

Freud's Baby – Little Hans (1909)

The case of Little Hans – *Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy* (1909) – rejuvenates psychoanalysis. It offers the possibility of seeing in the first light of day a primal history that in the other case histories can only be inferred retrospectively and perhaps appear to be restricted to abnormal types:

Surely there must be a possibility of observing in children at first hand and in all the freshness of life the sexual impulses and wishes which we dig out so laboriously in adults from among their own debris – especially as it is our own belief that they are the common property of all men, a part of the human constitution, and merely exaggerated or distorted in the case of neurotics. (SE x: 6; PFL (8): 170)

Freud speaks as though his old archaeological passion had exhausted him and as if he yearned for a renewal of his original inspiration. After long hours among the neurotics and hysterics, digging in their well protected dirt, Freud imagined that an infant analysis might open up something 'fresh' (*Lebensfrische*) to reveal the very ground plan of human nature in the child unfolding the 'man', so to speak. But of course the child is never outside of the society to which it holds the mirror. Nor do their elders wish to see themselves in the sexuality of their children. Yet Freud does not make enough of Little Hans' parents whose adherence to psychoanalysis constituted a peculiar domestic environment in which to raise Freud's 'fresh' specimen. Instead, he claimed to reproduce the father's records quite faithfully so as to preserve 'the naiveté and directness of the nursery'. Thus we enter a fiction based upon the nursery as the primal construct of a fresh psychoanalysis in which human history unfolds, as if from the first light of mankind, but which in fact unfolds in Vienna at the beginning of a century that is itself Freud's child.

In his essay on *The Sexual Theories of Children* (1908), Freud varies the imagery for achieving a fresh perspective upon human sexuality by shifting from the side of the object to the side of the subject of research:

If we could divest ourselves of our corporeal existence, and could view the things of this earth with a fresh eye as purely thinking beings, from another planet for instance, nothing perhaps would strike our attention more forcibly than the fact of the existence of two sexes among human beings, who, though so much alike in other respects, yet mark the difference between them with such obvious external signs. (SE IX: 211–212)

Freud's Martian phantasy assumes that other planets than our own might support science and yet not be inhabited by animate beings – or perhaps that wholly scientific beings could exist whose animate nature was not a reflexive concern and so found no expression in sexually differentiated conduct or codes of any kind. But such a community would not differ from the human community as viewed by the infant 'visitor' since his elders would conspire not to reveal the grounds of sexual difference despite its ubiquitous display. In short, the taboo on gender cannot fail to put itself in question as soon as anyone, so to speak, 'turns up' who doesn't already know the answer. Such a one is the first-born child who is, as it were, the question that will be put sooner or later to the parents – and certainly will be, once a second baby arrives in the family. In the Martian community the question of gender, however much it is erased by uniformly technical competence and scientific ideology, always threatens to appear with the vital accidents of love and affection. The same appears to be true in the human community. Despite the parental conspiracy to maintain a uniform front *vis à vis* their children – expressed in their common belief in the stork – emotional cracks will appear in the parental armour. After all, they love their baby and their baby loves them. Of course, at some point the infant will discover that the parents love one another – and even also love their next child – so that each elder child has always to come to terms with its emotional displacement. What is strange is that the infant has to meet this turning point in an atmosphere of lies and deception that creates the child's first experience of mistrust (Billig, 1999). But it is mistrust in 'his' own family rather than toward outsiders that sows the seed of intergenerational conflict and secrecy. It may be that this rupture in the early Eden of the family is functional for individuation. Even so, it is painful and risky since it may stifle both the intellectual and emotional growth of a child troubled by its necessary displacement in the family economy:

At the instigation of these feelings and worries, the child now comes to be occupied with the first grand problem of life and asks himself the question '*Where do babies come from?*' – a question which, there can be

no doubt, first ran, 'Where did this particular, intruding baby come from?' We seem to hear the echoes of this first riddle in innumerable riddles of myth and legend. (SE IX: 212–213)

The infant theorist is *not* a mythologist. Rather it is society, in the person of one's parents, that assuages infant questions with such myths as the stork, with ready-made answers to ready-made riddles, however unsatisfactory these myths are to children. Yet the child's suppression of 'hir' intellectual curiosity is made a condition of acceptance – or at least of 'good enough standing' – in the family. But if this were not enough to defeat the child, since 's/he' can only think 'hir' problem with 'hir' own body in view of the veils around 'hir', 's/he' *must* get the wrong answer. Just when 'he' is about to get the idea from his own penis that the (father's) penis must be involved in penetrating the mother-body, his theory that his mother's body is phallic like his own blocks his perception of the necessary site/sight (two into 0, won't go!). He remains an unaccountable 'third' – a puzzle to himself since girls are left out of the account for the moment! The infant's body also suggests to it an alternative mode of production for babies along the lines of maternal excretion, with 'insemination' by paternal urination, or else by means of rough and tumble between the parents, a display of 'affectionate aggression' whose result is a child able now to witness such things in 'hir' own case. Despite these false theories, or rather precisely because they fail to uncover the mother-body, the brooding and doubting engendered by the riddle of the baby furnishes 'the prototype of all later work directed towards the solution of problems'.

We owe our civilization to a collective myth whose unsatisfactory nature arouses in some of us the curiosity that inspires the arts and sciences that are the very mark of civilization and its discontents:

Hans: 'Mummy, have you got a widdler too?'

Mother: 'Of course. Why?'

Hans: 'I was only just thinking.'

At the same age he went into a cow-shed once and saw a cow being milked. 'Oh, look!' he said, 'there's milk coming out of its widdler!' (SE X: 7; PFL (8): 171)

Here, then, we enter Freud's nursery – no toys, no fairytales. And yet there is a story in the making. Little Hans is thinking about his body, comparing it with his mother's body and with animal bodies, but thinking the-body-with-bodies and not with fairytales or with the usual nursery toys. There is, however, an additional presence in the

nursery – namely, the psychoanalytic observer (a parent, Freud) – and despite Freud’s disclaimer of non-interference, his murmur is continuous. It is, however, a distracted murmur. Freud is at pains to generalize what is to be seen as ‘typical of the sexual development of children in general’. He refers to Dora’s phantasy of *fellatio* (to be considered in our next chapter) and his reduction of it to an infantile pleasure in thumb-sucking and sucking at the nipple. This sets up the association between the breast and udder as a breast in form and function (*mamma*) but a penis by position. Freud pays no attention to the mother’s response to Hans’ question. Does she mean to diffuse Hans’ interest by implying that widdlers are so common as to be uninteresting or is she trying to acknowledge Hans’ bodily interest but to discourage his ‘theoretical’ pursuit of the question? In the latter case her reply is fraught with trouble, for it might be taken by Hans to mean that of course she has a widdler like his, i.e., not only in function but in form, even though its position is not so prominent as either Hans’ widdler or the cow’s udder. The latter difference probably informed Hans’ question to his mother as an inquiry about genital difference rather than similarity. In this case, the psychoanalytically enlightened parent had begun by blocking an original inquiry into sexual difference and Freud seems either to have nodded or else enjoyed the opportunity for a later display of his own theoretical ability.

We have to learn to wait for Freud’s own theory. By the same token its presentation is measured out by Freud’s odometer, i.e., the chronology of the first five years which is the trade-mark of a Freudian case history. Hence Strachey’s insertion of the chronology in a note intended to help the reader ‘follow the story’:

This chronological table, based on data derived from the case history, may help the reader to follow the story:

- 1903 (April) Hans born. 1906 (Aet. 3–33/4) First reports.
(Aet. 31/4–31/2) (Summer) First visit to Gmunden.
(Aet. 31/2) Castration threat.
(Aet. 3/2) October) Hanna born.
- 1907 (Aet. 33/4) First dream.
(Aet. 4) Removal to new flat.
(Aet. 41/4–41/2) (Summer) Second visit to Gmunden. Episode of biting horse.
- 1908 (Aet. 43/4) (January) Episode of falling horse. Outbreak of phobia.
(Aet. 5) (May) End of analysis.

At three and a half, then, Hans displayed a tactile interest in his 'member'. Finding him with his hand on his 'penis', his mother threatened him in these words:

'If you do that, I shall send for Dr. A. to cut off your widdler. And then what'll you widdle with?'

Hans: 'With my bottom.' (SE x: 7–8; PFL (8): 171)

Freud refrains from any comment upon the mother's heavy-handed reply in favour of a rather stilted reference to the 'castration complex' in the *Interpretation of Dreams*, other works of his, and myths. He also adds a late (1925) footnote in which he rejects any claim to the effect that separation from the mother-body, as from the breast or in birth, or bodily loss (feces), must be considered a constitutive element of castration. Freud not only insists that it is the loss of the *penis* that is basic to the castration fear he also justifies his claim on the ground of the report by Little Hans' parents. Moreover, he leaves Little Hans' reply quite uninterpreted. But this is because he presumes upon the sexual interpretation of Little Hans' touching himself – his 'member'/ his 'penis' reflecting Freud's own slippage. Although his mother's threat was presumably inspired by a conventional response to infant auto-eroticism – or is it the mimicry of parental copulation? – her words challenged Little Hans to come up with a substitute 'widdler'.

Little Hans' reply is more kind to his mother than is her own answer to him, since it preserves a bottom line between them and thus a line for continued theoretical inquiry. But Freud is unable to treat the maternal body as the place of inquiry and so he moves us on to the zoo, where Hans sees a lion's widdler, from there to the station, where Hans sees a steam-engine widdling, and then back home, where Hans' comparative sexology is summarized in the finding:

'A dog and a horse have widdlers; a table and a chair haven't.'

Freud inserts a comment to the effect that epistemic categorization has its roots in sexual categorization. This implies that sexual curiosity lies at the basis of intellectual curiosity and that, in the interests of the latter civilizational good, the sexuality of infants ought to be fostered rather than repressed as it appears to have been even by Freud's model family. Even so, his parents remain the primary objects in Little Hans' sexual research and, at the age of three and three-quarters, the following exchange is reported:

Hans: 'Daddy, have you got a widdler too?'

Father: 'Yes, of course.'

Hans: 'But I've never seen it when you were undressing.'

Another time he is looking on intently while his mother undresses before going to bed:

‘What are you staring like that for?’ she asked.

Hans: ‘I was only looking to see if you’d got a widdler too.’

Mother: ‘Of course, Didn’t you know that?’

Hans: ‘No. I thought you were so big you’d have a widdler like a horse.’ (SE x: 9–10; PFL (8): 173)

At this point, Freud merely remarks that Hans’ last comment should be kept in mind for its importance later on. But surely several things provoke questions at this point? First of all, Little Hans repeats an exchange with his father without any fear of the castration threat he experienced with his mother. Nor is it raised. In any case, Hans was not deterred from repeating his question to his mother. In either case, his parents’ reply contains their expectation of him that he had *already* observed what they do not permit him to see, namely, the sexual difference between themselves and between himself and his mother. Little Hans’ reply to this double bind is complex because it contains a meta-comment on the ‘game’ of hiding the mother-body. Thus he indulges the parental directive to conduct his sexual research upon animals and reports his results – (of course) mummy must have a widdler, and based upon a comparative size, it must be like a horse’s widdler!

When he was ‘exactly’ three and a half, there occurred ‘the greatest event’ of Hans’ life – the birth of his little sister Hanna. Apparently his father recorded his immediate response to the sounds of his mother’s labour pains:

‘Why’s Mummy coughing? The stork’s coming today for certain.’

His father comments that Little Hans’ surmise had been prepared by, the parents’ stork story and thus he had connected the unusual groans with the stork’s arrival, even though this would have involved an inference connecting the baby with his mother rather than the stork, just as he understood that the tea was for her rather than for the stork after its journey. It is quite clear that the parental story is dismissed by Little Hans when he concludes from the blood in the pan at the bedside that there must be some sexual difference between himself and his mother:

‘But blood doesn’t come out of *my* widdler.’

His father recognizes that Hans has seen right through the stork story – *there can be no question that his first doubts about the stork have*

taken root' – but he shows no insight into Hans' task of solving a problem for which the parental advice is systematically misleading. Nor does Freud comment on this cognitive status of the taboo at work. Rather, we are led to focus upon Little Hans' jealousy at the arrival of a sister. It should be noted that we cannot decide whether Hans' responses are to displacement, i.e., the move from the first to second sibling position in the family, or, specifically, to displacement by a sister whose sex makes it clear that gender is at work between his parents and himself. Of course, the theoretical concept of gender cannot literally be 'seen' from the 'facts' of genital difference (sex). Nor, in a sense, is it hidden by the parental discretion about undressing or by their story of the stork. Human sexuality is not 'given' apart from the psycho-cultural practices that interpret gender for each of the sexes.

What is exquisite for Freud's purposes is to observe how Little Hans' sexological research delivers him into the hands of psychoanalysis. Hans attempts to come to terms with his little sister by deciding that she is indeed 'little' by swapping part of his own eponym and assigning to Hanna the reduced part whose actual absence constitutes 'the difference' between 'Hans' and 'Hanna', i.e., the masculine and the feminine forms of the 'same' name:

A little later Hans was watching his seven-day-old sister being given a bath.

'But her widdler's quite small', he remarked; and then added, as though by way of consolation: 'When she grows up it'll get bigger all right.'

Here Freud has a remarkable footnote (SE x: 11 n.3: PFL (8): 175 n.2). He begins by recording similar observations by two other boys on seeing their baby sister for the first time (we have to assume that what they saw was her 'genitals'). Freud then expostulates to the effect that 'One might well feel horrified at such signs of the premature decay of a child's intellect', whereas he himself regards sexual curiosity as the very origin of mental life. 'Why was it', he asks, 'that these young enquirers did not report what they really saw – namely, that there was no widdler there?' But shouldn't we say what they were looking at was a *pubis*. To say that they 'saw' that the little girl had no 'widdler', meaning that she had no penis, is to identify a possible query about whether she could widdle from the *pubis* – as, for example, Hans believed one could widdle from one's bottom – with the possible argument that anyone without a penis cannot widdle.

So far, all that Hans' sexual research has revealed is that both his parents have widdlers, i.e., that both have something with which to make wi-wi that – since they do not disclose it – he is obliged to assume resembles his own widdler. However, this says nothing as yet

about his widdler being a penis, i.e., a mark of sexual difference. Freud nevertheless wishes to elevate the otherwise degenerate Little Hans into a philosopher on the ground that his 'faulty perception' of a widdler where there is none was derived from his good inductive sense, that everyone has a widdler who is a member of the class of animate objects. Freud's little joke, however, reveals more about psychoanalysis than about philosophy. Rather than say that Little Hans 'sees' a penis because unconsciously he cannot bear 'not to see' the penis 'there' where he expects it, and that the absent penis in the case of the baby girl gives rise to undue anxiety about this possibility in his own case, Freud confounds Little Hans' 'sexual research' with a number of egregious biological errors about little girls. He says that Hans' attribution of a little widdler to his baby sister as a response to what he could not see was justified because in fact:

Little girls *do* possess a small widdler, which we call a clitoris, though it does not grow any larger but remains permanently stunted. (PFL: 176 n.1)

Now, of course, the clitoris is not a widdler – not at all. It neither urinates nor ejaculates – but, *pace* Freud, it does engorge. Yet it is not a 'stunted' penis. *Chambers Dictionary* (1983) defines the clitoris as 'a homologue of the penis in the female'. Thus a clitoris is to a penis as a whale's flipper or a bird's wing is to a man's arm – 'of the same essential nature, corresponding in relative position, general structure and descent'! What is not said is that although the clitoris is not open to view, despite its 'relative position', its existence is not for that reason in doubt, as would be a penis lost to its owner's sight! In this respect, at least, the clitoris may confer a psychic advantage upon the female. But Freud joins Little Hans in assigning superiority to the anxious penis on account of its 'growth'. However dirty, little boys are more evolved than little girls because they have something that makes them think. Little Hans is, therefore, never as 'little' as his 'little sister' who is condemned to the lesser part by her 'lesser' widdler!

Freud turns to a drawing of a giraffe made by Little Hans' father who reports that Hans asked him to draw it with a widdler. The game begins again. His father tells Hans to draw it himself and the child begins with a short stroke which he lengthened, remarking: 'Its widdler's longer'. On seeing a horse micturating, Hans observed that his widdler occupied the same relative place as his own. Watching his sister at three months and inspecting a baby doll, he again concluded that both did have widders, however tiny. Curiously enough, Freud again treats Hans as a young epistemologist concerned to

discover the category difference between animate and inanimate objects, even though the doll is inanimate yet 'sexed'. We do not as yet understand why. For the sake of a joke upon philosophy, Freud overlooks that Little Hans is concerned with sexual difference between animate beings and not with the difference between animals and non-animals. We might also be puzzled about why Freud says nothing about the parental conspiracy to hide from Little Hans something they expect him to see for himself in the streets – supposing his parents are like animals and he, in turn, is like one of them but not the other. Rather, Freud continues with his portrait of Little Hans by attempting to correct the 'injustice' done to him by emphasizing his auto-eroticism. To do so, however, he turns to the little boy's 'love relationships' with other children who are usually older than himself. In these he revealed, we are told, 'a very striking degree of inconstancy and a disposition to polygamy' – earned by referring to his playmates as 'my little girls' – and a 'first trace of homosexuality' earned by embracing his five-year-old cousin and saying, 'I am so fond of you'. While promising to correct Little Hans' portrait, Freud now casts him as a seemingly 'positive paragon of all the vices', continuing to speak of his violent 'long range love' for the girls he wailed for, or his 'aggressive, masculine and arrogant way, embracing them and kissing them heartily'.



Figure 1.1 Widdler, SE: x: 13

Freud makes no comment upon Little Hans' game of playing like the grown-ups. Rather than comment upon Hans' mimesis of the behavior he observed between his parents – and which might be connected with the puzzle about the stork – Freud prefers to toy with Hans as an adult character in a dirty play. This game culminates in a sequence in which, so to speak, young Hans catches the conscience of his parents by staging a little play within that play (repeated, incidentally, in what we may call 'the restaurant scene' where four year old Hans falls in love with an eight year old girl, abetted by his father). One evening, when being put to bed, Little Hans asked if Married, could sleep with him. This being refused, he proposed that she sleep with his parents but was told that she must sleep with her own parents. Hans then said he would go to Marriedl and sleep with her, at which his mother responded to his threat of leaving his bed as follows:

Mother: 'You really want to go away from Mummy and sleep downstairs?'

Hans: 'Oh, I'll come up again in the morning to have breakfast and do number one.'

Mother: 'Well, if you really want to go away from Daddy and Mummy, then take your coat and knickers and – goodbye!' (SE x: 17; PFL (8): 180)

Thus Hans is threatened (with separation) by his mother – in-the-name-of-the-father – as well as with castration by her earlier. Freud remains in alliance with the parents and their 'occasional' practice of having Hans in bed with them. But in remarking upon the erotic feelings felt by any child in such a situation, Freud pictures Hans as lying with either his father or his mother and closes his own phantasy with the extraordinary piece of damaging praise:

In spite of his accesses of homosexuality, Little Hans bore himself like a true man in the face of his mother's challenge.

The next two incidents reveal Hans as a 'true man', vainly trying to seduce his mother into handling his penis while bathing him, although as usual she casts him off – for being 'piggish' – but more successful with his understanding ('penetrating') father, who while on walks assists Little Hans with unbuttoning his widdler oblivious to the homosexual fixation he thereby establishes. Freud concludes his 'introduction' to Little Hans with his father's observations that, by the age of four and a half, Hans had repressed his earlier exhibitionism before girls and that the sight of his little sister in her bath now provoked laughter which he explained as follows:

'I am laughing at Hanna's widdler.'
 'Why?'
 'Because her widdler's so lovely' (*schön*).

Freud leaves us with the father's reflection upon this exchange:

'Of course his answer was a disingenuous one. In reality her widdler has seemed to him *funny* (*komisch*). Moreover, this is the first time he has recognized in this way the distinction between male and female genitals instead of denying it.' (SE x: 21; PFL (8): 184)

Little Hans' father next reports a change in the child's behavior towards the animals in the zoo at Schönbrunn. He had begun to avoid the giraffe and the elephant, as well as to fear the pelican but to love small animals. His father confronted Hans with the explanation that his fear of large animals was a fear of big widdlers, most likely acquired from his inspection of horses, and he summed things up by saying that it's just a matter of big animals having big widdlers and little animals having little widdlers. To this the child replied:

Hans: 'And everyone has a widdler. And my widdler will get bigger; it's fixed in, of course.' (PFL: 196).

Here Freud explains that Little Hans' reply was not directed by his fear of widdlers. On the contrary they were a source of pleasurable interest to him, but something – yet to be explained – has altered their valence so that his sexual research had become painful to him. Freud proposes that the castration threat made by his mother when he was only three and a half had emerged as a 'deferred effect' (*nachtragliche Gehorsam*), surfacing in his anxious reference to his widdler being 'fixed in' and reinforced by his 'enlightenment' about women's lack of a widdler (a shattering experience for which Freud seems to take no responsibility, as though it were due only to the father playing doctor). He then pictures Little Hans having to resist the fact that it is possible to be an animal without a widdler, namely, not a man but a *woman* (*Weib*). Little Hans resisted this fact of life because, in view of the castration threat, it would mean that he himself could be 'made' into a woman.

Case history and analysis of a phobia

Freud restarts the case history with the father's report that Little Hans had developed a nervous disorder – a fear *that a horse will bite him in the street*. His immediate fear of the horse's large penis, which Little Hans had also assigned to his mother, apparently had deeper

roots in 'sexual over excitation due to his mother's tenderness', as his father surmised. In any case, Freud sets aside the immediate conjunction of question and answer for a longer inspection of the evidence. But he says nothing about the father's compliance with his wife's behavior despite his complaint that Hans has begun to set them a riddle (*Rätsel*) so early in his life! At four and three-quarter's age, Hans woke one morning in tears. The reason he gave was:

'When I was asleep I thought you were gone (*fort*) and I had no Mummy (*Mammi*) to coax with (*Schmeicheln* = *liebkosen*).' (SE x: 23; PFL (8): 186)

Strachey's 'coax with' is strange and, I suggest, better translated as 'pet', since what is involved is Little Hans' return as well as receipt of his mother's fondling and also, I believe, his exchange of 'sweet talk' learned from the parents. But whenever he reflected so mournfully upon the possibility of being *without* a mother – or that his father would *go away* – his mother always took him into her bed. We might notice that the child 'elegist' has shifted the parental *fort/da* from the vision of their coming-and-goings to the experience of the *possession* of the mother at the expense of the father's permanent loss. Little Hans' fear that he would be bitten by a horse when out in the street could only be consoled by being 'petted' by his mother. In the meantime he had also told his mother, while in bed with her, that his Aunt who had seen her bathing him had said:

'He *has* got a dear little thingummy (*ein liebes Pischl*).'

to which Freud adds a note, saying that such sweet talk in respect of children's genitals was a common practice. Little Hans also confesses to his mother that, despite her prohibition, he put his hand on his widdler every night.

Freud argues that we must keep apart Little Hans' horse phobia and his anxiety over losing his mother and the petting they enjoyed. Hans' basic condition is to be seen in his enormous affection for his mother, in his attempts to seduce her, and in the admiration of his penis bestowed by his aunt and again offered to his mother. The possibility that he might lose his mother's loving, which occurred to him while he was away from her, is sufficient to arouse anxiety without any connection to the horse phobia. This is only confirmed by her practice of taking him into her bed, especially when his father was not with them at the vacation home. Now Hans' anxiety persisted even when he was with his mother. The puzzle here can only

be understood if we posit that repression has set in, but his longing remains and thus his anxiety must shift from the mother's possible loss to the fear of being bitten by a horse. So where did the horse phobia come from? Is the horse a substitute for the mother as suggested by Little Hans' comparison between their widdlers? But then we cannot understand his fear that the horse might come into his room at night. If we dismiss this as something foolish, we merely hide our ignorance behind our cleverness. But the language of neurosis is never foolish. Nor can we play the family doctor jumping on to Little Hans' masturbation as the cause of his anxiety. That is too easy. In the first place anxiety does not arise from masturbation but precisely from the attempt to break the habit which, after enjoying it for more than a year, is just what Little Hans was trying to do. It should also be said in defense of his mother that while she might be blamed for being too affectionate she would also be blamed for threatening her child.

Freud decides with the father that Little Hans should be told that the horse story was 'silly' and that what he really wanted was to be taken into his mother's bed. His fear of horses was caused by his excessive curiosity about widdlers which he realized was not quite right. He also suggests that the father 'enlighten' his child on sexual matters so far as to tell Little Hans that, as he could see from Hanna, his mother and, indeed, all females had no widdler (*Wiwimacher*). He was to pass off this information at a suitable opportunity offered by one of Hans' questions.

A month having passed, Little Hans resumed his walks but with a compulsion to look at horses in order to be frightened by them whereas earlier his fear had prevented the sight of them. After an attack of influenza which kept him in bed for two weeks, the earlier phobia returned and became worse after another period in bed. But it had become a fear of having his *finger* bitten by a *white* horse. His father suggests that it is not the horse but his widdler Hans was not to touch. Hans insists that widdler's don't bite. (Freud notes that the child's expression for 'I'm itching' (in the genitals) is 'it bites me'.) Hans and his father persist in trying to explain the horse phobia in terms of the child's masturbatory behaviour, the father apparently not having talked to Little Hans on the subject of woman's lack of a penis. But the moment of 'enlightenment' did offer itself on a quiet Sunday walk in Lainz, when Little Hans thanked God for getting rid of horses. His father seized on the moment to tell him that neither his sister nor his mother, nor women generally, have a widdler:

Hans: (after a pause): 'But how do little girls widdle, if they have no widdlers?'

I: 'They don't have widdlers like yours. Haven't you noticed already, when Hanna was being given her bath?' (SE x: 31; PFL (8): 194)

Although this news seemed to cheer Little Hans for a while, he soon produced a dream in which his masturbatory act was accompanied by the sight of his mother's widdler. Freud's comment implies that Hans had refused to abandon his single widdler theory despite his mother's threat and perhaps because the child had other reasons to doubt his father's story. But nothing is made of Hans' puzzlement about how women *urinate* if they don't have a widdler like little boys. The adult story makes no distinction between urination, masturbation, and copulation. Thus the 'infant' is caught in the attribution of a precocious sexuality at a stage where the urinary ritual or mysteries may be all that is at stake for the infant theorist. Even Freud's recommendation that Little Hans be informed that little girls have no widdler (*Wiwimacher*) encourages the puzzlement over what it is they have to make '*wiwi*' if they have nothing in their hand when they widdle.

From the father's report we consider next Little Hans' giraffe dream and his father's efforts to work it through with his son:

In the night there was a big giraffe in the room and a crumpled one; and the big one called out because I took the crumbled one away from it. Then it stopped calling out; and then I sat down on top of the crumbled one. (SE x: 37; PFL (8): 199)

The father interprets this as a phantasy played out between the animals (there were pictures of a giraffe and an elephant over Hans' bed) but which in fact represented Little Hans' ability to get past his father's protests against his being taken into bed by his mother whose genitals he wished to fondle. Freud adds that in addition to his idea of possessing the mother by sitting upon her, the dream reveals Little Hans' 'triumph' (*Sieg*) over his father's failure to prevent him from possessing his mother, although he probably feared that his mother did not like him because his widdler was 'no match for' (Strachey has 'not comparable to') his father's widdler. But still they were no closer to explaining the horse phobia, until on a visit to Freud's office it occurred to Freud to ask 'jokingly' whether the horses wore eye-glasses. Hans said, 'no'. But when asked if his father wore glasses – which he did – he also said 'no'. Freud then asked him whether 'the black around the [horse's] mouth' referred to his father's moustache, suggesting that it was his father whom he feared

precisely because he was so fond of his mother. He confirmed that Hans had no need to fear his father who loved him because his father 'knew long before he came into the world' that Little Hans would love his mother and fear his father because of it. But the father interrupted Freud, asking why Little Hans was angry with him since he had never scolded or hit him. Hans reminded him that he had been clipped by his father after he had butted him in the stomach. Yet Freud ignores the symbolism or meta-comment in the blow to the stomach in order to enjoy Little Hans' query about whether Freud could foretell things from talking to God. Freud's pleasure in hearing this from the mouth of babes and sucklings might well have filled him with pride had he not first suggested Hans' reply in his playful brag. In any case, from this time on the father supervised Hans in terms of prearranged advice from Freud.

The father's report continues to be based upon his own interpretative line that he is the horse that Little Hans fears because – even though he loves his father – he wants exclusive possession of his mother. This was the blissful state he had enjoyed every time the coach came to take his father away on a business trip:

'Daddy, don't trot away from me!'

I was struck by his saying 'trot' instead of 'run', and replied:

'Oho! So you're afraid of the horse trotting away from you.'

Upon which he laughed. (SE x: 45; PFL (8): 207)

His father then reports in some detail, even providing a sketch of the site from where Hans could observe the comings and goings of the

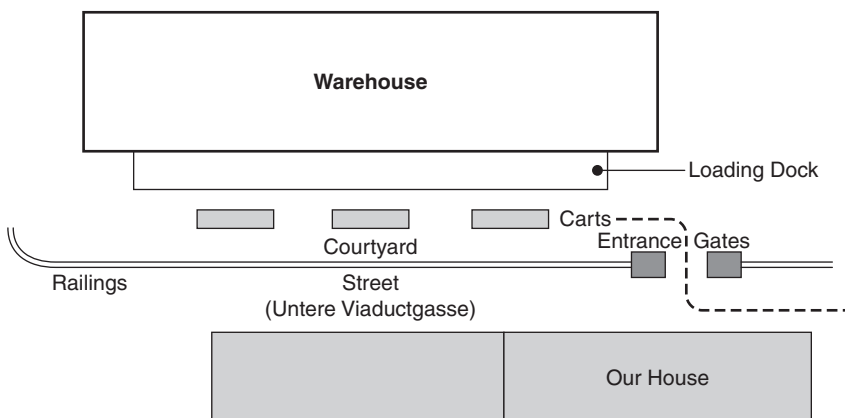


Figure 1.2 Warehouse (SE x: 46)

carhorses, and he notes specifically that Hans' fear arose with the larger carts (*Wagen*) – their starting up, their speed, and their turns to enter or exit the warehouse of the Office for the Taxation of Foodstuffs.

He suggests Little Hans' fear of the movement of the carhorse is an expression of a desire to be left alone in possession of his mother while he himself is away. With the aid of a sketch he treats Hans' fear of the carts moving off while he was trying to jump from them on to the loading dock where he wanted to play by stacking the boxes as a 'symbolic substitute for some other wish' that 'the Professor' would likely better understand. Further questioning reveals that the carhorses most feared by Little Hans were those with a 'black thing' on their mouths:



Figure 1.3 Horse head (SE x: 49)

He was most afraid that the horse pulling very heavy loads would fall down, 'making a racket (*Krawall*) with its feet', and perhaps be dead. Freud concurred with the father in seeing behind the diffuse horse phobia a wish for the father's death, but leaves us to wait for the significance of the fallen horse's legs thrashing in the air.

Little Hans began to play at being a horse himself and even to stamp his feet like a horse – something he had done whenever he was angry or had to do potty rather than play or when he had to widdle. So far things seem to be bogging down and Freud anticipates his reader's boredom by claiming that this trough in the analysis will be followed by a peak that Little Hans is just about to reveal. Hans' next episode involves his mother's 'drawers' (knickers) which throw him into a fit, spitting on the floor. His father tries to match the 'yellow' knickers to the yellow turds (*lumpf*) in an earlier episode. But Little Hans is just as upset by 'black' knickers. The puzzle related to his mother allowing him to accompany her to the toilet where he enjoyed seeing her lower her knickers to make *lumpf*. Hans continues to identify with horses and relates some games of cart and horse with the other children in which he often played 'horse' and was disturbed

by the expression 'cos of the horse' (*Wegen dem Pferd*) in which he heard the word 'cos' (*Wegen*) as 'cart' (*Wagen*). Freud does not pursue the association with *Magen* (the stomach) yet Hans had butted his father in the stomach earlier, perhaps mimicking what he took to be his father's way of treating his mother's stomach to make babies. The mother and father, of course, go together like a horse and cart. The puzzle is 'how?' – especially if the horse goes before the cart! But Little Hans seems to sense that the cart may, after all, go properly before the horse – to get its load. Returning to the inquest on his mother's knickers, Little Hans' behaviour, in particular his reaction of 'spitting' (*Spucken, Speien*) with its overtones of ejaculation or vomiting, remains without comment, although it reveals his mimicry of the parental secret. Here Freud sacrifices Hans' combination of research and acting out in favour of his own dramaturgy in which he speaks of Hans as 'masking' himself in the whole affair of the knickers in order to hide his pleasure with professions of disgust. In this connection, Hans offers the following explanation:

'I spit because the black drawers are black like a *lumpf* and the yellow ones like a widdle, and then I think I've got to widdle'. (SE x: 63; PFL (8): 224)

Hans' father pursues his questioning. But this reveals little more than that Hans associated the 'racket' (*Krawall*) – remember the racket made by the horse's feet and by himself stamping – of flushing the toilet with *lumpf* and the trickle with widdling. Freud intervenes to inform the reader that the father is getting nowhere because he asks too many questions.

On the eleventh of April, Little Hans entered his parent's room and was sent out as usual. He later reported:

'Daddy, I thought something. I was in the bath, and then the plumber (*Schlosser*) came and unscrewed it. Then he took a big borer (*Bohrer*) and stuck it into my stomach (*Bauch*)'. (SE x: 65; PFL (8): 226)

Along this line, Hans also remembered his displeasure at having to take baths sitting or lying instead of kneeling or standing. Under questioning he explains his fear that his mother might let his head go under the water but his father guesses that it is probably his sister Hanna upon whom he wished that fate. Later on, Hans expressed his fear that Hanna might fall from the balcony which had such big gaps in it – they had to be filled with wire – apparently the unpractical design of a Secessionist metal worker (*Schlosser*)! His mother gets him to admit that he would rather not have a sister. It then becomes clearer that Hanna is the '*lumpf*' with which he is obsessed. More

precisely, he has been looking everywhere – in bags, boxes, carts and in the toilet to see where babies come from since the stork story never convinced him. His recollection of Hanna being laid in bed beside her mother at birth also comes to mind, giving a better sense to his own desires than the prevailing insinuation that his motives are primarily incestuous, coupled with murderous feelings towards his father. Freud himself remarks that Hans was puzzled by the riddle of life and death but, of course, it is his own theory that has yet to root this riddle in the Oedipus story.

Meanwhile Little Hans continues with the phantasy of their journeys with Little Hanna in a box (*Kiste*) drawn by a horseman or himself riding the horse while Hans and his mother sit in the coach (Broser, 1982). The story, of course, puzzles his father all the more as he attempts to find his own place in it by identifying with the horse. At this point Freud suggests that the *box-phantasy* is to be treated as a comment upon the stork story:

‘If you really expect me to believe that the stork brought Hanna in October, when even in the summer, while we were travelling to Bmunden, I’d noticed how big Mother’s stomach was – then I expect you to believe my lies’. (SE x: 70–71; PFL (8): 231)

Hans and his father explore various inconsistencies in the stork story – essentially how the stork must not be seen by anyone when he brings the baby into the house, or down the chimney, into its crib or into the mother’s bed. Having let things run to this point – with the father receiving a right ‘drubbing’ (*frotzeln*) – Freud confesses that he had neglected to tell him that Little Hans would pursue his sexual research in terms of his infantile theory of anal birth and hence his excremental interests would reflect his equation of *lumpf* with babies and their origin. Thus Freud is himself to blame for the father’s failure so far to unravel his son’s case. There follows a long exchange between the two in which Little Hans reveals to his father his desire to beat his mother on the bottom (*Popo*) as she used to threaten to do with him – presumably another device to see if he can knock out of her the secret of pregnant (*gravide*) women and not simply an expression of sadism. The latter accusation is too strong I believe for the context of Little Hans’ sexual research and its frustrations. It is interesting to note that the term *gravide* (pregnant) closely resembles *Gradiva*, the lady of the light step – virginal and of course not pregnant, but who in turn reminds us of Freud’s vision of his own mother’s slim figure (at least between pregnancies). By the same token, much of Little Hans’ fear and anger at his father represents his

efforts – despite the stork story and his father's protestations that he had never given Hans cause for anger – to fit his father into the 'pregnancy complex' (*Graviditätskomplex*).

Little Hans is obliged to try to crack the secret of life any way he can so long as his parents withhold the facts of life for which he seems to be ready. The more they withhold his sexual enlightenment the more he parodies presumptive versions of how it must be the parents expect him to make his discovery. Thus he combines direct surgery with the chicken-and-egg story by cutting open a rubber doll to inspect its insides and relating the story of how he pretended to be a chicken before the other children at Gmunden and how they had looked for the egg and found a Little Hans! But still Little Hans remains in the dark as to whether his sister Hanna belongs to him, to his mother, or to his father. To be told that she belongs to all of them – but to remain unenlightened about the nature of sexual relations and of the female genitals – only leaves him in the dark. So finally his parents explain to him 'up to a point' that children grow inside their Mummy and come into the world by being pressed out 'like a *lumpf*', but painfully. Little Hans responds by taking the other tack with all sorts of questions to get out of the father *his* role in making babies. Once again the parental myth fends off these questions by answering that mummies and daddies only have babies if God wants a baby. Again Little Hans retreats into his phantasy of being a mother with little children lest they displace him and the lovely time he had experienced as his mother's first-born. Similarly, in his fascination with the loading and unloading of boxes he had acted out his infantile theory of how babies got out of their mother while also overlaying this game with his hypothesis on fecal birth. But one day, after having claimed so long that he was the mother of his own little children (his playmates), he told his father that it was his mother who was their mother while his father was their grandfather, adding that one day he would grow up and have children like his father and his mother would be their grandmother:

The little Oedipus had found a happier solution than that prescribed by destiny. Instead of putting his father out of the way, he had granted him the same happiness that he desired himself: he made him a grandfather and married him to his own mother too. (SE x: 98; PFL (8): 256)

Having resolved the oedipal riddle as a law of intergenerational reproduction, Little Hans then produced two further phantasies to bring his own plumbing into line with his sexual future:

The plumber came; and first he took away my behind (*Podl*) with a pair of pincers (*Zange*), and then he gave me another, and then the same with my widdler (*Wiwimacher*). (SE x: 98; PFL (8): 257)

A few days later, Little Hans' mother wrote to express to Freud her joy (*Freude*) at Little Hans' recovery. A week later his father added a postscript pointing to several minor matters but emphasizing how violent the anxiety attacks had been so that they could not have been handled by sending him out with a good thrashing. Overall, his anxiety seemed to have displaced itself into a disposition to ask questions as to how things were made but he still remained puzzled about the relation between a father and his son. To this Freud adds that in the 'plumber phantasy' Little Hans had indeed resolved the anxiety due to the castration complex. But for the rest this young researcher had only discovered, however early, that 'all knowledge is a patchwork' and that every solution leaves behind it an unsolved remainder.

Putting the Cart Before the Horse

Freud's concluding analysis of the case materials consists of an extended 'discussion' in Part III organized from three points of view. The first consists of an intertextual exercise which cannot be adequately understood without a knowledge of *Three Essays on Sexuality* (1905). Freud claims to test his earlier findings against the case of Little Hans and we must pay particular attention to Freud's conduct of his own case. In the second exercise, he evaluates the contribution of the case materials to a general understanding of phobic behavior. And in the final evaluation, he considers what light the case of Little Hans can throw upon child behaviour in general and the pedagogical practices of the day.

On the first count, Freud considers the present case to have accorded very well with his earlier findings. But rather than consider to what extent this reveals a persistent bias in his theoretical perspective, he instead devotes himself to setting aside the objections that Hans is a 'degenerate' child – that the analysis reveals nothing more than Freud's 'prejudices' instilled through the father into a suggestible child. He replies that these arguments rely upon too vague a sense of what is at work in 'suggestion' as well as involving a stereotype about the impressionability of children. He considers that there is no great difference between children and adults since, whether they lie or tell the truth, or if they phantasise too freely, what is relevant psychoanalytically is the weight of this behaviour in

the total economy of their experience which functions to produce internal checks and balances upon particular phases of reported experience:

The arbitrary has no existence in mental life.

Thus it is not possible to decide upon the total character of either the child or the adult from elements of behaviour that, at a given stage, appear bizarre or perverted but which may be found to have occurred in anyone's life-history and to have a significance that can only be determined by means of a case-history analysis. Of course, the discovery of the unconscious means that a split will occur between what is said and what is thought by the patient. This, however, is not a matter of deliberate deception. It is rather the very mark of mental life involving, as it does, unconscious processes. The latter, in turn, are necessary experiences that destine us for life in society. They are, so to speak, the stuff of family life out of which each of us has to come to terms with a 'given' sexuality whose meaning has nevertheless to be acquired or 'learned', as we can see from the case of Little Hans.

As to the objection that it was necessary to tell Little Hans things well beyond his own capacity of expression, Freud replies that this is a limitation that lies in the very nature of a neurosis inasmuch as it involves turning away from the 'other' person. As a result, the patient cannot work through for himself what 'we' want him to realize unless we intervene in the materials he presents to us in order to direct him towards the unconscious processes whose recognition may produce a reduction of his conflict. Freud, therefore, concedes the interference-effect but answers that it is required by the very nature of the effort to cure:

For psychoanalysis is not an impartial scientific investigation, but a therapeutic measure.

He remains adamant that even though Little Hans had to contend with two slightly uncoordinated analysts he nevertheless independently articulated the plumber phantasies and the 'lumpf' puzzles proper to his own sexual development around the 'castration complex'. But he sets aside any further appeal with the observation that *it is useless to try to convince those who are not already persuaded of the objective reality of unconscious processes* – a decision made in the 'pleasant knowledge' that their number is on the increase. So Freud's infant science, now sure of its own legs, confidently turns its back upon its scientific 'other' in order to explore its own turf.

Once again Freud reconstructs Little Hans' preoccupation with widdlers as due to his hypothesis that the presence of a widdler is what differentiates animate creatures from inanimate objects, with variations in the size of the widdler corresponding to the relative size of the creature. Hence grownups and large animals have big widdlers. Yet Freud says nothing to differentiate the urinal from the genital function of the widdler. In that case, little Hanna and her mother could be seen to widdle even if their urethra does not issue in a penis. By the same token, he overdetermines Little Hans' interest in his 'widdler' by not pointing to the joint urethral and ejaculatory functions of the 'penis'. Here is a sexual difference that is not the whole of the difference between the sexes. But by ignoring such distinctions, he casts Little Hans in the role of a sexually precocious child. Little Hans risks 'homosexuality' at one turn and 'polygamy' at another at a time in his life when he is ignorant of the copulatory function between the sexes but not of the autoerotic effect of lying with his parents. Freud indulges the dramatic irony of casting Little Hans as a 'sexual researcher' who consoles himself with masturbation until he has unlocked the riddle of human sexuality. While one cannot entirely abstract the sexual question from the predicament of being sexed, the latter surely predisposes the infant to raise the ontological question 'Where do babies come from?' without simultaneously posing the sexological question 'How do parents copulate?' To separate the two questions entirely would be to deny the unconscious relationship between them. But in reconstructing that relationship care must be taken not to project knowledge (guilt, perversion) that can only have been an after-effect. Indeed, this is the very essence of Freud's discovery of the *Nachträglichkeit*, i.e., the 'deferred' action whose history calls for the reconstructed stages of sexual development in the child. Part of the point here is that the 'good enough' parent (analyst) will know not to overlay the baby question with the sexual question until it is time. Yet Freud preferred to violate his better knowledge for the sake of improving the interest of his little stories. Here as elsewhere he sacrifices clinical precision to theatrical or literary effect. Thus when he speaks of Little Hans as having expressed to his parents his 'regret' that he had never yet seen their widdlers, Freud projects Little Hans into an adult mood of reflection upon an (im)possible experience – as though what had been missed was never having seen Niagara Falls – or else a wish that, on being confessed, might have been readily granted. Having indulged this effect, he tries to redeem it with an argument that all Little

Hans' precociousness involved was his need to explore the world on the basis of a comparison with his own body. Yet he never quite releases Little Hans' embodied curiosity from his sexual curiosity and the titillation that Little Hans somehow means to explore his mother's body with his 'research penis' meanwhile playfully rehearsing the question at hand.

Despite Hans' intense auto-eroticism, and even though he was only acquainted with the male genital organ, Freud observes that Hans displayed affection for both little boys and little girls but with a slight tendency towards 'polygamy' rather than homosexuality. Once again, he sacrifices Little Hans' life-history to his own phantasy of a collective history repeated in the developmental stages of each individual. His purpose is, of course, to try to embed the primal behaviour of children in the successful history that has moved civilized societies away from primitivism. Apart from what is fanciful in this evolutionary trope, it is engaged in merely to make the point that once a child has experienced the skin sensation (Moll's 'contrectation'!) aroused by sleeping beside his mother, he will want to repeat this 'bliss' by sleeping with a woman. Freud's evolutionary rhetoric is hardly any better than Moll's nomenclature from which he distances himself but upon which he nevertheless falls for the quasi-scientific effect of making the young old and the old young.

It is essential to Freud's purpose to cast Little Hans as a universal child, i.e., the child in all of us or the child whom each of us has been. So once again, he claims that Hans' case confirms his own earlier oedipal theory – where in fact he refers to his first comments on Little Hans and so merely repeats himself!

Hans really was a little Oedipus who wanted to have his father 'out of the way', to get rid of him, so that he might be alone with his beautiful mother and sleep with her.

This hypothesis very much depends upon Freud's slip from Hans' wanting his father to leave on trips so that he could be alone with his mother to the imputation (requiring the construct of the unconscious) of a murderous wish against the father with the purpose not just of snuggling up with his mother but also of making love to her. Having claimed Little Hans for psychoanalysis Freud then gives him back to society as after all not a bad little child, but in fact kind-hearted and affectionate and no more unusual than anyone else in that he was also occasionally angry and aggressive with those he loved. To make this point, he employs an intricate set of fictions, each embedded in the other:

- (i) the Oedipus fiction
- (ii) the case of Little Hans
- (iii) Little Hans as little Oedipus

'The emotional life of man is in general made up of pairs of contraries ...' Therefore, Little Hans is not unusual in his love and hatred of his father or of his sister, because in reality – and not just in fiction! – everyone is composed of ambivalent thoughts and emotions. To make this point, Freud adds the following quotation:

'In fact, I am no clever work of fiction;
I am a man, with all his contradiction.' (C.F. Meyer)

What Little Hans seeks to protect is his blissful monopoly of his mother's attention. Displaced by the arrival of his sister, he sets out to recapture his mother, to murder his father, and to live happy ever after married to his mother and surrounded by his own children.

Turning to Hans' horse phobia, or 'anxiety hysteria', Freud remarks that the latter are the most common neuroses of childhood. They are usually accompanied by a phobia and the latter cannot be broken willfully. Little Hans was fortunate that his parents cooperated with the attempt to get at the underlying repression by psychoanalytic means rather than by any rough pedagogy. Since he fears that the case history may have struck the reader as somewhat too long and not too clear, Freud reviews its principal events. It is necessary to insist upon the nexus between Little Hans' love of his mother and the shift into anxiety with regard to her. His efforts to displace this anxiety onto horses – whatever the possible motive in punishing himself for his masturbatory behavior or his ambivalence towards the parents – seem to stem from the deferred effect of his mother's castration threat. The latter was aggravated by the therapeutic move of telling him that females have no widdler. Freud defends this therapeutic setback on the grounds that it is the primary task of psychoanalysis to bring the unconscious processes into consciousness by means of its own interpretative language (*Deutkunst*), although the latter is in part taken from expressions used by the patient and would not otherwise be effective in helping him discover the unconscious complex '*where it is anchored*' in his unconscious. Thus Little Hans was able to produce his giraffe phantasy and the law-breaking phantasies shortly thereafter and together these reveal his incestuous desire of the mother with his father removed or else as an accomplice.

On the basis of Hans' 'symbolic phantasies of intercourse', Freud ventures to suggest to the child that he wishes his father were dead.

For it is his father (with his glasses and dark moustache) who is represented by the horse and the possibility that it will fall under its heavy load. Again, he defends the deteriorating effect of the psychoanalytic intervention at this point of the illness on the ground that it is necessary, so to speak, to fill out the portrait of the thief before he can be caught and hanged. Hence his 'running commentary' on the case materials serves to bring into focus the parricide underlying the maternal incest determining the unconscious process in Little Hans. It then becomes possible to see in the child's preoccupation with '*lumpf*' as an analogy between the heavily laden horse-carts and his own bodily retention of the feces and their release. We might add that in this instance, as with his interest in widdlers, Little Hans may well have been mimicking the larger process of 'baby in, baby out' with some sense of the pleasure involved. I think this provides a connection to the plumber phantasy as a *phantasy of procreation* (*Zeugungsphantasie*), although Freud insists it is distorted by castration anxiety because he reads it entirely in terms of the penile function and its aggressive replay of the child's own displacement in the family birth order:

The big bath of water, in which Hans imagined himself, was his mother's womb; the 'borer', which his father had from the first recognized as a penis, owed its mention to its connection with 'being born'. The interpretation that we are obliged to give to the phantasy will of course sound very curious: 'With your big penis you "bored" me' (i.e. 'gave birth to me') 'and put me in my mother's womb.' (SE x: 128; PFL (8): 285)

Proceeding from the procreation phantasy, Freud now lets us see that Hans' interest in heavily laden things and their spill or evacuation represents at least as much a concern (*der Graviditäts Interesse*) with his pregnant mother as with his dying father. This becomes all the more clear in Little Hans' insistence that Hanna had accompanied the family on its journeys even the summer before she was born ... '*in complete contradiction to his official speeches – he knew in his unconscious where the baby came from and where it had been before*' ... and that is why he was so contemptuous of his father's stork fable, teasing and beating the old horse. Indeed, Hans even went so far as to perform a cross-section upon his doll to show his parents that their fecal theory of birth was just that! In addition to a number of other symptomatic 'acts' – knocking over a horse and playing with his favorite turd-doll (Lodi), Little Hans finally acted out a piece of 'structural psychoanalysis', resolving his oedipal complex by marrying off his father to his grandmother so that he himself could marry

his mother. 'With this phantasy', Freud claims, 'both the illness and the analysis came to an appropriate end'.

Yet Freud continues his account of the case, rising to his characteristic heights of storytelling whose pleasure he has postponed to this point – the point whose timing reveals the master at work, retaining and releasing his material as he best sees it, creating yet another work of art/science in which no one can deny that psychoanalysis is Freud's child.

We now picture Little Hans 'exiled' from his parents' bedroom, between four and four and a half years old, suffering the loss of his mother's total affection and displacement by his newly born sister, Hanna. Torn from his early pleasure in the parental bed, Little Hans consoles himself by playing with his own widdler since he has even lost the company of his little playmates from the summer home. Alone in Vienna, Little Hans takes on the great riddle of where babies come from – a riddle no less than that of the Theban sphinx – already aware that his mother's body had swollen before she was confined and had become slim afterwards, making nonsense of the stork myth. Thus he first hypothesizes that babies are turds (*lumpf*) and come into the world through one's bottom – something one can enjoy and which gives one reason to believe one can have babies oneself. But there was something else to disturb Little Hans' birth phantasy. It was his father's claim that the two children were his even though they had come into the world through their mother. On this score, Little Hans suspected his father of fabricating the stork myth in order to protect his place in the mother's bed since he was obviously jealous of Little Hans there and wanted to preserve that lovely place Little Hans enjoyed while his father was away. He also loved his father for playing with him and taking care of him. Yet he loved his mother and hated his father as a rival. Thus he was torn by a conflict in which his hatred of the father was repressed but continuously fed by his love of his mother. He sensed too that his father's knowledge of the origins of babies had something to do with his big widdler – for his own became excited with the very thought which he imagined involved some sort of breaking into the mother. His body throbbed with sensations that pushed him towards 'the postulate of the vagina', but he shrank from this because his earlier hypothesis of the mother's widdler blocked his view of things. Thus there sank into his unconscious his desire to make love to his mother and his hatred of his father, disabling him both emotionally and intellectually.

Such is the clinical portrait of our 'little Oedipus' required before we can get at the horse phobia. The latter can be traced through

numerous possible factors but the connection between his friend Fritzl being hurt while playing horses and the death wish projected onto his father would not have been a sufficient cause apart from Little Hans' complex over his mother's confinement which the horse phobia remodeled. Thus it is difficult to disentangle the fear of the horse biting his finger from his mother's threat to have his widler cut off inasmuch as both reflect his lust for his mother and his hatred of his father. But in Little Hans' case victory (*Sieg*) went to the repression of his joy in being (playing at) a horse and so he limited his movements because of their dark erotic side, keeping himself indoors with his beloved mother. Thus his early love also had its share in the victory.

Having claimed a 'triumph' at least as much for himself as for Little Hans (Sigmund, triumph-mouth) Freud nevertheless reveals a final moment of personal anxiety, fearful lest his conclusion seems to give everything away to Adler. In that case, all Freud would have achieved was to explain Little Hans' phobia in terms of the repression of his hostile instincts against the father and his sadistic ones against his mother. Freud replies that he believes that all instincts are, so to speak, aggressive in their drive to expression and so he sees no reason to alter his own view that aggression (hatred and sadism) belongs to the very constitution of the sexual libido.

But there is still one more curtain to fall. Freud returns to the question of the implications of the case of Little Hans for child pedagogy. Once again he feels obliged to respond to objections that one can hardly generalize from such a degenerate child to normal children. He does so for fear that if it is learned that his beautiful mother had suffered as a young girl from a neurotic conflict – which Freud had treated – then Hans will be written off as bad stock. Although Freud seems to think a disposition to neurosis can be inherited, he rejects this possibility in Hans' case. Admittedly, the young boy was sexually precocious – although perhaps not by American standards, according to reported research, nor by the standard of many 'great' men. But in any case there is often a correlation between sexual and intellectual precocity and this is usually so in gifted children. Hans is perhaps only peculiar in that his phobia received treatment in his nursery whereas this is rarely the case for other children whose phobias are left to surface in adult neuroses, or else suppressed by the fear of punishment that goes with most child pedagogies. The latter are more directed to leaving the parents in peace rather than to the good of the child. Freud speculates that, in such a context, Little Hans' phobia may well have had the benefit of

drawing attention to the child's experience and working it through then and there. Paradoxically, those in the business of child education who prefer so to speak to let sleeping dogs lie have had to rely on Freud's work to have any idea of the child sexuality they so much fear. As it turned out, psychoanalysis did not unleash Little Hans' depravity. It cured his phobia and left him on familiar terms with his father who won from his son the confidence he lost in respect. More profoundly, the effect of analysis is to replace unconscious repression with the higher order (*seelische*) consciousness of condemnation (*sie ersetzt die Verdrängung durch die Verurteilung*), thus setting life on an even more secure foundation. Freud then admits that, if it had been left to him, he would have enlightened Little Hans about the vagina and copulation since he doubted that such knowledge would either have altered the child's love for his mother or have ruined his innocent childhood. As for the later years, since most education is based upon the suppression of the instincts, with great costs to all but the most exceptional children, it is more likely that a psychoanalytically-based pedagogy would civilize children with less suffering than is normal in the present situation.

In fact Freud continued to reflect upon the case of Little Hans and I think it is worthwhile to recall his more general reflections on the problem of anxiety. Infantile animal phobias offer the best material for discussion and so Freud returns to the case of Little Hans with some comparisons from the Wolf Man's childhood. It is important to notice that in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926) Freud no longer regards the Ego as a less powerful organization than the Id and its libidinal object-cathexis. The latter belongs either to the positive or negative Oedipus complex – in Little Hans' case either his love for his mother or his hatred of his father – which must be resisted for fear of castration. Although the two motives are interrelated, it is the resistance to hatred and aggression that determines the symptom formation. Thus by shifting the castration anxiety to the fear of being bitten by the horse, Little Hans removed the conflict with his father whom he also loved and also reduced the Ego's anxiety because he could avoid the horses by staying indoors with his beloved mother. The Wolf Man might have avoided looking at the picture books with the threatening wolves if his sister had not made him look at them. Whether the fear of castration is the basic factor in anxiety or whether it is merely an expression of a more existential anxiety that sets in with the trauma of birth, as argued by Rank, remains undecided in Freud's mind. However – apart from claiming priority

on this – he rejects Rank's thesis on the ground that the infant is too narcissistic to experience any other object. Separation and union, therefore, are after-effects in the development of the child, experienced at each critical phase of oral, anal, and genital development. What seems to be constant is the infant's fear of being separated from its mother in which case it is helpless to satisfy its needs. The mother's absence sets off the anxiety of being left unsatisfied which in turn provokes its cries for attention and rescue. Later on, the castration anxiety repeats this earlier infantile fear of separation from the mother but on the genital level and later on the anxiety can be transferred to moral and social anxiety as constitutive features of child socialization.

We can now restate the relation between internal and external sources of anxiety:

A wolf would probably attack us irrespectively of our behaviour towards it; but the loved person would not cease to love us nor should we be threatened with castration if we did not entertain certain feelings and intentions within us. Thus such instinctual impulses are determinants of external dangers and so become dangerous in themselves; and we can now proceed against the external danger by taking measures against the internal ones. In phobias of animals, the danger seems to be still felt entirely as an external placement in the symptom. In obsessional neurosis the danger is much more internalized. That portion of anxiety in regard to the super-ego which constitutes social anxiety still represents an internal substitute for an external danger, while the other portion – moral anxiety – is already completely endopsychic. (SE xx: 145–146)

By the same token, we may treat Freud's ruminations on anxiety as part of his own sense of the danger to psychoanalysis from such rivals as Otto Rank. We have already noted that Freud's discussion is intended to revise his own anticipation of Rank's thesis on the trauma of birth. Although setting him above Adler for maintaining a definite psychoanalytic perspective, he rejects Rank's specific hypothesis that the intensity of the birth trauma will determine all later separation anxiety because it lacks any of the observational data on births that it requires. But, of course, Freud is even more opposed to Rank's attempt to suggest that the birth trauma is more basic than the libidinal anxiety and the Ego mechanisms of repression and repetition in the *resistance of the unconscious*. In a certain sense, he argues that in anxiety the Ego inoculates itself in order to suffer a lesser illness than might be the case. How it does this is by the discovery of psychoanalysis.

Freud concludes that, strictly speaking, he had learned nothing new that he had not already known from older patients. All the same, the case of Little Hans retains its value as a model of the infantile complex that can be traced in all adult analysis. Thirteen years later (in 1922) Freud added a postscript to the case. He was visited by a strapping young man who – despite the dire predictions held out for a child whose innocence had been robbed by psychoanalysis – reported he had come through puberty unscathed and had even survived his parents' divorce and remarriage. He had kept on good terms with both parents but since he lived alone he missed seeing his sister of whom he was very fond. He told Freud that, although he had read his own case history, he had not recognized himself in it – at least not until he read the parts on the journey to the summer home in Gmunden. So, like a dream, the analysis had been forgotten!