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Freud's British family: Reclaiming lost lives in Manchester and London

by Roger Willoughby, London, Routledge, 2025, 235 pp., £31.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-032-65198-9

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BOOK REVIEW

Freud's British family: Reclaiming lost lives in Manchester and London, by Roger Willoughby, London, Routledge, 2025, 235 pp., £31.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-032-65198-9

Willoughby explains the goal of the book as follows:

'The affection and complexity of feeling Freud maintained for his half-brothers and their families in Britain is here revealed for the first time in detail. These relationships influenced his imagination, and his thinking and theorizing on mental structure and psychodynamics'.(p. 2)

Most Freud biographies begin by pointing out the extraordinary age structure of Freud's early family environment and the fact that the family lived in a single room at Schlossergasse 117 in Freiberg (now Příbor in the Czech Republic). Sigmund Freud was the firstborn in the marriage between Jakob Freud and the 20-years-younger Amalie Nathanson and was born in May 1856. This was Jakob's second or third marriage. He had two sons from his first marriage, Emanuel (born 1833) and Phillip (born 1836), who were old enough to have been Sigmund's fathers. Two of Emanuel's children, both of whom were Freud's age, John (born 1854) and Pauline (born 1855), are mentioned in Freud's article 'Screen Memories' (1899) and in his correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess, where Freud describes an episode in which he and John behaved very badly ('grausam') towards Pauline. Even more importantly, Freud stated that his childhood friendship with John was decisive for his later relationships, as the dynamics of this friendship formed a pattern that repeated itself. In his discussion of the 'Non vixit' dream in 'The Interpretation of Dreams' (1900), John is described as follows: 'Until the end of my third year we had been inseparable. We loved each other and fought with each other; and this childhood relationship, as I have already hinted above, had a determining influence on all my subsequent relationships with contemporaries. Since that time my nephew John has had many re-incarnations, which revived now one side and now another of his personality, unalterably fixed as it was in my unconscious memory. . . . All my friends have in a certain sense been re-incarnations of this first figure . . . they have been revenants . . . My emotional life has always insisted that I should have an intimate friend and a hated enemy. I have always been able to provide myself afresh with both, and it has not infrequently happened that the ideal situation of childhood has been so closely reproduced that friend and enemy have come together in a single individual – though not, of course, both at once or with constant oscillations, as may have been the

case in my early childhood. (p. 13, emphasis in the original)'

However, Freud's childhood changed abruptly in 1859 when Jakob and Amalie moved to Vienna with Sigmund and his younger sister Anna (a third child, Julius, was born the year after Freud but died at eight months old). At the same time that Freud moved to Vienna, his half-brothers Emanuel and Phillip emigrated to Manchester, where they founded the family business *Freud & Co.*, which sold small decorative items and giftware. In the company's advertising materials, the following products are mentioned: '*souvenirs, buckles, ribbons, buttons, fans, snuff boxes, trinket boxes, leather work, pin cushions, needlework and other forms of haberdashery under these headings*' (p. 32).

It was primarily his eldest half-brother, Emanuel, with whom Freud had a close and extensive relationship. However, other male members of the Freud family also maintained contact with Freud, though on a more sporadic basis. Emanuel and Freud met every year until Emanuel's death in 1914, either through visits to Freud in Vienna or meetings elsewhere on the continent, such as in Berlin and Hamburg. Emanuel's life experiences could have brought Freud into close contact with trauma and grief, as three of Emanuel's children died within a short period between 1866 and 1868. However, despite the extremity of this experience, it does not appear that the deaths of the children were a significant topic of discussion between them. The same applies to the women in Freud's English family, who are not extensively mentioned in his correspondence or interactions. When they are mentioned, it is mainly in relation to physical ailments and complaints, as well as spa visits for treatment. Emanuel's son, Samuel, later became important to Freud, as he helped send essential relief supplies – such as food, clothing, and tobacco – during World War I.

Freud's Anglophilia is well known; he translated John Stuart Mill and named his son Oliver after Oliver Cromwell. Freud visited his relatives in England twice, in 1875 and 1908. The first visit appears to be the most significant, as it occurred at a young and impressionable age. In his correspondence with his friend Eduard Silberstein (Boehlich, 1990) from that period, Freud reflects on various aspects of England: 'If I were to go on, I shall get the "English disease" rather late in life. I read English history, write English letters, declaim English verse, listen to English descriptions and thirst for English glances' (p. 50). He also expresses admiration for English scientific literature:

The acquaintance with English scientific books I made over there will always ensure that in my own studies I shall always be on the side of the Englishmen in whose

favour I am now prejudiced: Tyndall, Huxley, Lyell, Darwin, Thomson, Lockyer, et al. (p. 54).

Freud even wrote to Silberstein that he could see himself settling in England after completing his studies (p. 53). His 1875 visit lasted a full seven and a half weeks.

Freud's later visit in 1908 ended with a period of solitude in London, where he explored the National Portrait Gallery, the British Museum, and landmarks such as Westminster and Hyde Park. Around this time, his relationship with Emanuel seemed to stagnate, becoming more distant. Willoughby connects this shift to Emanuel's aging – once youthful and full of vitality, he was now visibly frail. Freud, then in his fifties, may not have welcomed this reminder of his own aging and mortality. Additionally, with the passing of his half-brothers, Freud would experience an 'internal promotion,' becoming the eldest of his generation in the family – a parallel to his childhood, when Emanuel and Phillip's emigration from Freiberg to England left him as the eldest son in the household at the age of three.

Freud's life ultimately ended in England after he was forced to flee Vienna in the summer of 1938. He escaped with his wife, Martha, her sister Minna, and his daughter, Anna. They first settled in a rented apartment at 39 Elsworthy Road, then moved to the Hotel Esplanade – where some of the most well-known photographs of Freud from this period were taken – before finally relocating to 20 Maresfield Gardens. Unlike the earlier parts of his life explored in the book, this final chapter has been extensively covered in other accounts (Cohen, 2012; Edmundson, 2007; Nagorski, 2022). However, Willoughby still presents new insights and corrections to common perceptions of events during this period. For instance, while biographical literature often suggests that meetings with figures like H.G. Wells, Stefan Zweig, Salvador Dalí, and representatives of the Royal Society took place at Maresfield Gardens, Willoughby clarifies that these visits actually occurred at Elsworthy Road. Additionally, he challenges the widely accepted belief that Freud's death resulted from euthanasia. Contrary to the notion that Freud died from a morphine-induced respiratory depression, Willoughby argues: 'The currently available sources do not support a chronology consistent with Freud's death being a result of morphine-induced respiratory depression. Instead, his death appears to have been a far more prosaic affair, the direct result of his cancer and heart condition'. (p. 201)

Since Freud is one of the most extensively documented historical figures, uncovering new sources and fresh material is a challenging task. However, this book achieves just that by offering a detailed study of the English branch of Freud's family and his relationships with them later in life – an area that has not been previously explored in depth. The book's primary objective is to demonstrate how Freud's interactions with his English half-brothers and their families shed new light on his personality and

may even contribute to new interpretations of the history of psychoanalysis. A striking example of this is the death of Freud's half-brother Emanuel, which coincided with Freud's work on 'Mourning and Melancholia' (Freud, 1917). Emanuel died suddenly in 1914 after falling from a moving train near Parbold station on the Southport-Manchester railway line. Willoughby provides a detailed account of the incident: 'Alone in his compartment, Emanuel was seen [by a passenger – housewife Mrs. Janet Brennell, 1856–1941 – in an adjacent compartment] fall from the train at 2:30 pm, it having just passed Parbold station. He was found dead by the tracks, near Platt's Siding, both legs badly crushed and the back of his head severely lacerated. When the train was stopped, Emanuel's compartment door was found shut but the handle not turned. The inquest, held on 19 October, returned a unanimous verdict of accidental death. (p. 132)'

Emanuel had taken this train journey countless times before. In his later years, he and his family had moved to Southport by the coast, and he frequently traveled this route to oversee the family business, which was increasingly being managed by his son, Samuel. Notably, Emanuel was the first member of the Freud family to be cremated – a departure from Jewish tradition, reflecting an adaptation to modern secular customs. After Emanuel's cremation, the Freud family adopted this practice instead of traditional burial. Among Freud's half-brothers, Emanuel's life and death provide the most material for interpreting Freud's own psychological development. Phillip, the other half-brother, remained more in the background. This was partly due to his reserved personality but also because he maintained his Jewish religious identity, distancing himself from the cultural assimilation seen in other parts of the family.

Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London also takes a modern historical approach, focusing on the lives of ordinary people and everyday experiences rather than grand achievements or significant historical events. Willoughby highlights this approach in his portrayal of Freud's half-brother Phillip, describing him as someone who 'epitomized the Joycean ordinary heroism of everyday life, persevering in his business over decades despite few rewards, forming and maintaining a family of his own, and sustaining connections with his culture and wider family in Europe' (p. 89). Phillip's life contrasts with Freud's in many ways, particularly in his commitment to his Jewish heritage and his more reserved, unassuming existence. While Freud became a towering intellectual figure, Phillip represents the quiet resilience of those who lived outside the spotlight yet played an essential role in maintaining familial and cultural continuity.

The very everyday aspect of Freud's English relatives makes the author's source investigation all the more labor-intensive and impressive. Emanuel's son John Freud's life is described here for the first time.

Nothing has been known about his later life after childhood with Freud in Freiberg. For example, it is stated in Ronald Clark's extensive biography 'Freud. Man and Cause' (Clark, 1980) that he 'disappeared,' and there has been much speculation about why, including the fact that he was excluded from Emanuel's will. However, it seems that the situation was not as drastic as it might have seemed, as he likely wanted a greater distance from the family. Research on him has also been complicated by the fact that he changed his name twice, first to Frued, and then to Froud, and he is buried as John Froud at Highgate Cemetery in London.

With its overwhelming level of detail, the book requires a fairly advanced interest in Freud biography and the history of psychoanalysis as a prerequisite to benefit from it. However, if this interest is present, the book is completely absorbing; details that have been mentioned briefly before in the biographical Freud literature are placed into a new and supplementary context, and alternative hypotheses about them are illuminated with new sources. It seems that not a single relevant source has escaped the author's attention. Along with impressive background knowledge, this enables the author to place the events he discusses into a maximally meaningful context. The book is also engagingly written; there is something detective-like and exciting about how the author puts together different sources and evaluates them against each other to reconstruct events in the English branch of the Freud

family and their possible causes. The book also has a 'labor of love' dimension that is contagious to the reader. *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* comes highly recommended. The only caveat is that the reader's explicit interest in details in the biographical Freud research should be fairly pronounced for the magic of this book to emerge.

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BOOK REVIEW

Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London, by Roger Willoughby. New York, NY: Routledge, 2025. 254 pp., \$42.99 (ISBN 9781032651989).

Reviewed by KATHERINE JENNESS, PhD, New York University
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The centerpiece of *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* is a richly rendered depiction of Freud's two older half-brothers, Emanuel and Philip, and their lives and families in England. How did there come to be a British branch of the Freud family? The same economic precarity that led the traveling merchant Jacob Freud to depart Freiburg and ultimately settle in Vienna with young Sigmund in tow would lead the adult children of Jacob's first marriage to migrate to Manchester in search of better opportunities in the family trade. The now-separated families would remain in touch, visit occasionally, and appear in Willoughby's telling to have played large roles in each other's imaginations.

The great psychic importance of Freud's half-brothers is dramatized in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud regarded Emanuel's children, his childhood playmates, as formative in shaping his sensitivity to Oedipal passions, and it is John and Pauline whom he emplots in his famous dream scene of yellow flowers and black bread. The Dreambook also reveals Freud's adornment of his younger half-brother Phillip in fantasies of Oedipal loss, as he was old enough to be his mother's husband (thus to be Freud's father) and was instrumental in separating Freud from his Catholic nanny by alerting the family to her petty theft. These figures receive their deserved biographical due in *Freud's British Family*. Willoughby also marshals fresh archival material to flesh out Freud's two visits to England (one when he was a solitary unknown, the later when he was a sought-after public figure) and his final migration to 20 Maresfield Gardens. Freud's imagining of his family was a crucible for his conception of mind.

Willoughby frames the material he offers through a bottom-up historical approach that seeks to elucidate the lives of lesser sung individuals whose experiences remain unremarked upon in the historical record. In this attention to lost lives, Willoughby invokes both the discourse of intersectionality, as well as the Joycean notion of heroics of the everyman who, like Leopold Bloom, plod through life the very best they can, given their circumstances. Overall, Willoughby's history contributes to the welcome departure from hagiography in Freud studies toward an emphasis on historical

contextualization. It is also a part of a growing collection of careful scholarship that contextualizes psychoanalysis in Britain specifically, such as Forrester and Cameron's *Freud in Cambridge* (Forrester & Cameron, 2017), Michal Shapira's *The War Inside: Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Postwar Britain* (Shapira, 2015), and the scholarship of Carolyn Laubender (e.g., Laubender, 2017, 2021).

Taken as a whole, Willoughby's account demonstrates the long shadow cast intergenerationally of poverty, migration, and antisemitism. The reader has a front row seat to the formation of characters in Freud's family members as they navigate relocations, health ailments, loss, pressure to assimilate, and eventually war. A pattern that deserves note, common in traumatized families, is a tendency toward enmeshment on the one hand and dramatic displays of individuation on the other hand. The result is a family filled with dazzlingly self-assertive members on the one hand and somewhat retiring members on the other hand—and this is the case whether we are speaking of a marriage (with Amalia arguably taking up much more space than Jacob) or a sibling group. Willoughby traces in textured detail the family history that generated psychoanalytic history.

Emanuel, for example, was the more assimilationist and secular brother, adopting the mannerisms and dress of an English gentleman, and supporting the Reform movement, even electing cremation when such a practice was quite rare among Jews. Phillip was late to marry, maintained his Austrian citizenship and generally resisted assimilation, and would remain committed to traditional observance. A similar pattern is observable in exaggerated form in Emmanuel's children John and Sam. Sam was a painfully inhibited man who hardly ventured outside his home but was instrumental in getting the Viennese Freudians supplies in wartime. John, on the other hand, was so absent from family correspondence that some historians concluded that he died young; however, he in fact became of all things a Thomas Cook tour guide.

Willoughby's book demonstrates well the pull of Britain on Freud's imagination as well. Freud's Anglophilia was in fact unusually meaningful to a specific yet influential cohort of Freud's readers. These were the Jewish intellectuals who helped make Freud the hero he became in the American imagination during psychoanalysis' golden age of popularity following the Second World War. In this Cold War context, wherein the individual was thought to be imperiled by powerful mass forces, a number of postwar intellectuals seemed to fashion Freud an antiauthoritarian hero, depicting him as a rugged individual who was uniquely resistant to conformist pressures (Jenness, 2017). In some iterations, this meant emphasizing Freud's "Britishness."

Both Lionel Trilling and Phillip Rieff, prominent postwar exegetes of Freud and Anglophiles themselves, celebrate Freud's fondness for England. For Trilling, Freud's love of England helps him defend his individuality from the pressures of Viennese society; his allegiance keeps him free from authoritarian influences of his immediate surround (Trilling, 1955/1965, p. 112). For Rieff, there is something,

Very English about the Freud that lives and dies so equably, in England, land of his inner affinity. All that antinomian imagination is hedged off

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neatly by an unimpeachable private life; all that passion countered by stoic calm; all that friendship muted by reserve; all that desire to lead tempered by encouragement to epigones striking out on their own—if not too far. (Rieff, 1959, p. xv)

In order to resist the pressures of an overbearing society, the Cold War American was thought to require healthy doses of “stoic calm,” “reserve,” and temperance—all traits that Freud was interpreted as exemplifying in this historical context. When postwar Americans loved Freud, in other words, it was, however improbably, a “British” Freud they loved.

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Review of *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* by Roger Willoughby

Willoughby, R. (2024). *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032652023>

Reviewed by Dr. Edward Bloomfield

This book is clearly a labour of love by the author and was over a decade in the making. It is academically rich, thoroughly researched, containing careful and scholarly documentation. There are often meticulously described details of Freud's life and circumstances. The academic rigour does not detract, and the author's narrative style has a consistently human quality to it. The writing has a compelling quality, and I found this an absorbing read.

The book is intriguing in its psychologically nuanced focus and piquant observations. One gains a sense of becoming more closely acquainted with Freud and the familial and cultural context and circumstances that forged the man and his ideas. One of the frequently recurring gems of this book are the thoughtfully observed and insightfully narrated descriptions of daily family life, where episodic details (like screen memories) are interwoven and suggestively linked to broader aspects of Freud's psychological makeup and his theoretical orientation and key concepts. This approach, of emphasising the importance of specific biographical details, is congruent with Freud's own examination of formative life experiences that constituted the core of his self-analysis and were the foundations for his subsequent development of psychoanalytic theories.

Often using a psychoanalytic framework and concepts, Willoughby (2024) intriguingly highlights the importance and deeper meaning inherent in events and contexts of Freud's everyday life. These are artfully exemplified at various stages in the book when narrating circumstances, incidents and encounters between Freud and his older half-brothers. Willoughby's own inferences, hypotheses, or even interpretations of the importance and significance of these biographical details are never delivered in a heavy-handed or unilateral fashion. They are offered in a balanced, thoughtful and thought-provoking way. Alternatives and supportive evidence are often provided for different perspectives. As a reader, I found this piqued my curiosity and imagination. This was one of the more enriching and satisfying experiences I had while delving into this book.

The book's explorations start from Freud's childhood and early adulthood, characterised by financial instability, hardship and the precarious social circumstances in Freiburg, and subsequently Vienna. This was a situation aggravated by antisemitic attitudes, prevalent and significant during those early stages of Freud's life. The financial austerity of his younger years clearly affected Freud's fear of poverty and his determined

efforts to avoid it through a strong work ethic and emphasis on industriousness, which lasted throughout his life.

Freud's family set up is characterised by a marginal, gentle and equanimous, but largely financially unsuccessful father and a more central, and somewhat domineering mother and an increasing number of siblings, of whom Freud was the first and eldest. Freud also had two considerably older half-siblings, Emmanuel and Philipp from his father's previous marriage. The book's primary focus is on Freud's hitherto less well documented later associations with these two older half-brothers, who migrated with their families to Britain in 1859, settling in Manchester. Willoughby (2024) suggests these two half-brothers exerted an important influence on Freud's emotional life. The significant age gap is postulated by the author to have added an Oedipal dimension to the sibling relationship with his older half-siblings, partially conflating vertical (parental) and horizontal (sibling) dynamics.

The younger of the two half-brothers, Philipp, had less of a relationship with Freud. Willoughby (2024) comments that Freud saw Philipp irregularly and only briefly in his adult years. Although their relationship was cooler, Freud recognised and admired certain qualities of the younger half-brother, such as his endurance and determination; the capacity to do what is necessary, often in the face of adversity. He comments on Philipp's grit, which he contends: "made Philipp into something of a Joycean hero, who exhibited considerable psychological strength and endurance across his life, characteristics the young Freud also endorsed in 1875." (Willoughby, 2024, p. 99).

The eldest of the two half-brothers, Emanuel, is portrayed as a desired alternative, younger father figure. Emanuel comes across in these pages as authoritative and strict (bordering on controlling), but effective and decisive. These traits, although also potentially problematic, are described by the author as having likely to have been a counterbalance to disappointing aspects of Freud's experiences of his own father, Jacob. Emanuel is also described as an enthusiastic advocate and staunch admirer of Freud. Willoughby (2024) argues, for Freud, Emanuel was therefore not only an admired older brother but functioned also as an important father figure. Emanuel, in this respect, is described as confident, assured, pragmatic and successful in building his business in the UK. The book argues coherently this is likely to have been influential in the earlier years of Freud's burgeoning career and ambitions.

As Freud established himself and gained his own identity, his relationship with Emanuel seems to have changed in later years, with Freud being able to acknowledge more consciously that Emanuel's character could be quite difficult, resulting possibly in less enthusiasm in the latter years to meet up with Emanuel, prior to his death at the age of 82; resulting from an accidental fall from a train in 1914. The author speculates that "Freud's complicated grief over the loss of Emanuel seems likely to have informed his key text 'Mourning and melancholia', which was verbally delivered to the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society on 30 December 1914, ten weeks after Emanuel's death." (Willoughby, 2024, pp. 134-135).

Freud visited his half-brothers twice in England, in 1875 and 1908. The book outlines how these encounters and associations with his British half-brothers, Emanuel in particular, influenced Freud's Anglophilia and were ultimately influential in his decision to choose Britain when seeking refuge from Nazi persecution in 1938. The chronology of Freud's visits in 1875 and 1908 interestingly also charts the progression of Freud's

developing reputation. From an early stage, both in Vienna and in Britain, the Freud family viewed him in almost messianic terms, prophetically anticipating great things from him. The reader's access to the everyday family context, interactions and correspondence provides an interesting backdrop and contrast to Freud's trajectory to international renown. It is interesting that during his visit to London in 1908, Freud, despite being well into his middle age (52), had not yet reached the international fame he would subsequently achieve. Around 1908, psychoanalysis was on the cusp of achieving international recognition. The 1908 visit contrasts with Freud's subsequent time in the capital, 30 years later, which is described in more detail later in the book. The author comments poignantly, regarding the 1908 visit to London, that "had his visit been timed just two or three years later, Freud might have had a very different social and professional experience in London." (Willoughby, 2024, p. 112).

As the reader progresses through the chronology, the book also outlines the 1918 postwar economic blockades and austerity, which again reintroduced financial deprivation to Freud's daily life. Foodstuffs and commodities were in short supply. The situation was further aggravated by hyperinflation in Austria. Despite Freud's, by now international, reputation, severe food shortages meant Freud himself experienced hunger and even malnutrition at that time. His nephew, Samuel, sent him food parcels from the UK, before Freud was able to restore greater financial stability, indefatigably rebuilding his private practice, predominantly through international (mostly English-speaking British and American) patients, who could pay in sterling and dollars and thereby offset the impact of hyperinflation on the devaluation the Austrian Krone. We learn that Freud employed at that time a language coach to improve his English, which had already been greatly assisted through his associations with Emanuel and his extended British family.

As the book moves through the years, we become aware of the ominous rumblings of a politically shifting landscape. By 1933 Hitler had come to power. In that year two of Freud's sons, Oliver and Ernest, had to flee from Berlin. Ernest settled in London. The persecution of Jews increased and many German psychoanalysts, the majority of whom were Jewish, fled the country between 1933 and 1936. We learn that Freud himself delayed departing to London, until it was almost too late (impossible) to leave. Aside from the oral surgery for cancer in 1923, Freud's health had been declining since 1931, further compounded by heart complications in 1933, leaving him considerably weakened. Freud left Vienna in June 1938, shortly after Nazi Germany annexed Austria in March of that year, his life being at significant risk under the Nazi regime. For four of his sisters, Dolfi, Rosa, Pauli, and Mitzi, it had become impossible to leave. Freud's attempts in 1938 to rescue them, by removing them from Vienna, failed. They tragically later died in concentration camps between 1942 and 1943. The book powerfully conveys the mounting menace and direct threat to the Freud family. The concerted diplomatic efforts and negotiations to secure the safety and evacuation of the Freud family are also described.

Willoughby (2024) argues that Freud's choice of Britain, as the country to emigrate to, was strongly influenced by his prior visits to the UK and close ties with his British half-brothers and their families. Freud's son, Ernst, who had settled in London since 1933, assisted in finding a property in the capital. Freud finally settled in Hampstead, which remained his abode for the final months of his life and is now the location of the Freud Museum. Hampstead exerted a gravitational pull for psychoanalysts, many of them asylum seekers from Austria and Germany, where psychoanalysis had already taken root before

the Second World War. It became a hub for the discipline and remains influential to this day. Despite successfully gaining asylum in the UK, Freud remained a person of interest to the Nazis and was on the Gestapo list of people to be automatically arrested, in the eventuality of success of German's planned invasion of the UK.

Willoughby comments that: "for an 82-year-old, with very serious debilitating health problems, and constant pain and discomfort, Freud still managed to use his time creatively." (Willoughby, 2024, p.180). Freud's pertinacious and unwavering work ethic persisted, as he dedicated himself to his final significant works: *Moses and Monotheism* (Freud, 1939) and *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (Freud, 1940). Freud also maintained his psychoanalytical practice, although this was severely reduced as a result of his move to the UK and his deteriorating health.

This book benefits from a detailed account of his last year in exile to London in 1938. Freud had distinguished visitors and patients. These include, among others, H G Wells, Salvador Dalí and Virginia Woolf. These encounters are described and explored, accompanied and interspersed with interesting observations and reflections by the author. The reader also gains a sense of loss and mourning for the life that Freud had left behind in Vienna. The grim tidings of family members that had remained behind and the growing recognition of the powerlessness to help, as Viennese Jewry were subjected to increasing anti-Semitic persecution.

The concluding chapter of the book, and of Freud's life, is both poignant and moving. In September 1939 war is declared against Germany and Freud would have witnessed the preparations for the impending air raids. Freud's own battles with cancer and his own impending mortality also overshadowed these final months of his life. Willoughby (2024) gives an intimate account of Freud's life and a new perspective on previously unexplored associations between Freud, his two older half-brothers and his extended British family. The book gives a fresh emphasis on the psychological and historical significance of these relationships, leading Freud, in his final year, to seek asylum in London.

Freud is universally recognised as a man of significant historical stature, as the founder of psychoanalysis. A genius and a pioneer, he was one of the most influential thinkers of the last century. His intellectual and cultural significance reverberates to this day. As someone less familiar with Freud's biography, I gained, from Willoughby's book, a true appreciation of the adversity, and tragedy that featured recurrently in Freud's personal life. Willoughby's writing style has a consistently personal quality to it. While reading, I developed a strong sense of Freud's human qualities of sensitivity, resolution, endurance and strength of character.

Contributor

Dr. Edward Bloomfield is a Jungian Analyst and Consultant Clinical Psychologist and has trained as a practitioner in Cognitive Analytical Therapy. He has an MA in Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies. He works part-time in the NHS and has a private practice in London.

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Freud's British Family: reclaiming lost lives in Manchester and London

ROGER WILLOUGHBY

Routledge, 2024

(Versão digital, 2025)

resenha por

ANDRÉ SCHÜLLER



UMA REPARAÇÃO HISTORIOGRÁFICA EM TEMPO JUSTO

Mais do que uma simples investigação histórica sobre a formação de Sigmund Freud, o livro discutido oferece uma resposta firme — sustentada por uma pesquisa simultaneamente rigorosa e sensível — ao silêncio persistente que há décadas encobre aspectos fundamentais da biografia do psicanalista mais conhecido do mundo. Já na introdução, o autor nos confronta com a questão central que orientou seu trabalho: “É bastante irônico que uma pesquisa como essa seja necessária”, afirma Roger Willoughby. Afinal, “(...) enquanto prática, a psicanálise sempre se interessou por histórias

silenciadas. Paradoxalmente, porém, seus praticantes muitas vezes demonstraram pouco interesse pela história de sua própria disciplina” (Willoughby, 2025, p.1).

Publicado em outubro passado pela Routledge, *Freud's British Family* investiga os destinos de Emanuel e Philipp Freud, meios-irmãos de Sigmund Freud, e o percurso de seus descendentes. Largamente ignorados pelos especialistas, esses personagens recebem neste livro um tratamento documental rigoroso. Willoughby cruza informações de correspondências inéditas entre Freud e esse ramo familiar com dados de censos do início do século XX, certidões de nascimento e óbito, registros fotográficos e endereços em cidades como Londres, Manchester, Salford

RESENHAS

e Lancaster. Com esse material, estrutura-se a narrativa em onze capítulos.

Antes de comentá-los, vale destacar o didatismo que sustenta esse ambicioso projeto. Consciente do volume de informações destinado a dois públicos — leitores familiarizados ou não com a historiografia da família Freud —, Willoughby organiza cada capítulo com uma introdução, seguida da narrativa principal e uma conclusão que retoma os pontos centrais. Recomendo fortemente a leitura das notas de fim, que oferecem dados adicionais sobre os acervos consultados e curiosidades que enriquecem a obra.

Quanto ao sumário de *Freud's British Family*, destaco dois aspectos. Primeiro, o amplo recorte histórico percorrido: desde meados de 1850, quando os filhos do primeiro casamento de Jacob Freud ainda conviviam com ele e com a nova família formada com Amalia, até a segunda metade do século XX, acompanhando os descendentes de Emanuel (1832–1914) e Philipp Freud (1834–1911). Segundo, porque o capítulo nove recebeu um elogio interessante de um dos maiores historiadores da psicanálise da atualidade¹, por revelar o paradeiro de Johann (“John”) Freud, meio-sobrinho mais velho de Sigmund e sua primeira companhia de brincadeiras. O elogio é justo: durante anos, sensacionalistas especularam sobre o suposto desaparecimento de John, atribuindo a Freud, inclusive, condutas questionáveis. A análise do professor Tögel,

nesse caso, cumpriu duas funções: reconhecer o ineditismo de Willoughby e lembrar aos especuladores da área que é preciso estudar antes de levantarem suspeitas infundadas.

Sobre o corpo do texto escrito por Willoughby, temos como ponto de partida o retrato das figuras que compuseram o cotidiano do pequeno Freud, que nasceu e viveu em Freiberg até os três anos de idade. Intitulado *A família Freud: Lugares de pertencimento, imaginação e diáspora*, o capítulo apresenta os pais do psicanalista, seus irmãos à época,² os meios-irmãos e seus primeiros companheiros de brincadeiras — John e Pauline —, compondo o que pode ser entendido como sua primeira rede de afetos cruzados.

Outro objetivo dessa reconstrução parece ser evidenciar um evento decisivo na subjetividade de Freud, provocado por uma cisão em sua família em 1859. Naquele ano, uma crise comercial levou Jacob, sua nova esposa, filhos e os descendentes do primeiro casamento a reorientarem suas vidas. Após uma tentativa frustrada em Leipzig, Jacob, Amália, Sigmund e Anna mudaram-se para Viena, enquanto Emanuel, sua esposa, filhos e Philipp seguiram para a Grã-Bretanha. Esse desfecho foi crucial para Freud assumir simbolicamente o papel de “primogênito” — uma posição que ele tinha por ser o filho mais velho de Amália Nathansohn, mas que havia perdido em Freiberg devido à presença de seus meios-irmãos e à morte de seu irmão Julius,

em 1858. Com a ruptura familiar, Freud passou a ocupar o centro da cena e internalizou essa narrativa simbólica como parte de sua identidade. Assim, a mudança de 1859 representou algo muito mais significativo do que uma simples mudança de cidade: foi um marco fundamental na formação do futuro psicanalista.

Nos capítulos seguintes, o autor aprofunda a trajetória dos agora “britânicos” irmãos de Freud. Emanuel e Philipp surgem como protagonistas de uma epopeia às avessas: homens que, longe de idealizações, enfrentaram dívidas, deslocamentos, fracassos e recomeços. Os imóveis alugados em sequência, as perdas pessoais, as frequentes mudanças de endereço (sobretudo no caso de Emanuel) e sua presença nos tribunais de falência em 1860 ilustram parte dos desafios rastreados por Willoughby. Destaca-se também a notável capacidade de recomposição desse ramo da família, assim como o vínculo que o jovem Freud manteria com ambos, ao longo de seu crescimento pessoal e profissional.

Interessante é vermos que Emanuel firmou-se como comerciante pragmático, abrindo espaço para novas tentativas no ramo de artigos importados e buscando consolidar-se no competitivo mercado inglês. Defensor da anglicização dos nomes dos filhos e adepto de uma religiosidade moderada, acabou tornando-se também um agente da assimilação cultural. Essa identidade híbrida, marcada por tensões entre tradição e adaptação, repercutiria mais

tarde na forma como Freud lidaria com sua própria herança judaica.

Neste contexto, Manchester surge como um laboratório de assimilação. Para os irmãos “ingleses” de Freud, era um espaço onde apagamento e reconstrução se entrelaçavam. A cidade oferecia oportunidades comerciais — devido à sua posição no comércio de linho e artigos de luxo, com os quais os sócios da *Freud & Co.* estavam envolvidos — além de um ambiente social e religioso diversificado, com comunidades judaicas ortodoxas e reformistas em expansão.

Um ponto crucial da pesquisa apresentada é a análise da primeira carta de Freud, ainda menino, a Emanuel. Mais do que uma curiosidade, o texto é visto como uma tentativa precoce de reorganizar uma paisagem afetiva desestruturada.

Entre as várias descobertas apresentadas ainda por Willoughby, destaca-se a reconstrução da figura de Philipp Freud, frequentemente considerado irrelevante na vida de Sigmund e alguém sem sucesso no comércio. O autor desafia essa visão, apresentando novos dados, incluindo uma imagem inédita de Philipp. Ao contrário de Emanuel, que absorveu valores iluministas e o estilo burguês vitoriano, Philipp seguiu um caminho mais discreto, tanto na religião quanto na vida cotidiana. Em certo momento, desenvolveu um caminho comercial próprio e manteve contato esporádico com Sigmund.

Todo o material reunido em *Freud's British Family* se conecta à própria figura de Freud, como percebemos ao longo da leitura. Um exemplo marcante é o reencontro entre Freud e John em 1870, durante uma visita de Emanuel e seu filho a Viena. Freud, com 14 anos, encenou com o amigo de infância a peça *Die Räuber*, de Schiller, para um grupo de crianças. A escolha do texto, como lembra Willoughby, foi significativa para o futuro psicanalista, que mais tarde o mencionaria em um sonho interpretado em sua célebre obra de 1899 (Freud, 1899/1900).

Conforme avançamos na leitura, outro ponto se destaca: a construção de uma genealogia da psicanálise, paralela ao amadurecimento da visão de mundo de Freud, que desde cedo foi marcada pela influência dos familiares “britânicos”. Não surpreende, portanto, que Freud tivesse uma impressão positiva da Inglaterra, sendo sua morte em Londres interessante nesse sentido.

O livro também aborda os eventos que levaram à morte acidental de Emanuel, uma perda profunda para Freud, além de oferecer um retrato comovente dos meios-sobrinhos, especialmente John e Poppy. Um tema pouco explorado, mas de relevância, é o capítulo que trata dos últimos 476 dias de Freud em Londres. Willoughby se concentra nos episódios que antecederam a morte do psicanalista, em 22 de setembro de 1939, apresentando um dos trechos mais marcantes do livro. O autor

se recusa a adotar a narrativa da “eutanásia heroica”, amplamente difundida como o último ato (heroico) de Freud. Em vez disso, ele propõe uma leitura mais alinhada aos fatos, oferecendo uma visão mais coerente e detalhada desse momento crucial.

Em resumo, o esforço de Willoughby resulta numa abordagem rica e equilibrada. Ele oferece respostas, como reabre questões. O livro se mantém fiel à função biográfica, mas vai além ao desmontar mitos, humanizar os personagens e apostar na escuta atenta como ferramenta de conhecimento. Mais do que uma contribuição historiográfica, *Freud's British Family* convida a revisitar Freud a partir de suas raízes esquecidas, dos vínculos que o moldaram e de sua notável capacidade (familiar) de seguir em frente. ■

Notas

1 “No seu livro, a parte mais interessante para mim foi o sucesso em resolver o enigma de John” — disse literalmente Christfried Tögel no último dia 13/03/2025, durante a apresentação pública de *Freud's British Family* no museu dedicado a Freud, em Viena. A palestra foi gravada e disponibilizada no canal oficial do museu no YouTube, e essa observação pode ser ouvida a partir de 1h25min.

2 Julius e Anna Freud — ele, nascido em meados de outubro de 1857 (falecendo aos seis

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André Schüller é Psicanalista (Sedes Sapientiae), psicólogo e autor de “Como tudo (finalmente) começou: as histórias documentadas da mãe, do pai e do mentor de Freud” (2025). Atua em consultório na cidade de Jundiaí (SP) e é consultor do Museu Freud em Příbor, temporada 2025/2026. schullerpsicanalise@outlook.com

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Uma reparação historiográfica em tempo justo: resenha de *Freud's British Family*
*A Historiographic Reparation in Due Time: Review of Freud's British Family*¹
André Schüller²

Mais do que uma simples investigação histórica sobre a formação de Sigmund Freud, o livro discutido oferece uma resposta firme – sustentada por uma pesquisa simultaneamente rigorosa e sensível – ao silêncio persistente que há décadas encobre aspectos fundamentais da biografia do psicanalista mais conhecido do mundo. Já na introdução, o autor nos confronta com a questão central que orientou seu trabalho: “É bastante irônico que uma pesquisa como essa seja necessária”, afirma Roger Willoughby. Afinal, “(...) enquanto prática, a psicanálise sempre se interessou por histórias silenciadas. Paradoxalmente, porém, seus praticantes muitas vezes demonstraram pouco interesse pela história de sua própria disciplina” (Willoughby, 2025, p.1).

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Antes de comentá-los, vale destacar o didatismo que sustenta esse ambicioso projeto. Consciente do volume de informações destinado a dois públicos — leitores familiarizados ou não com a historiografia da família Freud —, Willoughby organiza cada capítulo com uma introdução, seguida da narrativa principal e uma conclusão que retoma os pontos centrais. Recomendo fortemente a leitura das notas de fim, que oferecem dados adicionais sobre os acervos consultados e curiosidades que enriquecem a obra.

Quanto ao sumário de *Freud's British Family*, destaco dois aspectos. Primeiro, o amplo recorte histórico percorrido: desde meados de 1850, quando os filhos do primeiro casamento de Jacob Freud ainda conviviam com ele e com a nova família formada com Amalia, até a segunda metade do século XX, acompanhando os descendentes de Emanuel (1832–1914) e Philipp Freud (1834–1911). Segundo, porque o capítulo nove recebeu um elogio interessante de um dos maiores historiadores da psicanálise da atualidade³, por revelar o paradeiro de Johann (“John”) Freud, meio-sobrinho mais velho de Sigmund e sua primeira companhia de brincadeiras. O elogio é justo: durante anos, sensacionalistas especularam sobre o suposto desaparecimento de John, atribuindo a Freud, inclusive, condutas questionáveis. A análise do professor Tögel, nesse caso, cumpriu duas funções: reconhecer o ineditismo de Willoughby e lembrar aos especuladores da área que é preciso estudar antes de levantarem suspeitas infundadas.

¹ WILLOUGHBY, Roger. *Freud's British Family: reclaiming lost lives in Manchester and London*. 1. ed. London: Routledge, 2024. Para esta resenha, foi utilizada a versão digital da obra, cujo copyright está registrado como 2025.

² Psicanalista (Sedes Sapientiae), psicólogo e autor de “Como tudo (finalmente) começou: as histórias documentadas da mãe, do pai e do mentor de Freud” (2025). Atua em consultório na cidade de Jundiá (SP) e é consultor do Museu Freud em Příbor - temporada 2025/2026. E-mail: schullerpsicanalise@outlook.com. Endereço comercial: R. Vigário JJ Rodrigues, 21, sala 702 – Vila Arens – Jundiá, SP – CEP: 13201-001 – Brasil. Tel: (11) 97262-3084.

³ “No seu livro, a parte mais interessante para mim foi o sucesso em resolver o enigma de John” – disse literalmente Christfried Tögel no último dia 13/03/2025, durante a apresentação pública de *Freud's British Family* no museu dedicado a Freud, em Viena. A palestra foi gravada e disponibilizada no canal oficial do museu no YouTube, e essa observação pode ser ouvida a partir de 1h25min.

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A historiographic reparation in due time: A review of *Freud's British Family*ⁱ

André Schüllerⁱⁱ

More than a simple historical investigation into the formation of Sigmund Freud, the book under review offers a firm response—grounded in research that is at once rigorous and sensitive—to the persistent silence that for decades has obscured fundamental aspects of the biography of the world's most renowned psychoanalyst. Already in the introduction, the author confronts us with the central question guiding his work: "It is quite ironic that research like this should be necessary," Roger Willoughby states. After all, "(...) as a practice, psychoanalysis has always been interested in silenced histories. Paradoxically, however, its practitioners have often shown little interest in the history of their own discipline" (Willoughby, 2025, p. 1).

Published last October by Routledge, *Freud's British Family* investigates the destinies of Emanuel and Philipp Freud, Sigmund Freud's half-brothers, and the trajectories of their descendants. Long ignored by specialists, these figures are given rigorous documentary treatment in this book. Willoughby cross-references information from previously unpublished correspondence between Freud and this branch of the family with early twentieth-century census data, birth and death certificates, photographic records, and addresses in cities such as London, Manchester, Salford, and Lancaster. On the basis of this material, the narrative is structured across eleven chapters.

Before commenting on them, it is worth highlighting the didactic quality that underpins this ambitious project. Aware of the volume of information addressed to two audiences—readers either familiar or unfamiliar with the historiography of the Freud family—Willoughby organizes each chapter with an introduction, followed by the main narrative and a conclusion that revisits the central points. I strongly recommend reading the endnotes, which provide additional data on the consulted archives and curiosities that enrich the work.

As for the table of contents of *Freud's British Family*, I would emphasize two aspects. First, the broad historical scope covered: from the mid-1850s, when the children from Jacob Freud's first marriage were still living with him and with the new family formed with Amalia, to the second half of the twentieth century, following the descendants of Emanuel (1832–1914) and Philipp Freud (1834–1911). Second, because chapter nine received noteworthy praise from one of the foremost historians of psychoanalysis today,ⁱⁱⁱ for revealing the whereabouts of Johann ("John") Freud, Sigmund's older half-nephew and his first playmate. The praise is justified: for years, sensationalist accounts speculated about John's supposed disappearance, even attributing questionable conduct to Freud. Professor Tögel's assessment, in this case, fulfilled two functions: acknowledging Willoughby's originality and reminding speculators in the field that it is necessary to study before raising unfounded suspicions.

Regarding the body of the text written by Willoughby, the point of departure is a portrayal of the figures who shaped the everyday world of the young Freud, who was born and lived in Freiberg until the age of three. Entitled *The Freud Family: Sites of Belonging, Imagination, and Diaspora*, the chapter presents the psychoanalyst's parents, his siblings at the time,^{iv} his half-siblings, and his first playmates—John and Pauline—thus composing what may be understood as his earliest network of intersecting affections.

Another aim of this reconstruction appears to be to highlight a decisive event in Freud's subjectivity, brought about by a rupture within his family in 1859. In that year, a commercial crisis led Jacob, his new wife, their children, and the descendants of his first marriage to reorient their lives. After a failed attempt in Leipzig, Jacob, Amalia, Sigmund, and Anna moved to Vienna, while Emanuel, his wife, their children, and Philipp went on to Great Britain. This outcome was crucial for Freud to symbolically assume the role of "firstborn"—a position he held as Amalia Nathansohn's eldest son, but which he had lost in Freiberg due to the presence of his half-brothers and the death of his brother Julius in 1858. With the family rupture, Freud came to occupy center stage and internalized this symbolic narrative as part of his identity. Thus, the move of 1859 represented something far more significant than a mere change of city: it was a fundamental milestone in the formation of the future psychoanalyst.

In the chapters that follow, the author deepens the trajectory of Freud's now "British" brothers. Emanuel and Philipp emerge as protagonists of an inverted epic: men who, far from idealizations, confronted debts, displacements, failures, and fresh starts. The successive rented properties, personal losses, frequent changes of address (especially in Emanuel's case), and their appearances in bankruptcy courts in 1860 illustrate some of the challenges traced by Willoughby. The remarkable capacity for reconstitution of this branch of the family is also highlighted, as is the bond that the young Freud would maintain with both brothers throughout his personal and professional development.

It is particularly interesting to observe that Emanuel established himself as a pragmatic merchant, opening space for new ventures in imported goods and seeking to consolidate his position in the competitive English market. An advocate of anglicizing his children's names and a proponent of moderate religiosity, he also became an agent of cultural assimilation. This hybrid identity, marked by tensions between tradition and adaptation, would later resonate in the way Freud dealt with his own Jewish heritage.

In this context, Manchester emerges as a laboratory of assimilation. For Freud's "English" brothers, it was a space where erasure and reconstruction were intertwined. The city offered commercial opportunities—owing to its position in the trade of linen and luxury goods, with which the partners of Freud & Co. were involved—as well as a diverse social and religious environment, with expanding Orthodox and Reform Jewish communities.

A crucial point of the research presented is the analysis of Freud's first letter, written when he was still a boy, to Emanuel. More than a mere curiosity, the text is understood as an early attempt to reorganize a disstructured affective landscape.

Among the several discoveries presented by Willoughby, particular attention is given to the reconstruction of the figure of Philipp Freud, often regarded as irrelevant in Sigmund's life and as someone unsuccessful in business. The author challenges this view by presenting new data, including a previously unpublished image of Philipp. Unlike Emanuel, who absorbed Enlightenment values and the Victorian bourgeois style, Philipp followed a more discreet path, both in religious matters and in everyday life. At a certain point, he developed a commercial path of his own and maintained sporadic contact with Sigmund.

All the material gathered in *Freud's British Family* connects back to Freud himself, as becomes clear throughout the reading. A striking example is the reunion between Freud and John in 1870, during a visit by Emanuel and his son to Vienna. Freud, then 14

years old, staged Schiller's *Die Räuber* with his childhood friend for a group of children. As Willoughby reminds us, the choice of this play was significant for the future psychoanalyst, who would later mention it in a dream interpreted in his celebrated work of 1899 (Freud, 1899/1900).

As the reading progresses, another point comes into focus: the construction of a genealogy of psychoanalysis that runs parallel to the maturation of Freud's worldview, which from an early age was marked by the influence of his "British" relatives. It is therefore not surprising that Freud held a positive impression of England, a fact rendered all the more meaningful by his death in London.

The book also addresses the events leading to Emanuel's accidental death, a profound loss for Freud, and offers a moving portrait of the half-nephews, especially John and Poppy. A less explored yet highly relevant theme appears in the chapter dealing with the final 476 days of Freud's life in London. Willoughby focuses on the episodes preceding the psychoanalyst's death on 22 September 1939, presenting one of the most striking sections of the book. The author refuses to adopt the narrative of a "heroic euthanasia," widely disseminated as Freud's final (heroic) act. Instead, he proposes a reading more closely aligned with the facts, offering a more coherent and detailed view of this crucial moment.

In summary, Willoughby's effort results in a rich and balanced approach. He offers answers while also reopening questions. The book remains faithful to the biographical function, yet goes further by dismantling myths, humanizing its characters, and investing in attentive listening as a tool of knowledge. More than a historiographic contribution, *Freud's British Family* invites readers to revisit Freud through his forgotten roots, the bonds that shaped him, and his remarkable (familial) capacity to move forward.

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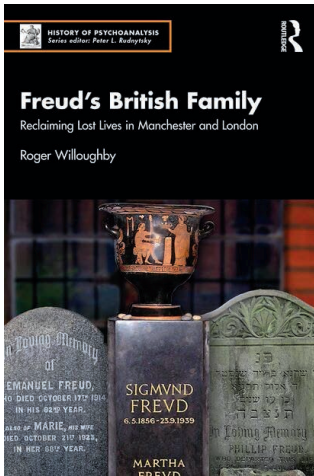
ⁱ **WILLOUGHBY, Roger.** *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London*. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2024. For the purposes of this review, the digital edition of the work was used, whose copyright is registered as 2025.

ⁱⁱ Psychoanalyst (Sedes Sapientiae), psychologist, and author of *How It (Finally) Began: The Documented Histories of Freud's Mother, Father, and Mentor* (2025); maintains a private clinical practice in Jundiaí (SP), Brazil, and serves as a consultant to the Freud Museum in Příbor for the 2025/2026 season; e-mail: schullerpsicanalise@outlook.com; business address: 21 Vigário JJ Rodrigues St., Suite 702 – Vila Arens – Jundiaí, SP – ZIP Code 13201-001 – Brazil; phone: +55 (11) 97262-3084.

ⁱⁱⁱ "In his book, the most interesting part for me was the success in solving the enigma of John," Christfried Tögel stated verbatim on 13 March 2025, during the public presentation of *Freud's British Family* at the museum dedicated to Freud in Vienna. The lecture was recorded and made available on the museum's official YouTube channel, and this remark can be heard from 1 hour and 25 minutes onward.

^{iv} Julius and Anna Freud—he, born in mid-October 1857 (dying at six months of age on 15 April 1858, when Sigmund was exactly 1 year, 11 months, and 9 days old); she, born on 31 December 1858.

Recenzia

WILLOUGHBY, R.: Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London. London: Routledge, 2025, 254 p.

In recent decades, biographical research has increasingly turned towards peripheral voices and “shadow” figures – individuals long overlooked or systematically marginalised by traditional narratives and societal interest. These “lost stories” are no longer merely supplementary to grand biographies; rather, they often serve as keys to understanding complex identities, essential interconnections, and the intellectual processes that shape the human mind. Roger Willoughby’s *Freud’s British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* fits naturally within this methodological and ideological trajectory. The book offers an original, interdisciplinary,

ambitious, and culturally provocative contribution – not only to Freudian studies but also to the broader and deeper examination of the Jewish diaspora, the historical period of modernity, and questions of cultural-psychological identity. Willoughby’s text is meticulously structured: its chapters follow a clear developmental arc – from the genealogical origins of Sigmund Freud’s extended family, through the migratory movements of his half-brothers Emanuel and Philipp, to Freud’s final months spent in exile in London, where he was forced to relocate in 1938 following the Nazi annexation of Austria. As a Jew, Freud faced escalating persecution: his daughter Anna was detained for several hours by the Gestapo, his books were publicly burnt, and psychoanalytic institutions were disbanded. His move to London was motivated not only by the political threat but also by his deteriorating health – he had long suffered from oral cancer, which required repeated surgeries and continuous medical care. Though physically weakened, Freud continued his intellectual work in London exile until he died in 1939. Roger Willoughby deliberately distances himself from the traditional biographical model that portrays Sigmund Freud as an isolated originator of psychoanalysis, detached from his social and familial context. Instead, he reconstructs neglected or actively suppressed connections that shaped Freud’s psychoanalytic thought – connections that have hitherto been marginalised or interpreted only indirectly. Willoughby’s principal focus lies with Freud’s much older half-brothers, Emanuel and Philipp – figures whom the historiography of psychoanalysis has largely left in obscurity, if acknowledged at all. He reconstructs their lives within the context of Victorian Britain, employing rich archival sources: business records,

immigration documents, preserved correspondence, and church registers. The result is a detailed and rigorously executed microhistory that is not merely anecdotal; rather, it provides a foundation for analysing the deeper psychological, cultural, and symbolic dimensions of Freud's work. The tension between intellectual and practical success, between the symbolic capital of Vienna and the material capital of Manchester, and between diasporic alienation and cultural adaptation emerges as a central theme of the book. One of the most compelling aspects of Willoughby's interpretation is his analysis of Freud's silence. With the subtlety characteristic of psychoanalytic reading, the author suggests that the absence of Freud's brothers in his writings is neither coincidental nor insignificant. On the contrary, the silence becomes symptomatic. Freud's reserved engagement with themes such as fraternal rivalry or identification with an elder sibling, despite their prominence in his theoretical framework, gains new depth when viewed against the backdrop of his family history. Roger Willoughby interprets this discrepancy as a manifestation of psychological and cultural repression, drawing on classical Freudian concepts such as the return of the repressed, identification, and neurosis as the consequence of unintegrated memory. A notable feature of the publication is its interdisciplinarity. The author skilfully integrates genealogical research with cultural historiography, applied psychoanalysis, and postcolonial identity theory. In his reading, Emanuel and Philipp are not merely historical actors shaping Freud's identity; they become powerful symbols of a hybrid Jewish identity, one that oscillates between multiple worlds and competing discourses. Their life trajectories in Britain offer a model of existence that contrasts not only with Freud himself but also with the dominant narratives of Jewish intellectual modernity. Through this lens, Roger Willoughby opens up a new space for reflecting on marginalised identities within the history of psychoanalysis – not as supplements, but as significant contexts for its emergence. In the concluding section of the book, the author examines the final months of Freud's life in London, situating them within the wider constellation of his British family. He highlights the fragmented, incomplete, and perhaps ambivalent nature of Freud's British identity, suggesting that it was his brothers who experienced this identity more fully, more naturally, and with greater rootedness. In doing so, the book reopens the question of the internal tension between cultural belonging and the personal experience of exile. *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* is a substantial contribution not only to the biography of Sigmund Freud but also to wider debates on cultural memory, identity, and transmission within the Jewish diaspora. Through its combination of historical rigour, analytical depth, and cultural sensitivity, the book aspires to engage not only scholars but also a broader readership interested in Sigmund Freud, the history of psychoanalysis, migration studies, and Central European cultural identities in the British context.

Ingrid Baniatová

Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London, by

Roger Willoughby. Published by Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group,

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Currently Amazon and Routledge offer a discount.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was not only the 'father' of psychoanalysis but, one could say, also the founding father of psychotherapy in general and especially of the psychodynamic psychotherapies. For many he was an inspirational genius but for some a controversial charlatan. Whatever one's opinion, there is no getting away from the fact that he set in train a talking cure movement that has spread worldwide, and many of his ideas have entered the public discourse. Yet his poor and humble origins remind us of his human ordinariness. Roger Willoughby eruditely traces Freud's life from Freiberg in what is now the Czech Republic where he was born, then in Vienna where he settled, and finally in London where he died aged 83. Each chapter is richly referenced and annotated, showing that Willoughby left no stone unturned in his historical research.

This book is a very interesting read for anybody keen to understand the particular family dynamics, and the psychodynamics, that influenced the development of Freud's personality, his theorising and his clinical praxis. Issues such as sibling rivalry, the oedipal complex, envy, birth order, defences and so forth come to mind here. His working-class father, Jacob, struggled to make ends meet and never quite managed. Two of his four children from his first wife Sally died young. The two surviving sons, Emanuel and Philipp, were some 23 and 21 years older than Freud – and may well have been substitute father figures to him, especially after they had a measure of entrepreneurial success later in life when they settled in Manchester, England – leaving behind financial debts in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Jacob's second wife Amalia gave birth to eight children of whom Freud was the eldest. Amalia, unlike Jacob and his first wife Sally, appears to have been from a more middle-class background. Freud appears to have been the most gifted of Jacob's twelve children. Why was this? What was the key to his extraordinary success? Being the eldest son born to Amalia may have been a factor but is unlikely to be the only one. In this book Roger Willoughby suggests some important and previously neglected additional factors.

Freud went to England on three occasions: at age 19 for 7.5 weeks and at 52 for two weeks to visit his two older half-brothers who had moved there, and again at 82 for 15 months when fleeing from the Nazis. His four younger sisters did not manage to escape and were murdered by the Nazis. When in London Freud wrote, among other things, two pieces on anti-Semitism and would accept several titular roles in Jewish and Austrian émigré organisations.

Much of Freud's life was characterised by financial worries, high infant mortality, anti-Semitism, and illness. The latter appears to have been particularly true of the Freud women in Manchester and Vienna who seemed to suffer from several chronic symptoms, maybe because they were relatively house-bound and restricted, unlike the men who seemed to travel around much more freely. Freud found the same pattern in many of his female patients. Willoughby acknowledges that women have a relatively low profile in his book and attributes this shadowy presence to the comparative paucity of archival material on them. This probably reflects the patriarchal culture of the times. It would have been interesting to learn more about Freud's mother Amalia, as well as his wife Martha and the other women in the family, and what role they played in Freud's success. His gentle father did not appear to be a role model in terms of career development. His two older brothers living in

Manchester may have fulfilled this role, especially later on in life when they managed to become moderately successful financially.

Much of Freud's thinking seems to have been influenced by the rich cultural life of Vienna, but also by his visits to England. He became quite an Anglophile and read much English literature. He was also influenced by Darwin and Galton. He was diagnosed with jaw cancer in 1923, and had more than thirty surgical operations in attempts to manage this. Yet he continued to smoke and died 16 years later in London where he had become quite a celebrity. Unlike his eldest brother Emanuel, he never became a British citizen. He transformed himself from his poor middle-European Jewish background into a successful secular Jew in the wider world, and England played a large part in this transformation. In London, he completed his book entitled *Moses and Monotheism* which more orthodox Jews – and some Christians – found controversial at the time. He felt a freedom in London at a time when in Vienna the Nazis were attacking what they saw as the perversion of 'Jewish' psychoanalysis. Most psychoanalysts fled from the Continent to the UK, the USA, and Canada. Nevertheless, Freud's daughter Anna, as well as Melanie Klein, helped promote Freud's ideas in England. It would have been interesting to read more about these early post-Freudians – especially Anna's role. The male characters are well developed in

this book but the contribution of women and the part that they played in shaping Freudian thought, which is here hinted at, will hopefully come to light in the future.

Willoughby's book gives a valuable insight into the context that influenced the development of Freud's journey into psychoanalysis and the role that England played in this. I heartedly recommend reading it.

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