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# On the Jewish Question

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BOOKS REVIEWED:

Earl Shorris, *Jews Without Mercy*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982.

Mortimer Ostow, ed., *Judaism and Psychoanalysis*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1982.

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**A**s antisemitism destroyed European Jewry, it gave a life-and-death edge to internal controversies among Jews about Jewish self-betrayal. Among the accusations made by some Jews against others, three are repeated again and again: the charge of parvenu behavior, of rising socially and economically while leaving one's suffering people behind; the charge of political passivity, of abandoning the defense of Jewish interests; and the charge of lack of self-restraint, of giving credence to the antisemitic association of Jews with dangerous sexual desire. These three issues are at the center of the controversies over both Jewish neoconservatism and the Jewish origins of psychoanalysis, and these controversies will therefore illuminate one another. We begin with the neo-conservatives.

**W**hen Earl Shorris was a boy, he tells us in the opening pages of *Jews Without Mercy*, he greatly admired the ritual slaughterer, who was the assistant to the kosher butcher in his neighborhood. He expected the assistant, the most pious and learned Jew in the congregation, to make the first aliyah on Yom Kippur night. Instead that honor went to Big Eddie, the flashy liquor-store owner who consorted with criminals and sold whiskey in the slums. Big Eddie had neither learning nor piety; he had money instead. The assistant submitted silently to his humiliation; for young Earl it desecrated the temple. The rise of

Jewish neoconservatism, Earl Shorris now writes, repeats that betrayal of Judaism from within. It signifies the triumph of the Jewish gangster over the Jewish law.

Although two of the most prominent neoconservatives, Jeane Kirkpatrick and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, are not Jewish, Shorris is right to see neoconservatism as a development within Judaism. It centers around *Commentary*, the magazine of the American Jewish Committee, and many of its most prominent supporters are ex-radical Jews. Neoconservatives claim to speak in defense of Jewish interests. They support what they identify as Jewish positions at home and in Israel (against affirmative action, say, on the one hand, and Palestinian claims on the other). They defend the American system of private advancement in which Jews have prospered against statist regulation at home and Soviet militarism abroad. Neoconservatives have, as Shorris sees it, abandoned Jewish ethics in favor of Jewish material success.

Neoconservatism marks a departure from traditional American Jewish positions. Nonetheless, *Jews Without Mercy* suffers from a double idealization of the Jews. Shorris in the first place strips Jewish history of its internal conflict, and in the second place identifies Jewishness with higher values against worldly interests. Shorris appeals to a single Jewish tradition that, he claims, originated in Egyptian slavery, extended through Moses, the prophets, and the diaspora, and culminated in humanitarian liberalism. Shorris's Jews are a communitarian, ethical people, bound together under the law. His neoconservatives have, for the first time in Jewish history, chosen power, appetite, and the self above mercy toward others and adherence to the law.

As an account of a monolithic Jewish tradition, *Jews Without Mercy* presents wishes rather than history. It omits the biblical militance of warriors such as Joshua; the inward-turning, heavily ritualized, traditional diaspora communities; and such conflicts as the eighteenth-century struggle between legalism and hassidism. Yet Shorris's wishes for his kind of Judaism are a part of history. They are resources in the struggle to define Judaism against enemies without and adversaries within the community. *Jews Without Mercy* may deny the importance of such internal struggles when it ventures into Jewish history. But Shorris's personal reminiscences (beginning with Big Eddie) show the ways in which controversies among Jews have formed his own identity.

Shorris lays claim to a Jewish identity through his personal and group memories, and counterposes that identity to Jewish neoconservatism. He does not address neoconservative arguments on their merits any more than he writes actual history. But these two failings have their compensations: *Jews Without Mercy* rightly brings to our attention not just another in a series of continuing arguments among Jews, but a sharp departure in the political and intellectual history of American Judaism. The rise of Jewish neoconservatism signals an unprecedented movement to the punitive right within the Jewish community, a re-

pudding of the traditions of labor socialism and middle-class humanitarianism. Neoconservatism by no means represents the mentality of a majority of American Jews, but Edward Koch's New York popularity and the sizable Jewish vote for Reagan indicate the most serious mass erosion of Jewish liberalism since the New Deal. How is Jewish neoconservatism to be explained?

*Jews Without Mercy* suggests that neoconservatism derives from the conjunction of two developments: American Jewish upward mobility, and the position of the state of Israel. In their admiration for the system that rewarded them and allowed them to rise, the neoconservatives are, as I will argue, Hannah Arendt's parvenus.<sup>1</sup> They inherit the mantle of the Jews who sought to rise socially and economically as individuals, while leaving their community behind. Jewish parvenus, according to Arendt, gave up the struggle for equal rights for all peoples in favor of personal privilege. Yet the neoconservative, unlike the classic parvenu, defends Jewish interests. The earlier parvenu (Disraeli was Arendt's example) sometimes held onto his Jewishness as a mystical, private, interior identity. It compensated for the loss of the Jewish community, which had been abandoned for assimilation. That notion of a mystical Jewish internal essence reemerged to make claims on the world in the form of Jewish nationalism, particularly when that nationalism repudiated diaspora Yiddishkeit in favor of a new, heroic Hebraism. The holocaust, combined with threats to the survival of Israel, strengthened the case for Jewish nationalism. At the same time, for most Jews in Israel and the diaspora, Zionism remained attached to a humanitarian Judaism.

Menachem Begin's right-wing terrorism was all along the exception. It is now in danger of becoming the rule. Neoconservatives insist that Jews not be held to higher standards than other peoples while they also justify Israeli and American militarism in the name of preventing another slaughter of the Jews. This merger of self-aggrandizement with Jewish exceptionalism takes the parvenu mentality to its collective conclusion. It claims parvenu status not just for individuals but for the Jews as a people.

It is essential to recognize that such claims spoken in the name of the Jewish people actually results in the abandonment of persecuted Jews. That is what we learn, as Shorris says, from the notorious attacks on Jacobo Timerman by Irving Kristol and *Commentary* magazine. Jeane Kirkpatrick's distinction of authoritarian from totalitarian regimes first appeared in *Commentary*. But Kristol and *Commentary* were not content to make use of her distinction in defending Argentina against Timerman's attack. They also falsely claimed that Timerman was arrested because of his connections to (totalitarian) guerrilla terrorism, not because he was exposing the (merely authoritarian) government variety.

<sup>1</sup> Hannah Arendt, "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition," in *The Jew as Pariah*, Ron Feldman, ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1978), and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2d ed. (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1958).

Timerman was tortured as a Jew. But Irving Kristol has boasted of "the distinct reserve shown Mr. Timerman . . . by the more reputable American Jewish organizations."<sup>2</sup> By reputable (as opposed to disreputable?) Kristol seems to mean the ability to tolerate authoritarian antisemitism. Kristol and the *Wall Street Journal* labelled Timerman's ordeal "The Timerman Affair." They meant to imply that Timerman was guilty of immorality. But their political unconscious betrayed them, for the title invokes the classic case of authoritarian antisemitism (the crucible in which both modern antisemitism and Zionism were forged), the Dreyfus affair. Neoconservative loyalty either to the Reagan administration or to Israel's Argentine ally may have provided the immediate occasion for the attacks on Timerman. But their larger implication is that those identified with the Jew as parvenu will turn their backs on the Jewish pariah.

Bernard Lazare was a French Jew who derived his political consciousness from the Dreyfus affair. He gave Hannah Arendt her exemplar of an alternative Jewish identity to the Jew as parvenue. She called Lazare the Jew as pariah. Social outcasts in Europe, the Jews were a pariah people. Parvenus tried to escape that pariah identity through individual mobility, but in the face of political antisemitism, their aloneness called attention to Jewish vulnerability. The Jewish pariah understood his or her status not as a personal misfortune but as a social fate. He or she was led to identify with Jewish (and other) pariah peoples. Timerman, in his fate and his protest against it, is the Jew as pariah. He and the butcher's assistant are the heroes of *Jews Without Mercy*.

Timerman and the assistant, however, stand for different responses to the persecution of the Jews. Timerman, by publicizing and analyzing his torture, turned victimhood into radical politics. His protest contrasts with the assistant's silence, yet it leads him to a similar fate: both he and the assistant end up as victims of other Jews. The neoconservatives attack Timerman (as they attacked Arendt before him) for making trouble for the Jews. But they also reject Jews like the assistant. In the face of the holocaust, that shochet is too close to the slaughtered sheep. The holocaust has not simply discredited Jewish passivity, however; it has allowed it to be employed as a mask for violence.

Think of the assistant in relation to Israel. The destruction of European Jewry (as if somehow Jewish acquiescence was to blame) is now used to justify Israeli aggression. Begin, echoing the language of the murderers of the Jews, has announced that the Israeli invasion will bring a "new order" to Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> Few American neoconservatives have carried assimilation to their enemies so far. Daniel Bell (who has probably lost his neoconservative standing), S. M. Lipset, and Nathan Glazer have all condemned the invasion of Lebanon and raised questions about the West Bank settlement policy that led to the Lebanese war.

<sup>2</sup> Irving Kristol, "The Timerman Affair," *Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 1981, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 26, 1982, p. 15.

But Shorris, by making the assistant's submission the alternative to Begin's gangsterism, gives credence to the self-justifications of Begin and Sharon.

The assistant is not merely Begin's negative identity, moreover, but a role that he plays himself. In his hideous evasion of responsibility for the Palestinian massacre—"Goyim killed goyim and already the world wants to hang the Jews"<sup>4</sup>—Begin invoked Jewish victimhood to escape Israeli guilt. In so doing he was making the victims of the holocaust responsible for his own crimes. By taking on the identity of the victim, Begin both obscures and justifies his violence.

There are problems, then, with glorifications of the assistant. One problem is the endorsement of political passivity, whether that submissiveness is actually practiced or used as a disguise. A second problem, which Philip Roth exposed a decade ago, is the choice of ethical restraint over instinctual life.<sup>5</sup> These two subjects, one political and the other erotic, one the stuff of historical tragedy, the other of personal comedy, may seem worlds apart. In fact they are inextricably intertwined.

The diaspora Jew was not supposed to go wild in public and make a spectacle of himself, wrote Roth. To do so was to put himself at psychological risk, and the Jewish community at physical and social risk. Jewish misbehavior fed anti-semitic stereotypes of the unrestrained, libidinous Jew. Postholocaust American Jewish fiction carried to its extreme the demand that Jews be good boys. The Jew was identified with righteousness and restraint. To be Jewish was to be accessible to claims made in the name of the conscience, wrote Roth, to "play ball with the superego." "The voice of the id," he argued, appeared in the novels of Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud, but not among Jews. "Raw, untrammelled, uncompromising, insatiable and unsocialized desire" belonged to the goyim. To locate desire in a Jewish protagonist was to fall victim to antisemitic stereotypes, as *Portnoy's Complaint* was accused of having done.

Roth responded that Bellow and Malamud had not escaped the stereotypes but inverted them. He claimed that for Bellow and Malamud gratification was goyish, renunciation was Jewish. Their Jew was aggressed against; he was the victim. Mr. Sammler, wrote Roth, was "the superego's man in Manhattan." Sammler counterposed "sexual niggerhood" to "ethical Jewishhood." In Malamud's novel, *The Assistant*, the gentile grocer's helper is the figure of sex and violence. When he gets circumcised, at the end of the book, Malamud's assistant has become Shorris's.

Shorris has inherited the ethical Jewishhood of Bellow and Malamud. Marx in "On the Jewish Question" made use of the opposite image of the Jew. He made him the embodiment of the striving, egotistic, material desire hidden within each holy Christian. By exposing the Jewish bourgeois inside the Chris-

4 *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 27, 1982, p. 1.

5 Philip Roth, "Imagining Jews," reprinted in *Reading Myself and Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975).

tian citizen, Marx was using antisemitic stereotypes against those who refused to acknowledge their participation in the "Jewish" world. If Marx employed those stereotypes too willingly, Shorris inverts them. Had Marx been a real Jew, he writes, "he might . . . have found in Jewish ethics the political relation of man to man that he thought would be realized in the paradise at the end of history."

Shorris denies not only Jewish materiality but also Jewish wit. "I lack the tradition of playfulness," he says, speaking against Big Eddie and for the assistant and the Jews. Evidently Jews with mercy are Jews without humor. This mournful, disembodied, ethical Jew floats above actual Jewish history and culture. He becomes himself a parvenu of purity, substituting spiritual upward mobility for its grosser, material form, but equally leaving behind the struggling, particular members of his community. Shorris's rescue operation has saved the Jews from antisemitic stereotypes and worldly contamination, but only by sundering them from human appetite. When the assistant speaks for the Jewish conscience, Podhoretz and Portnoy are left to speak for Jewish desire.

But do they? There are surely Jews who believe in pleasure, but, on closer examination, Podhoretz and Portnoy are not among them. Podhoretz complains, in article after article, about the liberal willingness to sacrifice Jewish interests. His complaint, like Portnoy's, comes from his self-involvement. But Podhoretz, unlike Portnoy, uses not only the language of self-interest but of morality and law and order as well. Such language is not really a screen for the gratification of personal appetite; it is nothing that innocent. Rather, in its grandiose and punitive idiom, it bespeaks a self that could never be gratified. Once self-expression moves away from economic interest and state military power, the neoconservative is no more comfortable with it than is the assistant. He endorses will, not appetite, and claims that the life of immediate gratification has softened America. The distinction between ethical Jews such as Shorris and neoconservatives such as Podhoretz, then, cannot be thought of as a counterposition between the law and desire. By so conceiving the alternatives, Shorris not only deprives good Jews of their bodies, he also gives appetite a bad name. Our aim must be to avoid this false dichotomy, and connect libido to the political defense of the Jews. That intention takes us back to the origins of psychoanalysis, but not in a way that simplifies our task. For Freud has been accused of employing libido in the service of personal advancement, to escape his obligations to the Jews. The problem, I will suggest, goes beyond the ways Freud escaped his Jewishness to the terms by which he returned to it.

**R**oth brings the saintly Jew down to earth by employing the vocabulary of Freud. He is reminding us that the man who placed the unconscious, repression, and sexuality at the center of human life was a Jew. Embarrassment over that fact is one of the subtexts of *Psychoanalysis and Judaism*. The other is the issue of Freud's parvenu longings, his trouble with his Jewish identity. The

two embarrassments are related because Carl Schorske (who appears in this book) and John Murray Cuddihy (who does not) have argued that the invention of the unconscious grew out of Freud's flight from his Jewishness.

The volume edited by Dr. Mortimer Ostow contains a series of papers written over the past thirty years; about half are by Dr. Ostow himself. The book as a whole is loyal both to psychoanalytic orthodoxy and to rabbinical Judaism. It thus seeks to heal the rift opened up at the origins of psychoanalysis.

Freud announced at the beginning of *The Interpretation of Dreams* that the only dreams he felt free to interpret were his own. Carl Schorske, in a brilliant imitation of Freud, reads the dream book as Freud's autobiography.<sup>6</sup> Invoking Freud's archeological metaphor for the unconscious, Schorske finds three layers in the dream book. Earliest and closest to the surface are Freud's professional dreams; they speak to Freud's ambition for a state-appointed professorship, an ambition blocked by antisemitism. Political dreams succeed the professional dreams, and they reach a deeper layer of Freud's psyche. They reveal Freud's boyhood ambition to defeat the antisemites and be a political leader of the Jews. These dreams lead Freud to his discovery of infantile sexuality, and of the oedipal wish to slay the father. But whereas for Freud the childhood wishes are the deepest, and give rise to the professional and political ambitions, Schorske follows Freud's method to a different conclusion. He reads the dream book as itself a wish, the wish to dissolve regicide into parricide. Schorske's Freud wants to be free both of his political obligations to the Jews and of the Jewishness that held back his advancement.

The Viennese liberal state of Freud's childhood was hospitable to Jewish advancement in business, the professions, and the state bureaucracy. But the rise of nationalism and antisemitism as Freud grew up undercut the synthesis of reason, political liberalism, and Jewish assimilation. Young Sigmund had wanted to be a Hapsburg minister, but the path of liberal politics was now closed. Freud faced the choices, Schorske implies, between, on the one hand, socialist or Zionist politics, and on the other, the flight from politics and Jewishness into the interior. "If I can not bend the higher powers, I will stir up the floods of hell": Schorske takes Freud's epigraph for the dream book as a statement about the choice he himself had made. Schorske's Freud, like Shorris's assistant, avoided taking a political stance in defense of the Jews. Unlike the assistant, however, he escaped away from Jewish piety, not toward it, and he fled politics not to renunciation but to libido.

Freud recounts in the dream book a story his father told him when he was a boy: Jacob Freud was out walking, wearing a new fur cap (of the sort Jews wore), when an antisemite ordered him off the sidewalk. The antisemite knocked off his hat; Freud's father meekly went out in the street, picked up the hat, and

6 Carl Schorske, "Politics and Patricide in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*," reprinted in *Fin de Siecle Vienna* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).

walked on. Young Sigmund contrasted his father's "unheroic conduct" with the scene in which Hannibal's father made his son swear vengeance on the Romans. The incident made Sigmund want to be the semitic leader, Hannibal, and avenge the insult to his father. But Hannibal was deprived of his final triumph. He never reached the promised land of Rome, and the mature Freud was in danger of imitating him. Freud describes a series of dreams about his longing to visit Rome. Before he published the dream book, his personal anxieties prevented him from entering the city. Freud went to Rome only after he received his professorship. He arrived not as the conqueror, Hannibal, but as the other figure important to Freud, who got to Rome as its devotee, the classicist and Catholic convert, Winckelmann.

Freud's wish to be Hannibal came from loyalty to his father the Jew; at the same time it expressed a desire to surpass his father, since Freud imagined the heroic resistance his father was unable to make. Freud reported his wish to be the son of Hannibal's father in the dream book, but he gave Hannibal's father the name of Hannibal's brother by mistake. In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Freud interpreted that paraphraxis as the wish to be the son of his own half-brother rather than of his father. But by assimilating this wish to the oedipus complex in general, Freud avoided his particular shame at his father's passivity. That shame would have trapped Freud in his Jewishness, whether he chose to avenge his father or to share in his submission. Freud's psychological reductionism, Schorske suggests, protected (by keeping unconscious) Freud's wish to be free of his father the Jew. And that unconscious wish becomes the origin of the psychological theory.

John Murray Cuddihy also finds that wish at the origins of psychoanalysis and, like Schorske, he places the meeting between Jacob Freud and the antisemite at the center of his story.<sup>7</sup> But, whereas Schorske's Freud embraces and then escapes a heroic political identity, Cuddihy's develops directly from a denial of shame. Cuddihy finds an Oedipus in the encounter with the antisemite; that Oedipus is not Freud but his father. Jacob Freud, like Oedipus, met a man on the road who ordered him out of the way. But Jacob Freud, unlike Oedipus, meekly accepted the insult. Freud's father was a traveling Galician merchant, an immigrant to cosmopolitan Vienna. Cuddihy imagines Freud's shame at his father's outlandish looks, his emotionality, his exposure. Shorris also describes how provincial Jews embarrass their assimilated brothers; Cuddihy connects that shame to the embarrassment felt by immigrant children (Jews and others) over their old-world parents. Freud, Cuddihy proposes, defended against shame by replacing it with guilt. He placed inside all men, including the goyim, that which he did not want to acknowledge as peculiarly Jewish: the uncivilized, insistent, physical, helpless-making urges. By universalizing the id, Cuddihy sug-

<sup>7</sup> John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).



gests, Freud freed Jews from the stigma that inhibited their entry into cosmopolitan, urban society. But Freud's method of assimilation undercut civility. Instead of learning and submitting to the rules of civilized society, Freud unmasked the id within each civilized self. Like Marx, he located the Jew inside the Christian.

Cuddihy comes close to making the unconscious a Jewish invention. The antisemitic overtones in *The Ordeal of Civility* have made it possible to ignore Cuddihy's book. It is not mentioned in *Judaism and Psychoanalysis*. Schorske, however, is altogether reputable, and cannot be ignored. Instead his analysis is silently drained of its troublesome suggestions about Freud's problem with his Jewishness. Martin Bergmann's analysis is illuminating about Freud's early struggle with religious Judaism. (For example, Freud made his fiancée, the daughter of a Rabbi, write to him on the sabbath.) But, though Bergmann cites Schorske on Freud's Rome neurosis, he still allows Freud to go to Rome as Hannibal. The Jewish Freud conquered Rome, according to Bergmann, by exposing religion as a collective delusion.

Ostow agrees. He emphasizes the roots of psychoanalysis in Jewishness, not in the escape from it. Marginal like Judaism, psychoanalysis subverted the categories that defined the Jew as marginal by attacking the religious basis of European culture. When Ostow cites Schorske it is to support his own view that Freud rejected Jewish particularism in favor of Jewish universalism: its rationalism, its ethics, its prophetic ideals. Once (quoting Lionel Trilling), Ostow does acknowledge Freud's insistence on a "biological urgency . . . which culture cannot reach," but he attributes that insight to Freud's Jewish universalism. He wants to free Freud from Christian particularism without crediting his alliance with the unconscious.

Leonard Sillman, in the most extreme version of this perspective, reads Freud's atheism back into biblical Judaism itself. Jewish monotheism eliminated magical explanations for natural events, writes Sillman; its "hidden atheism" prepared the way for science. Freud fulfilled the rationalist triumph over the unconscious implicit in biblical Judaism. Moreover, the Jew was, as Roth would put it, the superego's man in Palestine. His self-scrutinizing, consistent superego deprived him of the infantile pleasures of wish-fulfillment.

Ostow, unlike Sillman, acknowledges the nonrational elements that Judaism and psychoanalysis share—the connections between transference and Jewish mysticism, the religious component contained in the idealization of the analyst. Ostow recognizes the ways in which early psychoanalysis resembled a heretical Jewish sect. But in its investigation of the relationship between Judaism and psychoanalysis, this book contains hardly a word about the content of Freud's claim that—as Stan Draenos puts it in his splendid new book, *Freud's Odyssey*<sup>8</sup>—the body is the ground of the mind.

8 New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

Freud insisted, against western rationalism, that the core of our being consists of unconscious wishes. But the unconscious is an embarrassment for these Jewish defenders of Freud. Schorske and Cuddihy explain why, by attributing the discovery of the unconscious to Freud's evasion of his Jewishness. Schorske associates Freud's discovery with the flight from a political defense of the Jews; Cuddihy associates it with the shame of the Jewish son. Hence Cuddihy and Schorske both suggest that Freud was a parvenu. Those who wish to see Freud as a Jewish hero can hardly attribute his accomplishment to a reaction against his Jewishness. But then they cannot explain the centrality of sexuality to psychoanalysis. They seem to be left with the forbidden (antisemitic) association of Jewishness and sexuality. No wonder *Judaism and Psychoanalysis* engages in its massive displacement upward. It would be better to see, with Schorske and Cuddihy, that the repressive disabilities facing Jews directed Freud's attention inward—and then to see, against them, that that led him to make a powerful, liberating set of discoveries.

Those discoveries did not altogether liberate Freud, however, for he had his own trouble with the unconscious. That trouble is found in his fear of women, whom he made the embodiment of dangerous, primitive instincts. (Women are Freud's Jews.) So Richard Rubinstein is faithful to Freud when he defends the Old Testament patriarch as a protection against archaic, devouring, female Canaanite deities. The only women in *Judaism and Psychoanalysis* are Rubenstein's representatives of the preoedipal mother; there are no women at all in *Jews Without Mercy*. These omissions are striking, for Jewish women have played prominent roles both in radical politics and in the psychoanalytic movement. Actual women might help heal the split in these books between feared primitive appetites and the disembodied idea. That split, finally, lies within Freud himself, and it helps explain his return to Judaism. Renunciation turns out to be Jewish not just for Shorris and Malamud, but for Freud himself.

In *From Moses to Oedipus: Freud's Jewish Identity*, Marthe Robert integrates the ideas of Schorske and Cuddihy from a perspective sympathetic to Freud.<sup>9</sup> Loyalty to the Galician Jewish father, she agrees, held back the ambitious son. Freud wanted to slay his father because Jacob Freud made him different from the Viennese gentiles. Psychoanalysis transformed that difference into an underlying identity, that of sexual desire, which held everyone back from civilization. The shift from ethnic difference to erotic identity allowed Freud to preserve by universalizing his Jewishness.

But when Freud shifted from ethnicity to sex, as Robert does not point out, he shifted from fathers to daughters. The buried identification of Jews with sexuality came to rest on Jewish women. As Freud grew nervous about the unconscious, he grew nervous about the female threat to culture as well. Having re-

9 Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Doubleday, 1976.

placed Jews with women, Freud then made women subversive of civilization; he counterposed them to the Jewish fathers who stood for ethical restraint.

Freud discovered the unconscious by concluding that the seduction stories of his hysterical, Jewish, female patients were fantasies, not facts. "Of course I would not tell it to Dan and talk about it in Ashkelon," he wrote Fleiss. Freud was referring to David's lamentation over the death of Saul, "Tell it not to Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice." Freud alluded to the daughters rejoicing because he had discovered their cure. But his unconscious replacement of the Gentile tribe of Gath by the Jewish tribe of Dan suggests that (not yet ready to bring his death wishes against his father into his consciousness) he did not want the Jewish fathers to know he was letting them off the hook. Locating sexuality not in the fathers' acts but in the daughters' desires, Freud exculpated the fathers; he did so by placing sexuality inside women. This identification of women with the unconscious, at the origins of psychoanalysis, helped prepare for the split in Freud's later thought between dangerously sexual women on the one hand and ethically restraining patriarchs on the other.

Freud once celebrated Jewish dreams as a source of Jewish survival, and located his own imaginative power within the Jewish past. He wrote Arnold Zweig, "Palestine has never produced anything but religious, sacred frenzies, presumptuous attempts to overcome the outer world of appearance by means of the inner world of wishful thinking. And we hail from there." For the most part, however, Freud returned to his Jewish identity in the context of growing anxiety over the power of the unconscious. That anxiety responded first to Carl Jung's apostasy, then to the destruction of the first World War, and finally to National Socialism. Freud's ambivalence about his Jewishness had led him to the unconscious; now he saw primitive, emotional forces directed against Jewishness itself. Judaism appealed to the elder Freud as an ethical, nay-saying religion of the law.

Freud turned back to Judaism, Bergmann and Ostow show, by way of his identification with Moses. (On the inspired cover of *Judaism and Psychoanalysis*, Freud's hand holding a cigar uncannily repeats Michelangelo's Moses holding his beard.) Carl Jung was Freud's opening to the gentile world, evidence that psychoanalysis was more than a Jewish sect. In a letter to Jung, Freud had compared Jung to Joshua, destined to enter the promised land, and himself to Moses who only viewed it from afar. When his life was dominated by the conflict with Jung, in 1912-13, Freud daily visited Michelangelo's statue of Moses in Rome. He was beginning to see himself as Moses; the Jewish lawgiver was taking Hannibal's place.

Freud viewed Michelangelo's Moses, Bergmann shows, through the prism of his estrangement from Jung. In anger at the reversion of the Jews to orgiastic rituals and pagan idol worship (a reversion that Jung was imitating), Moses

broke the first set of tablets he had received from God. Did Michelangelo sculpt Moses holding the tablets before he broke the first set, or after he received the second? Freud saw the statue as he saw himself in the struggle with Jung: Moses had not yet broken the tablets, and was restraining his wrath.

A quarter-century earlier Jacob Freud had made his son a gift of the Bible that Freud had studied and discarded in his youth. Jacob Freud wrote Sigmund, "for long since the Book has been lying about like the broken tablets, in a closet of mine." Freud may well have taken the present as a reproach, associating (as Ostow says) the breaking of the tablets with his own rejection of the Bible. As Michelangelo's Moses, Freud was no longer a son libidinally rebelling against Judaism; he was a self-controlled Jewish patriarch. But Freud's interpretation of the statue violated the evidence of his eyes. Because of the prominent horns on Moses's head, as Freud noted, the statue had been called "Moses with the head of Pan." Having called attention to the horns, Freud ignored them. But in the biblical text, Moses is not horned until after he breaks the first tablets and God gives him the second set. (The Hebrew described an aura emanating from Moses; the Vulgate translated these rays into horns.) Freud's Moses is no horned God; giving way neither to festiveness nor to wrath, he has triumphed over his instincts.

*Civilization and its Discontents* attributed that same instinctual renunciation to the Jews as a whole. Savage gods were projections of human wishes, wrote Freud. Savages blamed their misfortunes on scapegoats; even the Christian devil acquitted God of responsibility for evil. Judaism marked an advance over animism and Christianity, since the Jews worshipped a God who set them high standards, and they took responsibility for transgressions inside. Freud celebrated Jewish guilt as an advance in civilization. He also argued that their sense of guilt held the Jewish people together. They were unified in loving a God who punished them for their forbidden wishes.

Guilt came from forbidden wishes, not deeds, in the dream book, and Freud "acquit[ted] dreams." But in *Moses and Monotheism*, written at the end of his life, Freud made the Jews guilty of an actual crime. He imagined that, rebelling against the ethical restraints Moses had imposed upon them, the Jews rose up and slew him. Guilt over this crime bound the Jews to one another, and led them to deify their founder.

*Moses and Monotheism* (as Bergmann points out) gave the Jews world-historic significance. They were the single people to enact Freud's crime of the primal horde. *Totem and Taboo*, written in the context of the break with Jung, imagined a primal crime at the origin of human history. In the beginning, Freud wrote, the father monopolized the women and enslaved the sons. The sons rose up, slew the father, and shared out the women among themselves. But the sons loved the father as well as hating him, and without his authority they could not resolve their conflicts over desire. To deal with parricidal guilt and unrestrained

instincts, the sons formed a covenant. They placed themselves under law. By locating the primal horde in Jewish history Freud had shifted the imaginative significance of the Jew (if Cuddihy is right) from a humiliated, subject people of central Europe, associated with instinctual life, to the heroic bearers of renunciation. He had placed them at the origin of civilization and its discontents.

Shorris agrees. He writes, "In awe they accepted the Covenant, ethics. They were no longer a horde; civil society was possible. Not in Athens but in the desert, in these poor primitive creatures was the beginning of political man. The Law implies an order for men; ethics precedes politics. The alternative is the horde." Shorris excises the primal crime from his account of the origins of the covenant; nonetheless, he accuses the neoconservatives of wanting to slay the father and return to the horde. Freud's account is mythical, of course, but it thereby performs a mythic function. It exposes the psychological and political costs of the restoration of paternal authority: submission, instinctual renunciation, and (since renunciation intensifies forbidden wishes) ever-deepening guilt.

It was not a cost that Freud's Moses had fully to bear. The primal father gratified his instincts, in Freud's first formulation. Freud replaced him with the culture-bearer, Moses. (Moses' power, like Freud's within the psychoanalytic movement, came from renunciation of sexuality, not its monopolization.) Nonetheless, the earlier liberation of the father from the constraints imposed on the guilty sons carried over into *Moses and Monotheism*. The giver of the law is above the people to whom he gives the law. Freud's Moses was not a Jew but an Egyptian.

Otto Rank had shown how most peoples gave their founder a noble birth. The inner source of that myth was the family romance, in which the child imagines he is the son not of his father but of a king. But the Jews, who were slaves, had a dilemma. If they made Moses noble, he could not be one of them. Jewish captivity forced them to describe Moses as a Jew adopted by the pharaoh's family. Having shown the Jewish need to invert the family romance, Freud then succumbed to a wish of his own. In an astounding leap from collective fantasy to actual history, he concluded that Moses really came from the pharaoh's royal house.

Freud's reversal gave him his own family romance. It fulfilled his boyhood wish (by way of Moses rather than Hannibal) not to be the son of Jacob Freud. That wish seems to have had two sources: first, following Cuddihy, that the leader of the Jews (and the founder of psychoanalysis) not come from a humble diaspora people; and second, following Freud himself, that the founder be exempt from the inhibitions to which he had sentenced his people. Who can blame Freud for freeing the founder both from the history of the Jews and from the inner suffering he had imposed upon them? But to make his founder powerful, Freud deprived him of sexuality, that overpowering source of internal disorder. The Moses of Freud's Michelangelo was God's assistant, and he has the self-restraint of Malamud's and Shorris's. But we know that Moses will break the tablets. By emphasizing Moses' self-restraint, Freud anticipates and justifies his

vengeance. The Jewish people relinquished libido for restraint; the founder gave it up for domination.

Freud's exemption for the father exposes the split that opens up when writers like Shorris and Ostow make Jews into an ethical, superego people. Posing the alternatives as guilt and submission on the one hand, selfishness and domination on the other, Shorris chooses the assistant and neoconservatives choose the boss. The two have lost touch with political resistance and unconscious life, so important in the histories both of Jewish radicalism and of the psychoanalytic movement. In the current crisis facing Jews, these books remind us, by what they forget, of the life-affirming Jewish traditions that we need now to remember.

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