

ESSAY I

FREUD'S BOTANICAL MONOGRAPH SCREEN MEMORY REVISITED

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Another presentiment tells me, as if I knew already—though I don't know anything at all—that I am about to discover the source of morality.

—Letter of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, dated 31 May 1897.
(*The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess*)

. . . the realization of a secret wish . . . might mature at the same time as Rome . . .

—Letter of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, dated 2 March 1899.
(*The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess*)

In his 1958 essay, "Psychoanalysis—Science or Party Line?," Erich Fromm asserts:

unconsciously [Sigmund Freud] . . . wanted to be . . . one of the great cultural-ethical leaders of the twentieth century. He wanted to conquer the world . . . and to lead man to the only—and very limited—salvation he was capable of: the conquest of passion by intellect. To Freud, this—not any religion or any political solution like socialism—was the *only* valid answer to the problem of man [In Fromm, E. (1963, p. 143)].

Freud, however, eludes Fromm. The following paraphrase of the above conveys the present author's quite different reading of the father of psychoanalysis: *consciously* [Sigmund Freud] wanted to conquer the world and to lead man to the only—and very limited—salvation he was capable of: the conquest of passion by intellect. To Freud, this was the *only* valid answer to *the Jewish problem*.

In other words, like Theodor Herzl, Sigmund Freud was bent on delivering his people from anti-Semitism—but secretly so. Herzl's

Promised Land was a sovereign Jewish State; Freud's Promised Land, on the other hand, was an enlightened secular world, a brotherly world where the seed of Abraham can move freely over frontiers.

The author was cued in to Freud's conscious messianic ambition by his dream of the Botanical Monograph—more accurately by a scene purportedly from his childhood which came to Freud while he was analyzing this short dream. According to Freud, this recollected scene is “intimately related” to “the ultimate meaning of the dream, which,” he adds, “I have not disclosed” (Freud, 1900b, p. 191).

But first, the dream itself, which Freud dreamt in the second week of March 1898, while working on his masterpiece, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900b), and in which it is included. Here is James Strachey's translation in the Standard Edition:

I had written a monograph on a certain plant. The book lay before me and I was at the moment turning over a folded coloured plate. Bound up in each copy there was a dried specimen of the plant, as though it had been taken from a herbarium (Freud, 1900b, p. 169).

And here is the all-important scene, the key to this short but significant dream:

. . . It had once amused my father to hand over a book with *coloured plates* (an account of a journey through Persia) for me and my eldest sister [Anna] to destroy. Not easy to justify this from the educational point of view! I had been five at the time and my sister not yet three; and the picture of the two of us blissfully pulling the book to pieces (leaf by leaf, like an artichoke, I found myself saying) was almost the only plastic memory that I retained from that period of my life (p. 172; Freud's italics, for he was associating to “colored plate”).

Now in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud (1900b) asserts, “in every language concrete terms, in consequence of the history of their development, are richer in associations than conceptual ones” (p. 340). And in the original edition [*Die Traumdeutung* (1900a)], the plates or illustrations in this “account of a journey through Persia” are denoted by *Tafeln*, which commonly signifies the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments [cf. “*Die (mosaischen) Gesetztafeln*, decalogue” (*The New*

Cassell's German Dictionary, 1962, p. 193)]. After redacting the Torah in Babylon, Ezra, in 458 B.C.E., journeyed with the *Tafeln*-filled Torah to another city in the *Persian* Empire, Jerusalem, where, in a public ceremony thirteen years later (445 B.C.E.), he read the Law to the people, establishing the Torah as the Book of Books. The “account of a journey through Persia” then can easily signify the Persian travel book of every Jew's childhood, the Torah—in Freud's case, in the form of the illustrated German-Hebrew Philippon Bible, a rebound volume of which his father, Jakob, gave him on his thirty-fifth birthday, May 6, 1891. Mercifully, Jakob wasn't able to foresee that, in 1897, the year following his death, his brilliant son would secretly resolve not to preserve, but to destroy the Law—see to it that there'd be no remnants of the Torah to rebind, not one leaf, not one law. (Cf. “the picture of the two of us blissfully pulling the book to pieces . . . leaf by leaf.”)

According to Freud, the Botanical Monograph dream was instigated by a conversation he had the night before with his friend, the ophthalmic surgeon Leopold Konigstein. The subject matter of this conversation, Freud, however, doesn't disclose. Nor will he ever do so. On February 14, 1911, eleven years after publication of *Die Traumdeutung*, Freud's disciple Carl Jung, who was then conducting seminars on dream interpretation, writes Freud, expressing his displeasure at Freud's withholding “the crucial topic of the conversation with Dr. Konigstein, which is absolutely essential if the dream is to be understood properly. Naturally, one cannot strip oneself naked but . . .” (Freud & Jung, 1974, p. 395). Three days later, on the 17th, Freud, under perceived pressure, replies:

. . . the crucial conversation . . . dealt with the very topic we touched on in Munich. . . the Egyptian statue allegedly costing 10,000 kronen. . . When I was a young man my father chided me for spending money on books, which at the time were my higher passion. As you see all this is not for the common people (Freud & Jung, *Ibid.*, p. 395).

But, as I shall show, a close reading of two pertinent passages in *Die Traumdeutung* reveals that Freud is once again holding back—the crucial topic of the conversation cannot have been the pricey “Egyptian statue” which he couldn't afford to add to his collection of antiquities:

. . . my dream was connected with an event the previous evening. I had walked home with Dr. Königstein and had got into conversation with him about a matter [*angelegenheit*] which never fails to excite my feelings [*lebhaft erregt*] whenever it is raised. . . . (Freud, 1900b, p. 171; [1900a, p. 177]).

Since *erregend* (cf. *erregt*) means “irritability” and *lebhaft* means “strong” or “vigorous” (*The New Cassell’s German Dictionary*, 1962), the “matter which never fails to excite [Freud’s] feelings” is repugnant to him. Moreover, it is repugnant to Dr. Königstein as well:

. . . in the course of [the conversation] I had given [Dr. Königstein] some information [*ihm Andeutungen gemacht*] which was bound to affect both of us closely. . . [*beiden nahe gehen müssen*] . . . (p. 174, [p. 180]).

Strachey’s translation here is misleading. Freud did not give Königstein “some information.” He gave Königstein an interpretation. [*The New Cassell’s German Dictionary* (1962) defines *deutung* (cf. *Andeutungen*, above): “interpretation, meaning, signification.” Here, then, is a more valid rendering:

. . . in the course of [the conversation] . . . I had given [Dr. Königstein] an interpretation [about a matter] which was bound to affect both of us closely. . .

Moreover, the original wording suggests strongly that Freud views this aversive or repulsive subject matter as an ominous sign. [*Die Vorbedeutung* (cf. *ihm Andeutungen gemacht*, or “I had given him [an interpretation]”) means “foreboding, omen, augury” and *vorbedeuten* means “to forebode, presage” (*The New Cassell’s German Dictionary*, 1962, p. 543)].

According to Strachey, Freud (1900b, p. 172, ed. n.1) dreamt the Botanical Monograph on or about 10 March 1898. And in early March 1898 there was one “matter” (or *angelegenheit*) that “was bound to affect,” that must move both (*beiden nahe gehen müssen* . . .) Freud and his fellow Jew profoundly: the miserable Dreyfus Affair. (*Angelegenheit*, which Strachey translates as “matter,” also means “affair.”) Less than three weeks earlier, on February 23rd, Emile Zola was sentenced to a year

in prison for libel vis-à-vis “*J'accuse!*”, his bold Open Letter (January 13th) in defense of Captain Dreyfus (convicted on the false charge of treason on December 22, 1895) in which the 57-year-old writer accused specific members of the French General Staff of covering up “one of the greatest crimes of the century,” the railroading of Dreyfus. [A player in the Dreyfus Affair was Gabriel Hanotaux, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs or *der auswärtigen angelegenheiten*. Moreover, *angeklagt* means “a man accused” or “defendant”—like Capt. Dreyfus or Emile Zola.] On February 9th, the second day of Zola's seventeen-day libel trial, Freud wrote Fliess, “Zola keeps us breathless. He is a fine fellow, a man with whom one can get on” (Freud, 1954, p. 245) [in 1898, date unknown, Freud recruited Königstein for his B'nai B'rith lodge (Klein, 1985, p. 87)]. The militant anti-Jewish violence in the land of the Declaration of the Rights of Man portends for Freud the resurfacing of virulent anti-Semitism throughout Christendom—each and every Jew a potential Dreyfus. Almost three years earlier, on July 5, 1895, Theodor Herzl, who had witnessed and reported on Dreyfus's public degradation on the parade ground of the Ecole Militaire, penned the following to the Chief Rabbi of Vienna, Rabbi Moritz Guedemann—as you listen to Herzl, please imagine that Freud is speaking to Königstein during their “crucial” talk:

I have been watching [the anti-Semitic] movement in Austria and elsewhere with the closest attention. These are as yet mere rehearsals. Much worse is to come (Pawel, 1989, p. 242).

Freud's book-destroying accomplice in the recollected scene, his sister Anna, who was born on December 3, 1858, just eight months after his infant brother Julius died (April 15). Several months prior to dreaming the Botanical Monograph, Julius's death surfaced, returned to Freud, in his systematic self-analysis which Freud had begun in response to the death of his father, Jakob, on October 23, 1896, which had left him feeling uprooted:

. . . I welcomed my one-year-younger brother (who died within a few months) with ill wishes and real infantile jealousy, and . . . his death left the germ of guilt in me (Letter to Wilhelm Fliess of 3 October 1897; Freud, 1954, p. 219).

Oppressed by his fratricidal sense of guilt, Freud secretly vowed to make an atonement by delivering the children—other little Juliuses (and Sarahs)—from the scourge of anti-Semitism. And that very year, 1897, Freud discovered not only the Oedipus complex but also a dazzling derivative: the God-idea stems from the Father complex. That is, God the Father is a projection out on to the universe of the oedipal boy's idealized perception of his father. With this godsend (or Godsend) which for now he keeps close to his chest, Freud would redeem himself from having played Cain to Julius's Abel: no God, no Judaism, no Christianity, no miserable anti-Semitism to distort or destroy the lives of the children. [Or, as the Root (Judaism) goes, so goes the miserable Branch (Christianity.) At the cost of Judaism, he would redeem the children—and himself.

But before setting others free from their religious chains, it is essential, Freud understands, that he set himself free from the Law, from Judaism's hold. In this light, please consider the following:

The thoughts corresponding to [Botanical Monograph] dream consisted of a passionately agitated plea on behalf of my liberty to act as I chose to act and to govern my life as seemed right to me and me alone. . . . (Freud, 1900b, p. 467).

In order to get on with his messianic ambition it is essential that Freud set himself free from the Law and become his own person. But how? Helpful here is Freud's gloss on his free-associations to "artichoke" [cf. "blissfully pulling the book to pieces (leaf by leaf, like an *artichoke*, I found myself saying)]:

Behind 'artichokes' ["leaf by leaf, like an artichoke"] lay, on the one hand, my thoughts about Italy [which, as Strachey notes, Freud doesn't specify] and, on the other hand, a scene from my childhood . . . (Freud, 1900b, p. 283).

"[O]n the one hand . . . on the other hand" indicates an equivalency, doesn't it? Because the childhood scene ("on the other hand") is bound up with Freud's desire to "govern [his] life," Freud's "thoughts about Italy" ("on the one hand") should also pertain to his desire for personal freedom. Now, by this time Freud has been "longing for Rome" (letter to Fliess of December 3, 1897, three months before the dream). So, it is safe to read "my thoughts about Italy" as "my thoughts about Rome."

Consider:

<p>“On the one hand,” Rome I, Sigmund, take my stand before that terrible Symbol, the <i>Tafeln</i>-bearing <i>Moses</i> of Michelangelo (in the Church of St. Peter in Chains).</p>	<p>“On the other hand,” Vienna I, Sigismund, 5, destroy a token of the Torah given me by my father Jakob, the <i>Tafeln</i>-filled Persian travel book.</p>
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In his 1914 essay, “The Moses of Michelangelo,” which at his insistence was initially published anonymously, Freud will confess, “no other piece of statuary has ever made a stronger impression on me than this [*Moses*]” (p. 213). And, as we shall see, it is for good reason that the statue impresses him so.

Now, at the time of the dream Freud still holds to the cathartic method of cure for neuroses:

. . . [we] lead the patient's attention back from his symptom to the scene in which and through which that symptom arose; and having thus located the scene, we remove the symptom by bringing about, during the reproduction of the traumatic scene, a subsequent correction of the psychical course of events which took place at the time (Freud, 1896, p. 193).

In other words, when a patient in the safety of the psychoanalyst's office relives a traumatic event, there is a purging of the emotions which sustain the neurotic symptom which arose from that event; hence, the symptom collapses. Freud's neurotic symptom is submission to the Will of the Father, be the father Jakob Freud, Moses or Jehovah. And because the situation before Michelangelo's *Moses* would be reminiscent of his oedipal days when he wanted to kill his father to possess his mother, Freud who is secretly bent on killing Moses (by destroying the Law) in order to possess Mother Earth understands that there would be uprushes of feelings and attitudes from his childhood concerning his father, Jakob. It is essential that they not overpower him, that he stay in control as these resurface, especially the parricidal rage and the terror while awaiting the anticipated retribution, i.e., castration. Indeed, in “*Der Moses des Michelangelo*” (throughout which “*die Tafeln*” denotes the two Tablets or Tables of the Law), Freud (1914) unwittingly reveals his castration anxiety before *Moses/Moses*,

who, enraged, glowers at the backsliding Israelites worshipping the Golden Calf:

... Sometimes I have crept cautiously out of the half-gloom of the interior as though I myself belonged to the mob upon whom his eye is turned—the mob which can hold fast no conviction [*das keine Uberzeugung festhalten kann*] . . . (p. 213 [p. 175]).

In the phrase “the mob which can hold fast no conviction,” Freud uses “*uberzeugung*” to denote the word “conviction,” and since *zeugungslied* means “penis” (*Cassell’s*, 1982), the following rendering of Freud’s recounted experience is reasonable (that is, if, as I maintain, Freud intends to kill and succeed Moses):

“[It’s] as though I myself belonged to the mob unto whom [Moses’] eye is turned. . . the mob which [can not hold on to their penises].”

Moment by moment Freud must stay alert, recognize that he is experiencing but new editions of feelings and attitudes from his childhood pertaining to his father, Jakob. Maintaining his emotional balance is essential if he is to set himself free from the will of the father; again, whether that father be Jakob Freud, Moses or Jehovah.

Because he loved his father, Freud understands that guilt or filial piety could sabotage his intention to destroy the Law and replace Moses, both as Lawgiver (“Know Thyself!”) and as deliverer of the Jews. Moreover, not having surmounted his belief in what he will call “the Bible Story,” Freud (1925, added 1935, p. 8) fears Yahweh and His terrible Justice or vengeance, especially that his little ones, his three boys and three girls, will suffer, pay for their father’s rebellion. When he was a boy, Freud, dreading retribution, abandoned his ambition to kill his father, Jakob, in order to take possession of his mother, Amalia; four decades later, would Freud, dreading Yahweh’s retribution, abandon his ambition to kill his father Moses in order to take possession of mother earth? Would he risk Yahweh’s avenging Himself upon his little ones, and unto “the third and the fourth generation”? (Exodus 20:5). The death of one child, his brother Julius, is already on his hands—or so he believed.

Like Janus, the two-headed Roman guardian of the threshold, Freud must be ever vigilant or he’d never resolve his father problem, never be

his own person, never govern his own life, forever be bound to the Law. One momentary lapse, and he could kiss his messianic ambition goodbye.

The world's greatest representation of Moses, however, is more than a mere prop for Freud to set himself free from bondage to the Law—much more. For when it comes to his great secret ambition, Freud is superstitious:

. . . My own superstition has its roots in suppressed ambition (immortality) and in my case takes the place of that anxiety about death which springs from the normal uncertainty of life
[Freud's jottings in the interleaved copy of the 1904 edition of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (Freud, 1901, [1904], p. 260, ed. n.)

Because 'murdering' the biblical Moses (by destroying the Law) and supplanting him, both as the new moral educator of humankind and as deliverer of his defenseless people, guarantees Freud immortality, Michelangelo's 8-ft, 4-inch bull-horned representation of that great man of his people so excites Freud's superstitious tendencies that the statue is his personal totem, that is, Moses himself (or the shade of Moses). In this regard, consider the following from Freud's 1914 anonymously published essay, "The Moses of Michelangelo":

I can recollect my own disillusionment when, during my first visits to San Pietro in Vincoli [St. Peter in Chains], I used to sit down in front of the statue in the expectation that I should now see how it would start up on its raised foot, dash the Tables of the Law to the ground and let fly its wrath. . . . (Freud, 1914, p. 220.)

Feeding Freud's 'totem' superstition is, I suspect, his Roman Catholic sensibility thanks to his devout Czech nanny who took him to mass regularly at Freiberg's Church of the Nativity of Our Lady: If bread, a Communion Wafer, is Jesus, what's to keep stone, Michelangelo's marble *Moses*, from being Moses? Here it is worth noting that when Freud was growing up in the small Catholic Moravian town of Freiberg where he learned that symbols (Wine and Wafer) can be what they represent (the Blood and Body of Jesus), a statue inspired by Michelangelo's *Moses* was stationed in its town square: this imposing Israelite writes on a

stone tablet and wears a helmet with horn-like projections (Lippman, 2003, p. 34, n.9).

For a sense of Freud's uncanny experience in the gloomy church before the statue, we turn to the famous passage from "The Moses of Michelangelo":

. . . How often have I mounted the steep steps from the unlovely Corso Cavour to the lonely piazza where the deserted church stands, and have essayed to support [*standzuhalten*] the angry scorn of the hero's glance [*Blick des Heros*]! . . .
(Freud, 1914b, p. 213 [1914a, p. 175]).

According to *The New Cassell's German Dictionary* (1962), *blick* ("glance") means "touches of light," and *blicken*, in addition to meaning "to glance," means "to shine" (cf. Exodus 30:35: ". . . the skin of Moses' face shone"). And in the *Cassell's* edition of 1914 (Bruehl, 1906 [rev. 1914]), the year that "*Der Moses Des Michelangelo*" was published, we find that *anblitzen*, which stems from the same root, in addition to meaning "to cast a furious look upon," means "to throw a ray upon." (In the frontispiece of the Freud family Bible, the illustrated German-Hebrew Philippon Bible, rays emanate upward in 'bundled' fashion from both sides of the forehead of the Tablet-bearing biblical Moses.) The year before, 1913, in *Totem and Taboo*, Freud quoted a pertinent observation by the anthropologist, Northcote W. Thomas:

. . . 'Persons or things which are regarded as taboo may be compared to objects charged with *electricity*; they are the seat of a tremendous power which is transmissible by contact and may be liberated with destructive effect . . .' (p. 20; italics mine).

This mysterious force or *mana* is comparable, then, to lightning or *blitz*.

Turning from *blick*, we now look at the word, *standhalten* (to "support," above). The 1914 edition of *Cassell's* defines *standhalten* as follows: "To withstand; to resist; to hold one's own; to stand firm." Freud's 'choosing' *standhalten* suggests strongly that whenever he entered the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli that Freud—his superstitious tendencies excited—attempted to resist the *blick* or *mana* of *Moses/Moses* (cf. "How often have I . . . essayed to support . . ."). Applying this decoding of *blick* and *standhalten* back to the time of the Botanical Monograph dream

(March 1898), three and one half years before he will first set eyes on Michelangelo's *Moses*, we arrive at the following rendering:

Vis-à-vis the *mana* [*blick*] of *Moses/Moses*, I intend to [*standhalten*] withstand, resist, hold my own, stand firm.

On the other hand, when he writes about the Israelites at Mt. Sinai vis-a-vis Yahweh, instead of using *standhalten*, which implies active resistance or opposition, Freud uses *ertragen* which implies passive submission. ("To bear; to suffer; to tolerate; to put up with"):

. . . Even Moses had to act as an intermediary between his people and Jehovah, since the people could not support [*ertruge*] the sight of God; and when he returned from the presence of God his face shone-some of the *mana* had been transferred on to him . . . (Freud, 1921b, p. 125 [1928, p. 140]).

Whereas *ertragen* suggests resignation (the Israelites), *standhalten* suggests resistance or defiance (Freud). Unlike the Israelites who passively suffered the will of Yahweh, this Israelite would defiantly hold his ground, stand up to *Moses/Moses*, ultimately to Yahweh. Again, *Cassell's* defines *standhalten* as follows: "To withstand; to resist; to hold one's own; to stand firm." In his last major attack on religion, *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud (1939) will add a pertinent note:

It is historically certain that *the Jewish type was finally fixed* as a result of the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah . . . (p. 42n; italics mine).

It was Ezra, of course, who brought the Torah, the Five Books of Moses, from Babylon to the Israelites in Jerusalem in 458 B.C.E. And if the Law of Moses "finally fixed" the Jews, then Moses is *the* ancestor of the Jews. By withstanding the sight of *Moses/Moses*, Freud intended to "unfix" himself, set himself free from the Law, and, thereby, become a person in his own right. (Cf. the lead quote: ". . . the realization of a secret wish . . . might *mature* at the same time as Rome . . .)

Having been born in a caul (Jones, 1953, p. 4), which is a sign of greatness, and which his mother, Amalia, never let her "goldener Sigi" forget, it is probable that Freud superstitiously believes that he, himself,

possesses *mana* from birth, and, so, may be able to withstand the terrible *mana* or supernatural power of *Moses/Moses*:

. . . kings and chiefs are possessed of great power, and it is death for their subjects to address them directly; but a minister or other person of greater *mana* than common can approach them unharmed . . . This power is attached to all *special* individuals, such as kings, priests or newborn babies, to all *exceptional* states, such as the physical states of menstruation, puberty or birth, and to all *uncanny* things . . . (Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 1913, p. 20; p. 22, Freud's italics.)

Moreover, if Freud were to withstand *Moses/Moses*' terrible charge or *mana*, then not only would he deliver himself from the Law. He would possess the *mana* of *Moses*—the terrible radiance would be transferred on to him, the new *Moses*:

. . . The strangest fact seems to be that anyone who has transgressed one of these prohibitions himself acquires the characteristic of being prohibited—as though the whole of the dangerous charge had been transferred over to him. (*Ibid.*, p. 22).

At this point I'll backtrack and quote from Freud's "longing for Rome" letter to Wilhelm Fliess of December 3, 1897, which, again, was three months before the Botanical monograph dream:

I dreamt I was in Rome. . . . Incidentally my longing for Rome is deeply neurotic. It is connected with my schoolboy hero-worship of the Semitic Hannibal, and this year in fact I did not reach Rome any more than he did Lake Trasimeno. Since I have been studying the unconscious, I have been so interesting to myself. It is a pity *that one always keeps one's mouth shut about the most intimate things.*

[“The best that you know you must not tell to the boys”.]
(Freud, 1954, p. 236; Bracketed quote from Goethe's *Faust*, as translated by James Strachey; italics mine.)

In this guarded letter to Fliess, who was then his best friend and confidant, Freud writes, “Since I have been studying *the* unconscious . . .”

—Not “my subconscious.” What he is alluding to is universal, pertaining not just to himself but to humankind in general. And armed with “the best” that he knows, his secret theoretical knowledge regarding the humble or oedipal beginnings of God the Father, Freud would annihilate religion and, thereby, eliminate anti-Semitism. Unlike Hannibal, not only would this Semitic avenger enter Rome; he would eventually crush the Romans, the new Romans, the Roman Catholic Church, the breeding ground for anti-Semites like the Christian thug who knocked his father Jakob's new *Shabbat* fur cap into the mud and ordered him off the pavement, with Jakob meekly complying and not defending himself.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, just before mentioning the fateful Sunday stroll when Jakob related his encounter with the Christian in Freud's birthplace (Freiberg in Moravia), Freud refers to his boyhood identification with Hannibal:

To my youthful mind Hannibal and Rome symbolized the conflict between the tenacity of Jewry and the organization of the Catholic church. And the increasing importance of the effects of the anti-semitic movement upon our emotional life helped to fix the thoughts of those early days. Thus the wish to go to Rome had become in my dream-life a cloak and symbol [*Deckmantel und Symbol* (1900a, p 202)] for a number of other passionate wishes . . . (1900b, pp. 196–197).

This is a veiled confession: In order to ultimately eliminate Christendom, especially the Catholic church, Freud would journey to Rome, enter the Church of St. Peter in Chains, and, there, set himself free from the Law by standing up to that terrible *Symbol*, the *Moses* of Michelangelo. In Luther's Bible, which Freud references in his works, “*Decke*” [as in *Symbol und Deckmantel*] denotes the veil which cloaks the dangerous supernatural radiance or *mana* of Moses:

“And till Moses had done speaking with [the terrified Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai], he put a veil on his face” [Exodus 34:33—“. . . *legte er eine Decke auf sein Angesicht*”].

To repeat: The arousal of his ambition to be the successor to Moses excites Freud's superstitious side; at such times, Michelangelo's *Moses* is, for Freud, a symbol in the same manner that the Host is a symbol for

devout Catholics like his early instructress in the faith, his devout Czech nanny—the statue is Moses or the shade of Moses. And if the dangerous charge or supernatural radiance of this terrible *Symbol*, Michelangelo's *Moses*, were 'transferred over' to Freud in the gloomy church, he would assume the mantle or *Mantel* of Moses, again, both as Lawgiver ("Know Thyself!") and as deliverer of his oppressed homeless people. Cf. Elisha succeeding the Prophet Elijah:

He [Elisha] took up the mantle [*den Mantel*] of Elijah that fell from him . . . And the sons of the prophets . . . said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they . . . bowed to the ground before him (II Kings 2:13; 15 [2. KONIGE 2:13; 15]).

[The description of Elisha's brethren bowing to Elisha is reminiscent of Joseph's dream of his brothers' sheaves making "obeisance to my sheaf" (Genesis 37:7). In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud (1900b) acknowledges identifying with Joseph—not because Joseph was the savior of his people, but because Joseph was "an interpreter of dreams":

. . . the name Josef plays a great part in my dreams. . . . My own ego finds it very easy to hide itself behind people of that name, since Joseph was the name of a man famous in the Bible as an interpreter of dreams. (p. 484, n. 2)].

Having had signs of heart trouble dating from 1893, Freud, while readying himself, probably understood that under the strain he could suffer a fatal heart attack in the church. [According to Dr. Max Schur (1972, p. 62), who was his personal physician from 1928 until his death in 1939, Freud had "suffered an organic myocardial lesion" in 1894.] And if his heart were to give out, it would leave his wife, Martha, and their six little ones destitute. And what if he were to suffer a breakdown, have a psychotic break? To have such a great ambition and to believe that he could pull it off, maybe this big dreamer is already a *meschugganah* lunatic, just another messianic pretender, one more deluded messiah of the Jews who comes on the scene during times of especial Jewish misery.

Still, summoning courage, Freud at long last entered the Eternal City on September 2, 1901. Three days later, on Thursday, the fifth, he crossed the threshold of the Church of St. Peter in Chains, and took his

stand before *Moses/Moses*. Remarkably, like Jakob who had seen “God face to face” and prevailed, Freud came through this dreaded but essential ordeal. At age 45, Freud—who enjoyed quoting the German poet Ruckert’s line, “the Book tells us it’s no sin to limp”—emerged from the gloomy church transformed; that is, as an exceptional being, possessing the divine and terrible biblical radiance of Moses (or so his superstitious side believed). Fourteen days later, on September 19, Freud (1985, p. 449) will write Fliess: “Rome . . . was a high point of my life.” The high point is more like it.

In the fall of the following year Freud gathers disciples (Gay, 1988, p. 136), and is on his way to preparing the ground for his Promised Land, an enlightened brotherly world where the seed of Abraham can at last move freely over frontiers. And is on his way to becoming FREUD.

Seven years later, on April 15, 1908, the fiftieth anniversary of Julius Freud’s death, the six-year-old Psychological Wednesday Society is re-named—on Freud’s carried motion—the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society (Nunberg and Federn, 1906–1908, p. 373); in this manner, Freud secretly dedicates to the memory of Julius the psychoanalytic movement.

In 1935, the Polish-Jewish writer Bruno Schulz (1990) averred, “certain images in childhood . . . amount to an agenda” (p. 111). Though Freud’s image of him and his sister Anna destroying “an account of a journey through Persia” seems to fall into this category, this childhood scene is not a veridical recollection. For as Freud asserts in his 1899 paper, “Screen Memories”:

Whenever *in a memory the subject himself appears* . . . as an object among other objects this contrast between the acting and the recollecting ego may be taken as evidence that *the original impression has been worked over*. It looks as though a memory-trace from childhood had been here translated back into a plastic and visual form at a later date—the date of the memory’s arousal. But *no original impression has entered the subject’s consciousness* (p. 321; italics mine).

The evoked childhood scene, like the Botanical Monograph dream, is itself a wish fulfillment. By the “date of the memory’s arousal,” Freud is bent on destroying religion; accordingly, in addition to depicting Freud (and his sister) destroying a fitting Torah symbol (“an account of a

journey through Persia”), this “worked over” scene from his childhood contains a mix pointing to his mighty weapon, the oedipal beginnings of the God the Father: (1) infantile sexuality (“pulling . . . artichoke”; see Anzieu, 1986, pp. 285–286), and (2) the age at which the oedipal boy not only abandons his ambition. He also unwittingly transforms his father into God the Father (“I had been five”).

Freud’s messianic ambition can easily account for his abandoning the seduction hypothesis (adult psychopathology, namely neurotic disorders or symptoms, can be traced back to father-child incest) for the Oedipus complex and its dazzling derivative, Freud’s mighty weapon, the origin of the idea of God the Father.

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