

WAS ADLER A DISCIPLE OF FREUD? A NOTE

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I am drawn to record this note after having read still another book in which Adler, the disciple, is reported to have broken away from Freud, his master. Adler himself denied this interpretation vehemently.

I was having dinner with him in the restaurant of the Gramercy Park Hotel, New York, in which he lived a year or two before his death. I recall asking him some question that implied his discipleship under Freud. He became very angry, flushed and talked loudly enough so that other people's attention was attracted. He said that this was a lie and a swindle for which he blamed Freud entirely, whom he then called names like swindler, sly, schemer, as nearly as I can recall. He said that he had never been a student of Freud, or a disciple or a follower. He had made it clear from the beginning that he didn't agree with Freud and that he had his own opinions.

Freud suggested, he said, that they try to get together and perhaps they could come to agree eventually. When the disagreement remained and Adler left the group, Freud, according to Adler, spread the version of the break which has since been accepted by all, namely that Adler had been a disciple of Freud and had then broken away from him. It was this that made Adler bitter, that evening at least, and made him think of Freud as "sly." I never heard him express personal opinions of Freud at any other time. This outburst must therefore be considered to be unusual.

What this incident may mean and how we ought to interpret it, depends upon additional evidence yet to be gathered.