued throughout this book, psychoanalytic theory has advanced to the extent that its practitioners have confronted their areas of acutest emotional vulnerability. Besides being a literary masterpiece, The Book of the It bears comparison to The Interpretation of Dreams of the preeminent work of self-analysis in the psychoanalytic canon. (41) Like Ferenczi and at least the early Freud, but unlike the reticent Rank, Groddeck makes explicit subjective dimension of theory-formation in psychoanalysis. As I map the prominent features of Groddeck’s psychic landscape, I shall - to borrow Freud’s metaphor for condensation in dreams - simultaneously attempt

to generate a “composite photograph” (1900,293) that allows us to discern the configurations that link Groddeck’s inner world to those of Freud, on one hand, and Winnicott, on the other.

The essential point to bear in mind is that Groddeck’s mother, Caroline, appears to have been seriously depressed during his early childhood. As he wrote in his memoir “White as Snow, Red as Blood, Black as Ebony”:

“Black as ebony” - that was my mother. Her hair was shining black, and I never saw her wear any but a black dress. She took to black after the death of her father, for she never became a true Groddeck, but only Frau, or perhaps not even that, but always Fräuline Koberstein (1925b, 22).

The blackness of Caroline Groddeck’s dress, worn in perpetual mourning after the death in 1870 of her father, the distinguished literary historian and pedagogue August Koberstein, blazons forth her emotional unresponsiveness to Georg, her youngest child, who was only four at the time. Indeed, Groddeck’s title presages André Green’s concept of the “dead mother,” which turn on a chromatic contrast between red -the color of blood and the bodily wound of castration- and black and white, the colors, respectively, of the bloodless wounds of mourning and anxiety. In Green’s formulation, which can be applied to Caroline Groddeck, “a living object, which was a source of vitality for the child,” is rendered “a distant figure, toneless, practically inanimate” (1983, 146).(42).

Groddeck concludes his autobiographical sketch by recalling another traumatic memory from the same year of his childhood:

The black-white-red of the woman very early made me into a solitary, for I saw it clearly enough at four years old, when my mother took me into the bath with her. He who seeth his mother’s nakedness shall not surely die, but in a sense the mother dies, for him. That comes to all of us, though for most the experience is unconscious. (1925b, 24-25).

By fusing an allusion to the story of Ham, who “saw the nakedness of his father,” Noah (Gen. 9:22), with the serpent’s rewording of the divine interdiction on the Tree of Knowledge, “Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4), Groddeck makes it clear that his mother was psychically dead to him. Although his voyeuristic transgression has a manifestly sexual content, it functions as a screen memory for a diffused sense of emotional abandonment.

To scholars of psychoanalysis, this incident in which Groddeck saw his mother naked in the bath inevitably will recall Freud’s own memory of seeing his mother naked during a train trip from Leipzig to Vienna, ...

41. For yet another monument of self-analysis, see again (as in chapter 7, note 3, above) my discussion (1991, 115-48) of Harry Guntrip’s Psycho-Analytical Autobiography, the longer - and, regrettably, still unpublished - version of his paper (1975) on his analyses with Fairbairn and Winnicott.

42. Superimposed on Groddeck’s struggle with the depressed mother is his conflict with the punitive preoedipal mother. This bifold relationship with the maternal imago, which underlies the Oedipus complex, as I have tried to demonstrate, is a pattern found also in Ferenczi, Guntrip, and Norbert Hanold. In Grossman and Grossman’s words: Groddeck’s attachment to his mother seems a hostile identification, a kind of unity in which there was little room for an identity of his own. His early arrogance and attitudes of omnipotence, as well as his later symptoms of psychic turmoil, can be seen as both an expression of and defense against awareness of this unity. He persisted in claiming to be his mother’s favorite, yet the defensive denial against

a feeling of being unloved appears again and again in his formulations” (1965, 204). Freud, too, always depicted himself as his mother’s favorite, a self-image that likewise becomes problematic when it is seen as “the defensive denial against a feeling of being unloved.”.

Descendants of Matys Matthias KOBERSTEIN

Sixth Generation

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~kobie/matysmat/aqwg06.htm#32>

Volver a Actualizaciones Georg Groddeck

Volver a Newsletter 19-ex-45