

ment took charge in 1975, it was able to complete the "inevitable" democratization peacefully. Moreover, under the capable leadership of King Juan Carlos, the government showed a far more human face than it would have had a totalitarian form of democracy triumphed in the civil war. For a man who was born in the wrong century and who died with the mummified arm of Saint Teresa of Avila at his side, this was no small achievement.

The Two Faces of Freud

by Kirk Kilpatrick

Sigmund Freud's Christian Unconscious by Paul C. Vitz, New York: Guilford Press.

When Sigmund Freud took his children hunting for mushrooms he always insisted that they follow a certain ritual. Part of the ritual consisted of placing fresh flowers every day at the shrine of the Virgin near the wood.

Although he publicly attacked religion as an illusion, Freud seems to have had a private preoccupation with it, particularly with Catholicism. When in Rome and Paris he haunted St. Peter's and Notre Dame. In his correspondence he refers frequently to Easter and Pentecost but never to Jewish holidays. His favorite books—*Faust*, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, *Notre Dame de Paris*, *Paradise Lost*, *The Inferno*—are centrally concerned with Hell, the Devil, possession by the Devil, or pacts with the Devil. Indeed, Freud seems to make more references to Heaven, Hell, the Devil, and damnation in his correspondence than many contemporary priests do in a lifetime of sermons. Were he alive today we can imagine him accusing such modern clerics of emptying Christianity of its content—a charge he leveled against his friend the Reverend Oskar Pfister, a liberal Protestant pastor.

In *Sigmund Freud's Christian Unconscious*, Paul Vitz develops the original yet well-documented thesis that "Freud had a strong life-long positive identification with and attraction to Christianity." At the same time Freud harbored an unconscious hostility to

Christianity and seems at times to have associated himself with the Devil and the Antichrist.

In the course of establishing his thesis, Professor Vitz treats the reader to some fascinating biographical material. One item that stands out is a cocaine purchase Freud conducted with Emanuel Merck, the great-grandson of the man who founded Merck Pharmaceutical and upon whom Goethe modeled the character of Mephistopheles. Freud, who was well aware of the symbolic overtones of this exchange, seemed to believe that cocaine would provide a shortcut to knowledge, power, and success. He first took the drug on *Walpurgisnacht*—the night Faust sealed his pact with the Devil.

According to Vitz, Freud's ambivalence about Christianity stemmed from his early relationship with a nanny, a devout Catholic, who cared for him until the age of three and apparently introduced young Freud to Catholic practices and rituals. In many European families at that time the bond between child and nanny was quite intimate, and was not unlike the relationship between the white child and black mammy that typified certain Southern households. In any event, Freud's relationship with his nanny seems to have had a profound lifelong impact on him. Not so curiously, perhaps, he hired a devout Catholic nanny for his own children.

Vitz devotes considerable attention to Freud's early years, as well as to dreams, slips of the tongue, and literary analysis. It is no mistake that the approach seems rather Freudian. That is the author's intent. One result is that whatever criticisms one is tempted to make against Vitz are the same criticisms one would want to level against the Freudian method itself. But by the same token, anyone who takes Freud seriously will have to take Vitz seriously. What he demonstrates so ably is that the Freudian system is a two-edged sword which can be used to cut both ways—in this case, against atheism as well as against belief.

In the *Future of an Illusion*, Freud argued that religious beliefs are illusions "born from man's need to make his helplessness tolerable and built up from the material of memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and

the childhood of the human race." Freud was concerned not with the beliefs themselves but with the motives for belief, and concluded that religion was untrustworthy because based on childhood needs and wishes, often of a neurotic nature.

But in that case Freud's attachment to his Catholic nanny, coupled with her abrupt departure, goes far toward explaining his lifelong ambivalence about Christianity and his public rejection of religion. Likewise, Freud's rejection of his father, a weak and passive man who seemed unable to control the super-charged Oedipal atmosphere of the household, provides the psychological motive for his rejection of God. Freud's atheism, as well as atheism in general, can be interpreted as unconscious Oedipal wish fulfillment. And in fact, as Vitz has pointed out elsewhere, the biographies of many prominent atheists reveal a pattern of shame, disappointment, or rage directed at their fathers.

Freud himself connected the primeval murder of the father by the sons with the Christian doctrine of original sin, and in one startling passage in *Totem and Taboo* seems to acknowledge—at least on the mythical and symbolic level—that no better resolution had been found for the Oedipal crime than Christ's radical obedience to His Father's will. Nevertheless, in his public persona, Freud seems to have been more often on the side of the fallen angels. "Do you not know that I am the Devil?" he once asked, then added, "All my life I have had to play the Devil, in order that others would be able to build the most beautiful cathedral with the materials that I produced."

In *Sigmund Freud's Christian Unconscious*, Vitz uses those materials to neutralize the thesis presented by Freud in *The Future of an Illusion*. Judged by his own criteria, Freud turns out to be an unreliable witness on the subject of religious belief. For a long time now, *The Future of an Illusion* has been one of the most frequently required readings in college psychology courses. Through it, generations of students have learned to view religious belief as the result of immature projections and wish fulfillments. Fair play would suggest that in the future they get an equal opportunity to examine

the psychological motives for agnosticism and atheism. Paul Vitz has written an important book which deserves to be widely read.

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"Here Is Free Country"

by Myron B. Kuropas

***Freedom's Child* by Walter Polovchak with Kevin Klose, New York: Random House; \$17.95.**

During the 1930's many Americans were enamored of the "grand and noble experiment" called the Soviet Union. Movie stars, clergymen, authors, intellectuals, columnists, and other American opinion makers traveled to the USSR and returned with glowing reports of the joys of socialism under Joseph Stalin. Many immigrants from the former Russian empire believed these stories and some decided to return to their former homeland to taste the fruits of Bolshevik labor. One such person was Morris Stolar, a Jewish communist sympathizer living in Chicago's Humboldt Park who, in the 1930's, moved to Moscow with his wife and two American-born children. Today, one of these children, Abe Stolar, now 75, is awaiting permission to return to Chicago. He has been waiting for a very long time. Despite the personal interventions of Secretary of State George Shultz and much American press coverage (the *Washington Post* recently ran a feature story describing his plight), Abe Stolar sits in his Moscow apartment waiting and hoping that someday he will once again walk the streets of Humboldt Park.

A similar fate almost befell Walter Polovchak, a Ukrainian-born youngster whose father wanted to return to the Soviet Ukraine after living in the Humboldt Park area for less than six months. *Freedom's Child* is an exciting, blow-by-blow, objective account of young Walter's long struggle to remain in the United States against his father's wishes. With the help of Kevin Klose—author of *Russia and the Russians*, former bureau chief of the *Washington Post* in Chicago and Moscow, and now

an editor on the *Post's* national news desk—all sides of the Polovchak controversy are presented in the words of the antagonists.

On Walter's side were Chicago's Ukrainian American community; his lawyers, Julian Kulas and Henry Mark Holzer; the US State Department; Juvenile Judge Joseph Mooney; local NBC-TV reporter Paul Hogan; Walter's cousin, Walter Polowczak; and his sister Natalie, who also refused to return to the Ukraine. Arrayed against Walter were his parents, Michael and Anna; their ACLU lawyers, Richard Lifshitz, Richard Mandel, and Lois Lipton; *Chicago Tribune* Foreign Editor Howard Tyner; and Pyotr Prilepski of the Soviet embassy in Washington, DC.

The Polovchak drama began when 12-year-old Walter, protesting his parents' decision to return to the Ukraine, ran away from their apartment and went to live with Cousin Walter. His parents sent the police after him and Walter finally ended up in court. There, with the help of Ukrainian American lawyer Julian Kulas, Walter won his first victory. Judge Mooney ruled in favor of a MINS (Minor in Need of Supervision) petition awarding temporary custody to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Asked by reporters why he refused to go back to the Ukraine, Walter replied: "Here is free country." His words were flashed around the world.

Young Walter returned to his cousin's care and after Julian Kulas requested political asylum for the young Ukrainian refusenik, he was guarded, for a time, by federal agents. Later, Walter was granted political asylum by the US State Department.

One of the first reporters to provide sympathetic coverage of the Polovchak case was Paul Hogan of Channel 5 in Chicago. He quickly learned that Walter was Ukrainian, not Russian (as much of the press had reported), and that his understanding of freedom was based on comparative experiences as opposed to philosophical comprehension. It was also Paul Hogan who exposed the role of the Soviet embassy in putting pressure on Walter's father to return with his entire family.

All of this was too much for Howard Tyner, the *Chicago Tribune* corre-

spondent who, despite assignments in Poland and Eastern Europe as well as numerous meetings with Ukrainian Americans, never really sympathized with the Ukrainian perspective. Professing to be a friend of Julian Kulas, Tyner admits not "going along with Julian's attitude on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. . . . Anyway, when I learned he was going to be involved, I had visions of super anti-communist Ukrainian émigrés collar-ing the kid to get him away." Tyner concluded that young Walter's understanding of freedom was superficial. "Between going out for a McDonald's burger in Chicago or waiting in line for pierogi on Lenin Allee in Lviv, he liked it better here," Tyner argues in the book. So concerned was Tyner with fairness to the family that he decided to contact the ACLU and urge them to serve as counsel to Michael and Anna Polovchak. A breach of journalistic ethics? "I suppose," responds Tyner unconcernedly.

The ACLU position regarding Walter's motives was also hostile. "The issue of where the parents sought to take the kid—to Ukraine—was irrelevant," admitted Illinois ACLU Executive Director Jay Miller. For Miller, the entire incident had little to do with freedom from repression by a totalitarian regime; it was all "a propaganda thing" for the Ukrainian community. Harvey Grossman, another ACLU lawyer who worked on the case, was in regular contact with Pyotr Prilepski, a man from the Soviet embassy whose rank and position were those usually reserved for KGB agents.

The ACLU argued that Walter's parents knew what was best for Walter and that he should be returned to their custody immediately. There was little concern for Walter's feelings toward his parents, especially his father. Walter's life in the Ukraine was hardly ideal. With a mother totally dominated by an indifferent, philandering father who was more interested in making deals on the black market with goods sent by American relatives than he was in nurturing his relationship with his family, young Walter was raised by an adoring, deeply religious grandmother who always believed the family would someday leave for America. When she died on the eve of the family's departure for the United States, Walter was