

Analysis

Part 2

189

205

221

231

245

255

265

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275

287

295

305

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327

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## FREUD ON THE 'HISTORICAL NOVEL': FROM THE MANUSCRIPT DRAFT (1934) OF *MOSES AND MONOTHEISM*<sup>1</sup>

YOSEF HAYIM YERUSHALMI, NEW YORK

*Moses and Monotheism*—the alliterative English title dilutes the more precise and emphatic *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion*<sup>2</sup> while the work remains, in many ways, the most opaque and problematic in the Freudian canon. Rejected by historians and anthropologists alike, its psycho-Lamarckian assumptions in utter disrepute, for some time now it has seemed that the only way to salvage the book is to treat it primarily as a psychological document of Freud's inner life. This subjectivizing tendency has been reinforced ever since it became known that the original subtitle, which never appeared in the published version, had been: 'Ein historischer Roman' ('A Historical Novel').<sup>3</sup> In-

evitably, perhaps, *historischer Roman* conjures up associations to both fiction and the psychoanalytic 'family romance' (*Familienroman*), a central concept that Freud himself utilized in analysing the biblical narrative of the birth and rescue of Moses. Thus the book is now increasingly approached as a kind of historical fiction masking Freud's private family romance—his allegedly unresolved oedipal conflict with his father and, deriving from this, his assumed ambivalence over, and even repudiation of, his Jewish identity.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the question of the conscious intentionality of the work recedes ever farther from view.<sup>5</sup>

In my own work in progress on a full-scale

<sup>1</sup> For permission to cite the manuscript draft of *Moses and Monotheism* (hereafter MS. 1934) and to publish its introductory section, I am grateful to Freud Copyrights Ltd., Wivenhoe, Colchester, England, and to its director, Mr Mark Paterson, as well as to Professor Albert Solnit of Yale University for his good offices on my behalf. My thanks also to Professor Josephine Wahl of Howard University for personally preparing for me a photocopy of the manuscript; to my doctoral student Ms Evelyn Ehrlich for the initial transcription of the entire text; and to my colleague Professor Andreas Huyssen, chairman of the Department of German at Columbia University, for reviewing both the transcription and the translation of Freud's introduction. Needless to say, any remaining flaws are mine alone. In the notes that follow, dual citations are given for works published originally in German or French and then in English.

<sup>2</sup> *Moses and Monotheism* appears as the title of the first English translation by Katherine Jones (Freud, 1939a) and was retained by James Strachey in his translation for the *Standard Edition*. Since the Jones-Strachey title has become fixed in the literature, I have felt no choice but to use it here. It is to be noted that equivalent titles are to be found in all the translations listed by Grinstein (1977, no. 144). Only the Spanish moves a bit closer to the original (*Moisés y la religión monotheísta*). The full and accurate title should be, of course, 'The Man Moses and the Monotheistic Religion'. This has been recognized in the Hebrew translation, *Ha-ish Mosheh ve-'emunat ha-yihud* (1978) and in the new French version, *L'homme Moïse et la religion monothéiste* (1986), both of which appeared after Grinstein's bibliography. Had Freud desired to name the book 'Moses and Monotheism'

he would have written 'Moses und der Monotheismus'. That we are not dealing here with a semantic trifle is shown by the fact that on p. 50 of MS. 1934 this title appears as a possibility to be considered and we see, therefore, that in the end Freud deliberately rejected it.

<sup>3</sup> It seems first to have been reported by Ernest Jones (1957, 3, p. 192), based on Freud's letter of 30 September 1934, to Arnold Zweig, which will be discussed below.

<sup>4</sup> It will suffice to cite the judgements expressed in three very diverse works. Thus, Paul Ricoeur (1965, p. 239; 1970, p. 244); 'this book stands as an exorcism. It marks the renouncement on the part of Sigmund Freud the Jew of the value of belonging to the race that engendered Moses and imparted ethical monotheism to the world'; Marthe Robert (1974, p. 278; 1976, p. 167): 'And so in order not to die, Freud declared in the book that may be regarded as his authentic testament... that he was no more a Jew than Moses had been... So that when it came time for him to leave the stage... he could say that he was neither a Jew nor a German... for he wished to be the son not of any man or country but like the murdered prophet only of his life work'; and still more radically—Elliot Oring (1984, p. 101): '*Moses and Monotheism* would seem to be the work of a modern apostle, a new gospel with a perhaps not-so-new *Epistle to the Hebrews*... If Moses was not a Jew then neither was Freud. If anti-Semitism were to disappear, then the Jews must be prepared to acknowledge the underlying message of the Christ myth as preached by a psychoanalytic prophet'.

<sup>5</sup> Arguing that *Moses and Monotheism* contains 'coded autobiographical confessions', Marianne Krüll (1979, pp. 229 f.; 1986, pp. 196 f.) discerns no less than five 'encoding



Lucie Freud



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study of *Moses and Monotheism*,<sup>6</sup> of which this essay represents only a discrete byproduct, I have proceeded on the principle that before one can begin to speculate with any degree of discipline on Freud's unconscious or esoteric motives in writing the book, every effort should be made to understand it on its own terms and within its manifest contexts. Prior to any psychological deconstruction of the text there ought to be a rigorous attempt at historical reconstruction, employing all the traditional tools of critical historical inquiry and all the relevant documents available. Without such elementary controls speculation can only result in an all too common species of wild analysis.

Accordingly, one of the first questions I found myself asking was whether a manuscript of *Moses and Monotheism* has survived. To my considerable surprise, I soon ascertained that the manuscript draft of the original version, written in Freud's Gothic hand on fifty-seven large folio pages and dated 9 August 1934, is preserved in the unrestricted portion of the Freud Archives.<sup>7</sup> This manuscript which, so far as I am aware, has until now never been utilized in Freud scholarship, is of superlative interest and deserves a critical edition which I hope eventually to produce. For the moment, however, I shall confine myself exclusively to one significant aspect. The manuscript opens with an introduction that Freud never published, in which he attempts to elucidate the subtitle of his work, that is—to explain what he intended by

calling it 'a historical novel'. The present paper is concerned primarily with this phrase, though I shall attempt to probe some related questions as well. The reader will surely understand why I cannot undertake to treat here the larger and far more intricate issues raised by *Moses and Monotheism* as a whole, all of which must be deferred to a more ample occasion.

Before proceeding to a direct examination of Freud's unpublished introduction, it should be realized that in the very same period he also had occasion to reflect upon the nature of the historical novel within other contexts. The immediate background is to be found in his correspondence with his friend and admirer, the novelist Arnold Zweig, who had recently fled from Nazi Germany to Palestine and, by a piquant coincidence, was living on Mt. Carmel in Haifa at a rooming-house called 'Bet Mosheh' (House of Moses).<sup>8</sup>

#### MOSES—NIETZSCHE—JOSEPH

The first announcement of the work that was to become *Moses and Monotheism* came in a letter from Freud to Zweig dated 30 September 1934, some seven weeks after the draft had been completed (Freud/Zweig, 1968, pp. 101–104; 1970, pp. 91–3. Cf. Jones, 1957, 3, p. 192). Freud began to tell his news almost casually: 'For being somewhat at a loss what to do in a period of comparative leisure I have written something

planes' in the work, of which three are conscious, one preconscious, and one unconscious. Beyond this formal classification, however, she does not really assign any hierarchy of meaning to the various planes, so that we are not informed as to which have priority in the interpretation of the book as a whole.

<sup>6</sup> The work has its origin in a lecture entitled 'About Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*' which I delivered as the Lionel Trilling Seminar, Columbia University, in November 1986, an occasion at which I benefited from the sympathetic criticism of the two commentators, Profs. Robert Alter of Berkeley and William J. McGrath of Rochester. At the same time I was acutely aware that what I had presented was too long for a single lecture and yet too short to encompass my thinking on the subject and the data I had already gathered. The opportunity for a more ample treatment has come to me through the invitation of Yale University to deliver the Franz Rosenzweig Lectures in the Fall of 1989, which will be published subsequently as a book by Yale University Press.

<sup>7</sup> The manuscript is at the Library of Congress in Washington. See the typescript catalogue, *Library of Congress*,

*Manuscript Division: The Sigmund Freud Collection*, where it is listed on p. 18 under Series B: Unrestricted Portion, Container no. B18. Curiously, the catalogue records only the bracketed dates of publication [1937–39], without any indication that the first page of the manuscript is dated 9 August 1934, in Freud's hand. B18 also contains a holograph manuscript of Part II ('Wenn Moses ein Ägypter war...') as it was prepared for publication in *Imago* in 1937, and the printed proof sheets of Parts I and II from the same journal, but with only sparse and minor corrections by Freud.

<sup>8</sup> See Freud/Zweig (1968, p. 90; 1970, p. 86). This published correspondence, so important for the light it casts on the evolution of *Moses and Monotheism*, represents only a fraction of the total number of letters extant. Even those published have suffered the suppression of various passages, first by Zweig himself and then by the editor, a deprivation to which the student of Freud is already accustomed from similar publications. Unfortunately, the Zweig Archives now in the DDR are inaccessible to me, while seventeen folders containing letters from Freud to Zweig in the Freud Archives at the Library of Congress are sealed until the year 2010.

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myself... Now do not start rejoicing, for I wager  
you will never get it to read'.

After this coy but tantalizing little flourish,  
Freud went on in earnest:

The starting point of my work is familiar to you—it  
is the same as that of your *Bilanz*. Faced with the new  
persecutions, one asks oneself again how the Jews  
have come to be what they are and why they should  
have attracted this undying hatred. I soon discovered  
the formula: Moses created the Jews. So I gave my  
work the title: *The Man Moses, a Historical Novel*  
(with more justification than your Nietzsche novel).  
The material fits into three sections. The first is like an  
interesting novel; the second is laborious and boring;  
the third is full of content and makes exacting  
reading...

Thus, whatever other levels of intention the  
work might contain, Freud's immediate moti-  
vation is stated unequivocally. He has taken up  
his pen in reaction to the 'new persecutions'  
unleashed against the Jews by the Nazis, the  
same point of departure as Zweig's recent *Bilanz  
der deutschen Judenheit 1933* ('Balance Sheet of  
Germany Jewry 1933') which had been pub-  
lished earlier in the year.<sup>9</sup> Beyond that, however,  
there is no resemblance. Zweig's book was  
essentially an attempt to draw the attention of  
the world to the plight of Germany Jewry and to  
explain how it had come about. The emphasis is  
on an understanding of the German 'psychosis'  
and a defence of the Jews as integral participants  
in every sphere of German and European culture  
and society in which, deliberately, a separate  
section is devoted to 'Freud and Psycho-  
analysis'.<sup>10</sup> By contrast, Freud was concerned to  
discover, not how the Germans, but how the  
Jews 'have come to be what they are', and what  
there is about them that has attracted 'this  
undying hatred'. The final result, as we know,  
would be a radical attempt at a psychoanalysis  
of Jewish history to which, characteristically, the  
key would be the uncovering of origins, summa-  
rized in the phrase that 'Moses created the  
Jews'.

But there is another remark in the letter that

catches our attention. After informing Zweig  
that he has subtitled the work a 'historical  
novel', Freud immediately adds: 'with more  
justification than your Nietzsche novel'.

The reference is to Zweig's announcement  
some five months earlier, on 28 April, that he  
plans to begin 'a novel about Nietzsche's mad-  
ness'. He was only worried about the plot, 'for  
neither a case history nor the portrayal of a  
delusion is a plot...' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 85;  
1970, p. 74).

Freud had responded to this on 12 May with  
a particularly illuminating letter in which he  
strongly advised Zweig not to pursue the matter  
(Freud/Zweig, 1968, pp. 87–9; 1970, pp. 76–9).  
While admitting that he is 'much more clearly  
conscious of my inclinations against the project  
than the reason for it', and not denying that 'the  
relationship you establish between Nietzsche and  
me also plays a part in my reasons', Freud's  
main objections were on substantive grounds.  
'It seems to me', he began, 'that we touch here  
on the problem of poetic license versus historical  
truth', and then he proceeded to elaborate:

Where there is an unbridgeable gap in history and  
biography, the writer can step in and try to guess how  
it all happened. In an uninhabited country he may be  
allowed to establish the creatures of his imagination.  
Even when the historical facts are known but suffi-  
ciently remote and removed from common know-  
ledge, he can disregard them... [as an example of the  
latter Freud offers Shakespeare's treatment of Mac-  
beth]. But on the other hand, when reality is firmly  
established and has become common property, the  
writer should respect it... [here Freud severely  
criticizes Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*; poets such as  
Schiller in *Don Carlos* and Goethe in *Egmont* and  
*Goetz* also generally do not observe these rules].

Now when it is a question of someone so near to us  
in time and whose influence is still as active as  
Friedrich Nietzsche's, a description of his character  
and his destiny should aim at the same result as a  
portrait does—that is to say, however the conception  
may be elaborated the main stress should fall on the  
resemblance. And since the subject cannot sit for the  
portrait, one has first to collect so much material  
about him that it only needs to be supplemented with  
a sympathetic understanding. Otherwise we will be

<sup>9</sup> Zweig (1934). Some seven years earlier Zweig had written  
a book on anti-Semitism entitled *Caliban oder Politik und  
Leidenschaft* (1927). Significantly, the book was dedicated to  
Freud ('Sigmund Freud Respektvoll') and it was Zweig's  
request for permission to make this gesture (see Freud/

Zweig, 1968, p. 9; 1970, p. 1) that initiated the friendship  
between the two.

<sup>10</sup> Zweig (1934, p. 232): 'Sigmund Freud, geboren 1856 in  
Freiberg in Mähren, C.S.R., ist der bedeutendste jetzt  
lebende Wissenschaftler der Welt'.

faced with what happened to the devoted son and the Hungarian painter: 'Poor father, how much you have changed!'

Zweig might think he has enough biographical material for such a portrait, but there was another, special obstacle: 'it is the case history of a sick man, and that is much more difficult to guess or reconstruct... Anyway, if it is a case history, for the layman the main interest is gone'.

Because of their friendship Freud did accede to Zweig's urgent request that he ask Lou Andreas-Salomé for her co-operation.<sup>11</sup> She flatly refused. Still, Zweig would not be dissuaded. On 6 June he wrote to assure Freud of his agreement on the question of historical truth but continued to elaborate on his plan for the novel. He added that he had just read Emil Ludwig's biography of Napoleon and found it 'stupid', Napoleon a 'cardboard figure' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 92; 1970, p. 82). Two days later he announced that he had just written a play entitled *Bonaparte in Jaffa* and gave further details concerning his ongoing Nietzsche work: 'The central point in my plan is actually the possibility it offers of discharging an anti-German affect more fiercely and totally than would be conceivable in any other way. Nietzsche's notorious contempt for German anti-Semitism makes him absolutely vital as the hero of this novel' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 95; 1970, p. 84). This time all that was left to Freud was to pull out his trump card. On 15 July he wrote Zweig flatly that 'it is impossible to understand anyone without knowing his sexual constitution, and Nietzsche's is a complete enigma', adding: 'Should writers be allowed to weave such a web of fantasy round the crude pathological facts? I do not know. Writers are not usually very amenable creatures' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 96; 1970, p. 85).

As we have noted, the manuscript draft of *Moses and Monotheism* bears the date 9 August 1934, little over three weeks after the letter just cited. Thus we see the extent to which, in the very midst of writing this draft, Freud was also preoccupied with the nature of the historical

novel, with 'poetic license versus historical truth'. But his thoughts were stimulated not only by the continual exchange with Zweig over Nietzsche. In the previous year the first volume of Thomas Mann's tetralogy *Joseph and his Brothers* had been published, the two subsequent volumes coming out in 1934 and 1936 (the final volume was published after Freud's death). We know that Freud read the Joseph books avidly, as they appeared (Freud, 1980, pp. 440, 447; 1960, pp. 426, 432). Here, indeed, was not only a historical novel on the grandest scale, but one that was based on biblical material, like his own *Moses*. In the great meditation ('Prelude: Descent into Hell') with which the entire opus begins, and whose resonances could not have eluded Freud, Mann expressed his awe in contemplating so distant a past and his sense of the enormous difficulty in trying to recreate it:

Deep is the well of the past. Should we not call it bottomless? (*Tief ist der Brunen der Vergangenheit. Sollte man ihn nicht unergründlich nennen?*)...

For the deeper we sound, the further down into the lower world of the past we probe and press, the more do we find that the earliest foundations of humanity, its history and culture, reveal themselves unfathomable. No matter to what hazardous lengths we let out our line they still withdraw again, and further, into the depths... (Mann, 1933, p. ix; 1958, p. 3).

Mann's *Joseph* evoked Freud's admiration; Zweig's abortive Nietzsche project brought forth his strong reproof before it was ever written. Disproportionate reactions, to say the least. Moreover, it seems almost unfair that, just as he was actively discouraging Zweig from pursuing the Nietzsche novel, Freud himself should have been writing a work on Moses which he labelled 'a historical novel'. Why should Freud have felt he had 'more justification' in doing so? Surely Nietzsche, an older contemporary of both men (he died in 1900) provided more authentic and richer historical materials than did Moses or, for that matter, Joseph. Yet if we hark back to Freud's letter of 12 May we find that on this very score he was being perfectly consistent. Freud's point to Zweig had been that precisely those historical figures who, like Nietzsche, are 'so

near to us in time, portraiture and imagination or go remote past, it all an 'unbridgeable into which the w whether historical and has become case 'the writer sh

To be sure, for s accounts of the o common property but by Freud's ti believers, this wa consensus of both on the historical v shattered by the : nineteenth and ea scholarship. Until Albrecht Alt's pat (The God of the F tives had been larg Moses scholarly virtual denial of hi first section of Fr titled 'Hat Mose conflicting theories work. The 'propo mantled, Freud, lik the biblical schola stake out his own

#### REDEFINING 1

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<sup>11</sup> Letter of 16 May 1934, but adding that he himself has advised Zweig to give up the project. See Freud/Salomé (1980, p. 220; 1985, p. 202).

<sup>12</sup> Copyright © by A

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 remote past, it all depends upon whether there is  
 an 'unbridgeable gap in history or biography'  
 into which the writer may legitimately step, or  
 whether historical reality is 'firmly established  
 and has become common property', in which  
 case 'the writer should respect it'.

To be sure, for some two millennia the biblical  
 accounts of the origins of Israel had been such  
 common property among Jews and Christians,  
 but by Freud's time, except among orthodox  
 believers, this was no longer so. The prior  
 consensus of both Jewish and Christian tradition  
 on the historical veracity of the Bible had been  
 shattered by the so-called Higher Criticism of  
 nineteenth and early twentieth-century biblical  
 scholarship. Until the publication in 1929 of  
 Albrecht Alt's pathbreaking *Der Gott der Väter*  
 (The God of the Fathers) the patriarchal narra-  
 tives had been largely dismissed as mythical. On  
 Moses scholarly opinion had ranged from a  
 virtual denial of his historicity (significantly, the  
 first section of Freud's manuscript draft is en-  
 titled 'Hat Moses gelebt?') to a welter of  
 conflicting theories on the nature of his life and  
 work. The 'property' having been thus dis-  
 mantled, Freud, like Mann on the one hand and  
 the biblical scholars on the other, felt free to  
 stake out his own claim.

#### REDEFINING THE 'HISTORICAL NOVEL'

Still, why subtitle his work 'a historical  
 novel'? Though the term may have been in  
 Freud's mind because of his correspondence  
 with Zweig and his reading of Mann, his use of  
 it was certainly idiosyncratic, perhaps even iron-  
 ic. But we need not even try to guess, for in his  
 original introduction Freud set out immediately  
 to explain himself. Here, in translation, is the  
 manuscript text (for the German original see the  
 Appendix):

9.8.34            The Man Moses  
                       A Historical Novel<sup>12</sup>

As the sexual union of horse and donkey produces  
 two different hybrids, the mule and the hinny, so the  
 mixture of historical writing and free invention give  
 rise to different products which, under the common  
 designation of historical novel, sometimes want to be  
 appreciated as history, sometimes as novel. For some  
 of them deal with people and events that are his-  
 torically familiar, but they do not aim at reproducing  
 them faithfully. They derive their interest, in fact,  
 from history, but their intent is that of the novel; they  
 want to sketch moving portrayals and to affect the  
 emotions. Others among these literary creations func-  
 tion in quite the opposite way. They do not hesitate to  
 invent persons and events in the hope of achieving an  
 especially adequate description of the particular char-  
 acter of a historical period through such means, but  
 first and foremost they aspire to historical truth despite  
 the admitted fiction. Still others manage to a large  
 extent in reconciling the demands of artistic creation  
 with those of historical fidelity. How much fiction,  
 contrary to the intentions of the historian still creeps  
 into his presentation, requires little further comment!

When I, however, who am neither a historian nor  
 an artist, introduce one of my works as a historical  
 novel, this term must allow for yet another definition.  
 I have been trained to the careful scrutiny of a certain  
 domain of phenomena. To me fiction and invention  
 are easily associated with the blemish of error.

My immediate purpose was to gain knowledge of  
 the person of Moses, my more distant goal to con-  
 tribute thereby to the solution of a problem, still  
 current today, which can only be specified later on.

A character study requires reliable material as its  
 basis, but nothing available concerning Moses can be  
 called trustworthy. It is a tradition coming from one  
 source, not confirmed by any other, fixed in writing  
 only in a later period, in itself contradictory, certainly  
 revised several times and distorted under the influence  
 of new tendencies, while closely interwoven with the  
 religious and national myths of a people.

One would be entitled to curtail the attempt as  
 hopeless, were it not that the grandeur of the figure  
 outweighs its elusiveness and challenges us to renewed  
 effort. Thus one undertakes to treat each possibility in  
 the text as a clue and to fill the gap between one  
 fragment and another according to the law, so to  
 speak, of least resistance, that is—to give preference  
 to the assumption that can claim the greatest prob-  
 ability. That which one can obtain by means of this  
 technique can also be taken as a kind of historical  
 novel, since it has no proven reality, or only an  
 unconfirmable one, for even the greatest probability  
 does not coincide with the truth. Truth is often very  
 improbable, and factual evidence can only in small  
 measure be replaced by deductions and speculations.

The introduction appears as lucid as it is  
 modest. In essence Freud dissociates his enter-

<sup>12</sup> Copyright © by A. W. Freud et al.

prise from that of both Zweig and Mann. He has called his work a 'historical novel', not because it really has anything in common with that genre as it is ordinarily conceived, not because he has any imaginative agenda beyond the quest for truth. It is a novel only in the sense that, given the extreme paucity of reliable historical facts concerning Moses, Freud must rely so heavily on 'probability', while recognizing that 'even the greatest probability does not [necessarily] coincide with the truth'. Indeed, there is an analogue to this use of 'novel' in Freud's *Leonardo da Vinci* of 1910, where he wrote: 'If, in making these statements, I have provoked the criticism, even from friends of psychoanalysis and from those who are expert at it, that I have merely written a psychological novel, I shall reply that I am far from over-estimating the certainty of these results' (Freud, 1910, p. 134).

But would such lingering insecurities not afflict the historian as well? Certainly, Freud seems to say, to the extent that 'fiction, contrary to the intentions of the historian, still creeps into his presentation', the historian is also a kind of historical novelist. The crucial difference lies in the 'technique' employed to arrive at 'the greatest probability', and here, though not named explicitly, the technique is obviously that of psychoanalysis. In this way, then, Freud divorces himself from the traditional historian as well. He is 'neither a historian nor an artist'. What is he, then? One 'trained to the careful scrutiny of a certain domain of phenomena' to whom 'fiction and invention are easily associated with the blemish of error'. In other words—a scientist. We shall yet have occasion to return to this point.

Quite incidentally the introduction also hints at an earlier stage in Freud's thinking, traces of which are still to be found in the manuscript draft. The term 'character-study' (*Characterstudie*) suggests that he may have begun with the

notion of writing a psychoanalytic study of Moses himself, something akin to his *Leonardo*, and there is evidence that he even thought to derive the character of the Jews from that of Moses.<sup>13</sup> By now, however, he was on the track of deeper channels through which Moses had 'created the Jews', as well as the consequences of their formative experiences for an understanding of Jewish character, Jewish history and anti-Semitism ('a problem, still current today, which can only be specified later on').

Not known until now, the manuscript of 1934 reveals clearly that when Freud used the term 'historical novel' he was referring only to that portion of the manuscript which roughly corresponds to Parts I and II of the published version. Part III was not included by him in this rubric. Indeed, before reaching the substance of what would become Part III, he presents a short summary of his prior historical reconstruction, observing: 'Herewith I can close what I have designated as the historical novel about the man Moses'.<sup>14</sup>

The plot of the 'novel' in Freud's schematic summary relates that Moses was a noble, ambitious Egyptian, a convinced adherent of the Aton religion, perhaps close to the king Ikhnoton. The latter's death, which brought about the downfall of the new religion and of the dynasty, meant for Moses the loss of all his hopes and a severe mortification of his convictions. In compensation, he took unto himself a currently enslaved tribe of Semitic strangers who had wandered into the Nile Delta during the reign of the Hyksos, led them through the then prevailing anarchy out of Egypt, attempted to sanctify them through circumcision, and taught them the religion of Aton whose anti-theses to the Egyptian folk-religion he sharpened still further. The fact that he had chosen the Hebrews in order thereby to realize his ideals gave him the right to proclaim to them that they

are God's chosen people. They have had bad experiences, they cast off the sacred law upon them and until now, sometime and somewhere, the worship of a local deity turned out that the gods were not without souls. The religion persisted and produced the effective characteristics of the people given to his Jewish people. I hope that 'this contains an inner contradiction which I affirm that it has historical reality'. Moses is not mentioned.

Let us recall now the 30 September Freud section of his work on the Egyptian origin of Moses of his name and the creation of the biblical interesting novel'. Freud attempts to reconstruct which, as we have considered as part of the 'laborious and boring' seems to me, is not in the style of the second section. Freud's deep unease with reality' at which he realized the plot of his to the third section add a 'Critical Appendix' which, as it turned out, published. 'I did not it would be so difficult novel. Now that it demands that the historical writing be a

This *Anhang* is like Hugo Gressmann's as a representative critical biblical scholar. Freud an opportunist own venture. The con-

<sup>13</sup> On p. 20 of MS. 1934 Freud writes of the Jews and Moses: 'Ja eine eigentümliche Reaktion dieses Volkes, die sich wiederholt in seiner Geschichte zeigt, und der es zum guten Teil seiner Fortbestand verdankt, scheint bereits im Charakterbilde Moses, wie wir es zu erraten versuchen, vorgezeichnet. Ich meine die Bemuehung durch einen Schicksalsschlag das Verlorene auf anderem Boden, mit neuen Mitteln wiederaufzubauen'. This passage does not appear in the published version of *Moses and Monotheism*. An echo

may be found in Freud's letter of 17 January 1938, to his son Ernst who had established himself in England (Freud, 1980, p. 456; 1960, p. 440): 'It is typically Jewish not to renounce anything and to replace what has been lost. Moses, who in my opinion left a lasting imprint on the Jewish character, was the first to set an example'.

<sup>14</sup> MS. 1934, p. 26: 'Hiemit kann ich abschliessen, was ich als den historischen Roman um den Mann Moses angekündigt habe'.

<sup>15</sup> MS. 1934, p. 29: 'schwer sein wuerde, eine Jetzt, da er vollendet

are God's chosen people. Subsequently he may have had bad experiences with them. In the end they cast off the sanctity that had been forced upon them and united with kindred tribes that, sometime and somewhere, had adopted the worship of a local god named Yahwe. But it turned out that the deeds and teachings of Moses were not without success. The tradition of his religion persisted and, over a span of centuries, produced the effect that Yahwe assumed the characteristics of the God whom Moses had given to his Jewish people. Freud expresses his hope that 'this construction does not suffer from inner contradictions; I am not bold enough to affirm that it has hit upon the to us unknown historical reality'. Curiously, the murder of Moses is not mentioned in this summary.

Let us recall now that in his letter to Zweig of 30 September Freud had stated that the first section of his work (the establishment of the Egyptian origin of Moses through the etymology of his name and the psychoanalytic interpretation of the biblical exposure myth) was 'like an interesting novel'. The second section, which attempts to reconstruct the historical events but which, as we have just seen, Freud also considered as part of the 'novel', was depicted as 'laborious and boring'. The latter phrase, it seems to me, is not so much a comment on the style of the second section, as it is a reflection of Freud's deep unease over the degree of 'historical reality' at which he had arrived. Having summarized the plot of his novel, and before proceeding to the third section, Freud felt it necessary to add a 'Critical Appendix' (*Kritischer Anhang*) which, as it turned out, was also never to be published. 'I did not know', Freud began, 'that it would be so difficult to compose a historical novel. Now that it is completed, my conscience demands that the standard of more sober historical writing be applied to it'.<sup>15</sup>

This *Anhang* is largely devoted to a critique of Hugo Gressmann's *Mose und seine Zeit* (1913) as a representative work of the best in modern critical biblical scholarship, thus also affording Freud an opportunity to compare it with his own venture. The central points in Gressmann's

interpretation with which Freud took issue were his acceptance of the Jewish origin of Moses and especially his interpretation of the biblical miracle of the splitting of the Red Sea. According to Gressmann and others the Hebrews were forced at one point to cross, not the Red Sea proper, but the Gulf of Akaba. Mount Sinai, or Horeb, which from the biblical description was surely a volcano, could not have been in the Sinai Peninsula, which contained no volcanic mountains, but was situated on the other side of the Gulf of Akaba, near the northwest coast of the Arabian Peninsula. This was the territory of the Midianites who worshipped Yahwe, the god of the volcanic region, as their chief deity. Just as the Hebrews were crossing the Gulf they found the Egyptians in hot pursuit. But in the very midst of their terror something unheard of and unexpected occurred. Suddenly volcanic eruptions sent the waters in turmoil, casting the Egyptians back and enabling the Hebrews to reach land safely. The impression upon them of this 'miracle' was overwhelming and indelible. From the Midianites of the region they now learned that the name of the god who had intervened to save them was Yahwe. It was then that the intuition flashed in Moses's mind that this god had chosen Israel to be his people, and that therefore the people must choose him as its god. When Moses communicated this to them their spirits were fired as well. As soon as the Hebrews came to Kadesh in the Sinai Peninsula, where they united with kindred tribes who had lived there for ages since leaving Canaan, Yahwe was officially declared to be their only God. A Midianite priest, Jethro, was invited to Kadesh to teach Moses the details of Yahwe's service. With the transportation of Yahwe's holy ark from Midian to the Israelite camp, the implantation of the new religion was complete.

Freud trusts that he will not be considered impudent if he points out that Gressmann's explanation of the miracle 'is also only a historical novel, no more certain than the one constructed by us. One cannot easily subscribe to the notion that the adoption of a new religion is to be traced back to a fortuitous coincidence

<sup>15</sup> MS. 1934, p. 29: 'Ich hatte nicht gewusst, dass es so schwer sein wuerde, einen historischen Roman zu verfassen. Jetzt, da er vollendet ist, mahnt mich mein Gewissen,

den Massstab nuechterner Geschichtsschreibung an ihn anzulegen'.

such as the appearance of a volcanic phenomenon... so long as other explanations are possible. A sudden volcanic tidal wave which only washed away the Egyptians and which left the nearby Israelites unmolested remains a process that is hard to imagine and extremely unlikely, actually not much different than a miracle'.

Turning back for a contemplation of his own historical novel (*unser eigenen historischen Romans*) Freud points out that it has made so many positive assertions concerning the character and motives of Moses that it seems worthwhile to make the effort to examine how much historical plausibility, aside from the psychological, it can claim.

In this sense Freud finds three points in the biblical tradition strong enough to bear the weight of his construction. First—Moses's indisputably Egyptian name which, strongly reinforced by the analysis of the exposure myth, can only mean that Moses was an Egyptian whom the tradition made into a Jew. 'Here', Freud claims, 'we have touched firm ground. The Egyptian provenance of Moses is the indispensable prerequisite for the further developments in our novel'.<sup>16</sup> Second—the explanation of the election of Israel. Gressmann well understood the crucial importance of the element of chosenness, but his recourse to the impact on the Israelites of a volcanic eruption is no more than poetic fantasy (*dichterlichen Phantasie*). How much more coherent, Freud insists, is his own notion of the descent of the high-born Moses to the enslaved people whom he paternally adopts, leads to freedom, and attracts to a new religion. Finally—the custom of circumcision, which Gressmann derives from the Midianites but which is intimately associated with Moses, even though the biblical account denies that he initiated it among the Hebrews. 'Circumcision belongs to Egypt' (*die Beschneidung gehoert Aegypten zu*), and since Moses imposes it on the people after the exodus from Egypt, 'many of the assertions in our historical novel gain thereby in credibility'.

In sum, as Freud's introduction assumes and subsequent passages in the manuscript confirm, his use of the subtitle has little or nothing to do with the historical novel in its ordinary connotations. It is, rather, a strategy of defence. If Gressmann and his fellow biblical scholars are, like Freud, also historical novelists of sorts, then the issue is no longer fiction, whether public or private, but the lack, at important junctures, of hard historical facts. To bridge the gaps, each, the historian and the psychoanalyst, must resort to probabilities. What differentiates them is the method of speculation and the ultimate coherence and verisimilitude of the results.

#### THE BASE OF CLAY

Yet Freud was not really content with this provisional formulation. The lack of sufficient historical evidence continued to torment him. On 6 November he wrote to Zweig: 'this historical novel won't stand up to my own criticism. I need more certainty and I should not like to endanger the final formula of the whole book, which I regard as valuable, by founding it on a base of clay...' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 108; 1970, p. 97). A week later, to Max Eitingon: 'I am no good at historical novels. Let us leave them to Thomas Mann' (Jones, 1957, 3, p. 194). And again, on 16 December, to Zweig: 'The fact that I wrote at length to you in an earlier letter about Moses being an Egyptian is not the essential point, though it is the starting point. Nor is it any inner uncertainty on my part, for that is as good as settled, but the fact that I was obliged to construct so imposing a statue upon feet of clay, so that any fool could topple it'.<sup>17</sup>

The recurring metaphor is interesting. The weak base (or feet) of clay is certainly a reference to Parts I and II of the work, the historical foundation which, as we have learned from the manuscript, also constitutes the 'historical novel' proper; the 'imposing statue' refers to Part III, the goal and *raison d'être* of the entire

effort which, as a man of letters, is not to 'any fool'. But it appears natural enough in light of Freud's cannot but recall his 'statue of Michelangelo', a work of such ramifications I probe on occasion. Here it is an aspect. If Freud's 'statue of Michelangelo's Moses were a sculptor have this effect, biblical exegesis in plain sense of the text, presenting a Moses who does not shatter the image of him an Egyptian and a Jew. In the Michelangelo written:

But here it will be [Michelangelo's Moses]. For that Moses did not did throw away the stone. Moses must be a quiet the artist's conception have had the presumption and to falsify the character think him capable of being said to approach (1914, p. 230).

Was this not exact now? But with the all, Michelangelo's other than a work of while Freud's *Moses* historical novel, and discovering a historical

For the next three with the problem of historical base. Zweig's land of the Bible, and Watson to Freud's notion Freud read *E gelobtes Land*, but my Moses... So my My opinion about the construction was clear

<sup>16</sup> MS. 1934, p. 35: 'Somit haetten wir hier festen Boden beruehrt. Das Aegyptertum Moses' ist die unentbehrliche Voraussetzung der weiteren Entwicklungen in unserem Roman'.

<sup>17</sup> Freud/Zweig (1968, p. 109; 1970, p. 98). Cf. *Moses*

and *Monotheism*, (1939b, p. 17): 'The greater the importance of the views arrived at in this way, the more strongly one feels the need to beware of exposing them without a secure basis to the critical assaults of the world around one—like a bronze statue with feet of clay'.

<sup>18</sup> Elias Auerbach, *W* (1932); Freud/Zweig (19

effort which, as a result, is rendered vulnerable to 'any fool'. But the choice of image, which appears natural enough, is especially significant in light of Freud's prior work on Moses. It cannot but recall his 1914 essay on 'The Moses of Michelangelo', an association whose multiple ramifications I propose to consider on another occasion. Here it will suffice to focus on one aspect. If Freud's interpretation of Michelangelo's Moses were correct, then he and the great sculptor have this in common: Both are, in effect, biblical exegetes who radically violate the plain sense of the text—Michelangelo by presenting a Moses who contains his anger and does not shatter the Tablets, Freud by making him an Egyptian and having him killed by the Jews. In the Michelangelo essay Freud had written:

But here it will be objected that after all this [Michelangelo's Moses] is not the Moses of the Bible. For that Moses did actually fall into a fit of rage and did throw away the Tablets and break them. This Moses must be a quite different man, a new Moses of the artist's conception; so that Michelangelo must have had the presumption to emend the sacred text and to falsify the character of that holy man. Can we think him capable of a boldness which might almost be said to approach an act of blasphemy? (Freud, 1914, p. 230).

Was this not exactly what Freud was doing now? But with the crucial difference that, after all, Michelangelo's statue did not purport to be other than a work of the individual imagination, while Freud's *Moses*, even while calling itself a historical novel, aimed, at least consciously, at discovering a historical reality.

For the next three years Freud was obsessed with the problem of shoring up his weak historical base. Zweig, strategically placed in the land of the Bible, was more than eager to play Watson to Freud's Holmes. At Zweig's suggestion Freud read Elias Auerbach's *Wüste und gelobtes Land*, but found that 'his Moses is not my Moses... So much for my disappointment. My opinion about the weakness of my historical construction was confirmed and it was this that

rightly made me desist from publishing my work'.<sup>18</sup> On 2 May 1935, Freud wrote wistfully: 'Moses will not let go of my imagination... In an account of Tel-el-Amarna, which has not yet been fully excavated, I noticed a comment on a certain Prince Thotmes, of whom nothing further is known. If I were a millionaire, I would finance the continuation of these excavations. This Thotmes could be my Moses and I would be able to boast that I had guessed right' (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 117; 1970, p. 106).

In a letter sent on 1 June to Lou Andreas-Salomé (which, incidentally contains the best extant summary of the purpose and contents of *Moses and Monotheism*) Freud continued to refer to it as a 'kind of historical novel'. Toward the end he added that beside his fear that publication would spur the Church to cause the banning of psychoanalysis in Austria, he is also worried that 'the historical foundations of the Moses story are not solid enough to serve as a basis for these inevitable conclusions of mine. And so I remain silent' (Freud/Salomé, 1980, pp. 222-4; 1985, pp. 204 f.).

Meanwhile, with Zweig goading him on, Freud had still not given up his hope of finding his Egyptian Moses in the Amarna Letters. The quest was not without its farcical aspects (for what follows see Freud/Zweig, 1968, pp. 125-9; 1970, pp. 115-8). A certain Dr Jizchaki, who had been a journalist in Egypt and was writing a play about Moses, assured Zweig that a Dr Robertson of the 'Rockefeller Museum' in Luxor had told him that on a recently excavated tablet there appeared two names among pupils of the Aton Temple in Heliopolis 'which could only be interpreted as Moses and Aaron'. Turning to the Brockhaus Encyclopedia, Freud found no mention of a Rockefeller museum or foundation in Luxor. Moreover, 'the reference to Aaron makes the account given by your authority very dubious. I do not believe he, Aaron, ever existed'. In his next letter Zweig corrected his information. The so-called Rockefeller Museum was really the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. A Professor John Merlin Powis Smith was working in Luxor in 1932. But by

<sup>18</sup> Elias Auerbach, *Wüste und gelobtes Land: Geschichte Israels von den Anfängen Israels bis zum Tode Salomos* (1932); Freud/Zweig (1968, pp. 114 f.; 1970, p. 104).

now Freud's scepticism had fully asserted itself. On 20 January 1936, he replied:

Luxor exists, Rockefeller subsidies exist, and so even does Professor Smith. But one point which occurred to me later and which invalidates all our expectations is the following: if such a list of the pupils of the Sun Temple... was found in Amarna, it could not possibly be in cuneiform on a clay tablet. It would have to be hieroglyphics on papyrus. Cuneiform was used only for correspondence with foreign countries. So there is little hope of rousing my Moses in this way from the sleep which is his destiny (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 129; 1970, p. 119).

Freud added that one of his young friends, Ernst Kris (later to become the eminent psychoanalyst, but at this time an art historian at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna) had also made investigations along the same lines. These too were without positive results. Six months later, on 8 June, Zweig wrote to say that a 'young historian of Judaism' who lives near him in Haifa had promised a list of earlier writers who believed that Moses was an Egyptian. 'Would this help you?' he asked. But on 16 July he was forced to tell Freud that his 'little philologist' had gone to visit London without leaving him the references. And so even this modest track led, at least for the time being, to a dead end (Freud/Zweig, 1968, p. 144; 1970, p. 134).

Ever the optimist, as late as 6 September 1937, Zweig wrote from Amsterdam that he was 'on the scent of a piece of comparative philology which proves the identity of Yahwe and Jove from a linguistic point of view' and that 'a Professor Yahuda has promised to let me have his work on Egyptian influences in the Old Testament'.<sup>19</sup>

Freud, however, had probably realized by now that no further historical evidence to sup-

port his thesis would be forthcoming. He must also have felt a growing dissatisfaction with his description of his work as a 'historical novel'. Intended at first to pre-empt his potential critics by showing that he himself recognized the insufficiency of available historical facts to sustain his larger claims, the subtitle could also have the opposite effect of drawing attention to those very weaknesses.

At the same time, however, there was one source for confidence as well. In Ernst Sellin's *Mose und seine Bedeutung für die israelitisch-jüdische Geschichte* (Moses and His Significance for the History of Israelite-Jewish Religion) published in 1922, Freud found the notion that Moses had been slain by the Israelites advanced by a renowned biblical scholar with no psychoanalytic orientation whatever. While Sellin had already figured in the manuscript draft of 1934, it was only subsequently that Freud seems to have realized the full import and implications of the affinities between Sellin's work and his own.<sup>20</sup>

All the aforementioned factors seem to have moved Freud toward a decision to publish at least the first two parts of his work (i.e. the 'historical novel'). He must have begun rewriting the draft of these sections by the latter part of 1936. On 5 February 1937, he wrote to Eitingon that 'a fragment that could be detached from the work on Moses... has been completed. The more important things connected with it must of course remain unsaid' (Freud, 1980, p. 451; 1960, p. 435). On 2 April he could notify Zweig that 'a fragment of Moses has found its way into *Imago*'.<sup>21</sup> On 11 August he completed the revision of Part II, which was published soon after in the same journal.<sup>22</sup>

In these two instalments (Part III would not see the light until the entire book was published

<sup>19</sup> Freud/Zweig (1968, p. 156; 1970, p. 147). The reference is to A. S. Yahuda, *Die Sprache des Pentateuch in ihren Beziehungen zum Ägyptischen*, vol. I, Berlin, 1929. Freud had the English edition (Yahuda, 1933) in his library (see Trosman & Simmons, 1973, p. 665, no. 247).

<sup>20</sup> It is noteworthy that the murder of Moses is not mentioned in Freud's summary of the plot of his 'historical novel' (MS. 1934, pp. 26 f.). On p. 43 of the manuscript he recognizes that 'der von Sellin entdeckte Mord an Moses wichtigste Stueck der Verkettung'. In the summary of his work to Lou Andreas-Salomé (Freud/Salomé, 1980, p. 225; 1985, p. 205) he writes that Sellin has made it 'probable' that Moses was killed in a popular uprising. In Part II of *Moses*

and *Monotheism (Imago, 1937)* he calls Sellin's 'presumptions... probable enough'. Finally, in the second preface to Part III, dated London, 1938, he writes: 'To my critical sense this book, which takes its start from the man Moses, appears like a dancer balancing on the tip of one toe. If I could not find support in an analytic interpretation of the exposure myth and could not pass from there to Sellin's suspicion about the end of Moses, the whole thing would have had to remain unwritten' (1939b, p. 58).

<sup>21</sup> Freud/Zweig (1968, p. 150; 1970, p. 140); *Moses ein Ägypter, Imago*, 13 (1937), Heft 1, pp. 5-13.

<sup>22</sup> Wenn Moses ein Ägypter war... *Imago*, 13 (1937), Heft 4, pp. 387-419.

in 1939) neither the subtitle appeared in the manuscript nor was the original introduction fluid and, along with the suppressed. Freud himself as a historical figure highly restricted his risks on other grounds. He informed his secretary and mailed him the following comment: 'can perhaps only appear as a' (Freud, 1980, p. 456; 1960, p. 436).

#### DICHT

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in 1939) neither the original general title nor the subtitle appeared. More significantly, every mention in the manuscript of the phrase 'historical novel' was now deleted. This being so, the original introduction of 1934 had become superfluous and, along with other important modifications within the text itself, was completely suppressed. Freud would no longer present himself as a historical novelist, not even in his own highly restricted use of the term. He would take his risks on other grounds. On 17 January 1938, he informed his son Ernst in London that he had mailed him the *Imago* offprints, adding the following comment whose full significance we can perhaps only now appreciate: *It is my first appearance as a historian; late enough!* (Freud, 1980, p. 456; 1960, p. 440, my italics).

#### DICHTUNG OR WAHRHEIT?

What we have examined so far inevitably points to larger issues. If Freud, who had written categorically in 1934 that he was neither a historian nor an artist, turned out to be a historian after all, albeit in a special sense, should we not presume him to be also—some would say primarily—an artist as well? Though the subtitle disappeared, does not *Moses and Monotheism* remain a 'historical novel' and, some will add, is not psychoanalysis, Freud's creation, itself more art than science? Should we not, in Freudian fashion, invert Freud's repeated denials and regard them as affirmations? Such questions, raised by friend and foe during Freud's lifetime, have continued to proliferate in a large and growing literature.

Without plunging into the thicket of conflicting interpretations, I would submit that part of the confusion in so many discussions of Freud as artist or scientist has arisen from a failure to distinguish between different levels of signification. There is, for example, a primary distinction to be made between Freud's public statements in the works he sent to the printer, and what he wrote in private correspondence. The former are authoritative *ex cathedra* pronouncements meant, as the word 'published' implies, for public knowledge. The latter are filled with spontaneous and fleeting observations which, while they may sometimes illumine the

published works, do not necessarily have the same epistemological status. Both the public and the private may hint at unconscious or semi-conscious meanings which are sometimes susceptible to analysis. However, even where one feels one has succeeded in uncovering such hidden or latent meanings which appear to be in opposition to the manifest sense, the seductive tendency to regard these as the 'true' meaning of the text is to be resisted as a gross form of reduction. Genetic factors or hidden stages in the evolution of any canonical Freudian text are useful when they help to elucidate the public meaning of that text, and we have not hesitated to employ them in this way. However, if they reverse or subvert the text, then they are properly of interest for a psychobiography of Freud, but they should not be allowed to usurp the manifest meaning of the text itself for which Freud has taken full responsibility.

As for the specific problem of art versus science, Freud's love of literature and his sensitivity to literary texts are well known. There is also common agreement that Freud himself possessed a formidable literary talent, not only in the style of his prose but in the architecture of each work. (Ironically, as we shall yet observe, the one work which, by Freud's own prompting, is regarded as an exception to his high literary standard, is the 'historical novel' *Moses and Monotheism*.)

To read Freud, especially in the original German, is to be privileged, not only with knowledge and insight, but with a genuine aesthetic pleasure. Little wonder that literary critics who, in a tradition initiated by Freud and his early disciples, have long applied psychoanalytic theories and methods to analyse various works of literature, now turn increasingly to the literary analysis of Freud's own writings. Such ventures are, in themselves, entirely legitimate and sometimes profitable. The only danger lies in passing from a recognition of Freud's literary merits to the conclusion that his work is to be understood primarily as a species of literature. The question ultimately remains whether Freud's literary talent was employed in the service of his science, or whether his work was really a kind of imaginative fiction masking as science. These issues are easily confounded, somehow more so in Freud's case than in most.

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*Imago*, 13 (1937), Heft

Other scientists have written superlatively, without any attendant suspicions as to the scientific character of their work. The great historians have often been great literary artists as well, while leaving no doubt that they were primarily historians. When a mathematician gazes in rapture at a certain equation and declares it 'beautiful', it loses none of its mathematicalness. In Freud's instance some may be more impressed by his literary qualities than by his science. Yet the issue for the moment is not what we think, but what he thought, his own self-image. Let us, then, consider the available evidence as best we can.

There are a number of contemporary reports that in private conversation Freud admitted he was essentially a novelist, or at least entertained novelistic aspirations. Wilhelm Stekel, Freud's erstwhile disciple in Vienna, writes:

Freud told me once, when we were walking in the forest of Berchtesgaden, 'In my mind I always construct novels, using my experience as a psychoanalyst; my wish is to become a novelist—but not yet; perhaps in the later years of my life.'<sup>23</sup>

Fritz Wittels, Freud's early biographer, declares that Stekel told him the same anecdote (Wittels, 1924, p. 13).

Certainly the most insistent and elaborate allegation comes from the Italian novelist and journalist Giovanni Papini in a report of an interview with Freud that took place on 8 May 1934, just when the first draft of *Moses and Monotheism* was being written:

Everybody thinks, [Freud] went on, that I stand by the scientific character of my work and that my principal scope lies in curing mental maladies. This is a terrible error that has prevailed for years and that I have been unable to set right. I am a scientist by necessity, and not by vocation. I am really by nature an artist. Ever since childhood, my secret hero has been Goethe. I would have liked to have become a poet, and my whole long life I've wanted to write novels...

<sup>23</sup> Stekel (1950, p. 66). The earliest important treatment of Freud as a writer is Walter Muschg (1930). On the question as to whether Freud's prose is to be regarded as primarily scientific or literary, see the exemplary but sharply opposed studies by Walter Schönau (1968) and Patrick J. Mahony (1987). While Mahony's criticism of Schönau for not doing

A man of letters by instinct, though a doctor by necessity, I conceived the idea of changing over a branch of medicine—psychiatry—into literature. Though I have the appearance of a scientist I was and am a poet and novelist...

My books, in fact, more resemble works of imagination than treatises on pathology. My studies on *Daily Life* and on *Wit* are really and truly literature and in "Totems and Taboos" [*sic*] I have tried my hand at the historical novel... (Papini, 1934, pp. 99–101).

Though it is always possible that these snatches from Freud's conversations may be authentic, upon reflection that seems improbable. Stekel was reminiscing decades after he had left Freud for America and even earlier they had never been close enough for such intimacies. Papini was a creator of fictions whose exuberance may have carried him away. To be sure, there are scattered comments attributed to Freud that he may actually have said. The reference to his being a historical novelist rings true since at the time of the Papini interview his work on *Moses* had 'a historical novel' as its projected subtitle. That he had become a scientist by necessity rather than vocation seems to echo the statement in his so-called 'Autobiographical Study' that neither at the Gymnasium nor later in life did he 'feel any predilection for the career of a doctor' (Freud, 1925, p. 8). But nowhere that we know of did this man of many desires express a thwarted craving for an artistic or literary career. On the contrary, he had wanted to study law and engage in 'social activities' until that ambition was deflected by the decline of Austrian liberalism and growth of political anti-Semitism. Goethe was certainly one of Freud's heroes, but it was not the poet in Goethe that attracted him to a vocation. It was rather Goethe's essay on *Nature*, which he once heard read aloud, that decided him on the study of medicine. In short—from all we know directly from Freud he could at times have felt himself an unfulfilled politician, a theoretical or experimental scientist diverted to medical practice by the

full justice to the literary dimensions of Freud's work is persuasive, it seems to me that he skirts the vital issue of Freud's self-perception in this regard. Schönau, on the other hand, freely admits Freud's literary gifts but emphasizes, correctly I think, Freud's unwavering view of himself as scientist and not as artist.

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We are on somewhat firmer ground when we turn to Havelock Ellis, the eminent sexologist who had more than a passing interest in psychoanalysis and with whom Freud maintained fairly cordial relations. Yet they clashed on the very issue of psychoanalysis as art or as science. Ernest Jones (1957, 3, p. 21) recalls:

From time to time Freud exchanged letters with Havelock Ellis, and he often sent him copies of his books. But he was not pleased with a paper Ellis had written during the war, which just now came to his notice. In it Ellis maintained that Freud was an artist, not a scientist; Freud [in a letter to Eitingon of 15 February 1920] called that "a highly sublimated form of resistance." Writing to me [12 February 1920] he described Ellis's essay as "the most refined and amiable form of resistance, calling me a great artist in order to injure the validity of our scientific claims."

In the same year Freud wrote in *A note on the prehistory of the technique of psychoanalysis*:

A recent book by Havelock Ellis (so justly admired for his researches into sexual science, and an eminent critic of psycho-analysis) which bears the title of *The Philosophy of Conflict* (1919) includes an essay on "Psycho-analysis in Relation to Sex." The aim of this essay is to show that the writings of the creator of psycho-analysis should be judged not as a piece of scientific work but as an artistic production. We cannot but regret this view as a fresh turn taken by resistance and as a repudiation of analysis. We are inclined to meet it with a most decided contradiction (Freud, 1920, p. 263).

Ellis was apparently unperturbed by Freud's response. To his former pupil Joseph Wortis, who had undergone a desultory training analysis with Freud, Ellis wrote in 1936: 'Freud was rather indignant (perhaps a suspicious circumstance!) when I once told him he was an artist. But he is an artist!' (Wortis, 1954, p. 176).

In an appreciative essay on Freud written in 1939 Ellis returned to the same theme:

Freud is a great deal of an artist, though he himself vigorously repels that attribution, declaring that he is nothing but a man of science...

To survey the vast field in which he has desired to move is indeed to raise the question whether Freud is properly regarded as a man of science. To raise that question, as I have long since done, is not to belittle Freud, for it is possible to maintain that the greatest

men of science really belong to the sphere of art. While Freud himself, as I have found in correspondence with him, at once protests that he is a man of science and nothing else, one may ask: 'What science?' (Ellis, 1939, p. 125).

To the extent that we today tend no longer to perceive art and science as polar opposites within the dynamics of human creativity, such a statement could at least be worthy of serious discussion. Not so for Freud. The notion that psychoanalysis might be both art and science was repugnant to him, the suggestion that it was only a form of art was seen as an attack. Despite his repeated recognition that the great literary masters often showed amazing psychological insight and precociously anticipated some of the findings of psychoanalysis, throughout his mature life he seems to have felt that art and science were not only radically different but irreconcilable. This basic attitude was surely intensified by strategic considerations in defence of psychoanalysis. In retrospect Freud seems to have been concerned over three major sources of resistance to his discovery: the charge that it offered a debased conception of the human being, reducing him to mere sexuality; that it was a Jewish science, a 'Jewish national affair' without universal applicability; and—that it was not a science at all but, at best, a type of art.

Paradoxically, with regard to the latter Freud's anxiety may even have been further aggravated by his own susceptibility to art in all its forms and by his own literary talent, of which he was by no means oblivious. Nowhere can this be seen more vividly than in his published case-histories which, with their fundamentally narrative structure, offer perhaps the strongest analogues to literature itself. Thus, after recounting the case of Fraulein Elisabeth von R in 'Studies on hysteria', Freud pauses to remark:

I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories [*Novellen*] and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science. I must console myself with the reflection that the nature of the subject is evidently responsible for this, rather than any preference of my own. The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in

the works of imaginative writers enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight into the course of that affliction. Case histories of this kind are intended to be judged like psychiatric ones; they have, however, one advantage over the latter, namely an intimate connection between the story of the patient's sufferings and the symptoms of his illness... (Freud, 1895, p. 160).

We have here an exceptionally clear statement of the issues. Freud recognizes the affinity, surprising even to himself, between his type of case history and a literary short story. Yet this quality, which seems to detract from what is ordinarily regarded as 'the serious stamp of science', is inevitable in his form of therapy, where the symptoms of the patient's illness become intelligible largely through the narration of his sufferings. The case, as finally reported in writing, may have the superficial appearance of a short story. It is to be read, however, purely as a psychiatric case history.

An equally significant personal digression is interpolated into Freud's account of the case of Dora:

I must now turn to consider a further complication to which I should certainly give no space if I were a man of letters engaged in the creation of a mental state like this for a short story [*eine Novelle*], instead of being a medical man engaged upon its dissection. The element to which I must now allude can only serve to obscure and efface the outlines of the fine poetic conflict which we have been able to ascribe to Dora. This element would rightly fall a sacrifice to the censorship of a writer, for he, after all, simplifies and abstracts when he appears in the character of a psychologist. But in the world of reality, which I am trying to depict here, a complication of motives, an accumulation and conjunction of mental activities—in a word, overdetermination—is the rule (Freud, 1905, pp. 59f.).

Here again Freud accentuates the contrast between the 'man of letters' [*Dichter*], and the 'physician' [*Arzt*], identifying himself exclusively with the latter. His proof lies in the material he is about to introduce on the theme of Dora's love for Frau K, this in addition to her love for Herr K, which had already been revealed earlier. A writer, Freud insists, would have eliminated Dora's desire for Frau K as a superfluous element which would only complicate and obscure the hitherto 'fine poetic conflict' [literally 'the fine, poetically appropriate conflict'—*den*

*schönen, poesiegerechten Konflikt*]. By contrast, Freud the physician (i.e. the psychoanalyst, the scientist) is prepared to sacrifice aesthetic considerations in favour of his quest for 'the world of reality' where motives are simultaneously multiple, accretive, 'overdetermined'.

The opposition between art and science was part of Freud's positivist heritage (there were other heritages as well), and he seems to have clung to it consistently. It is already expressed in a charming letter to Martha Bernays at a time during their long engagement when he was somewhat jealous over the attentions paid her by Max Meyer, a musician, and Fritz Wahle, an artist, in which the serious point remains visible beneath the lover's banter:

I think there is a general enmity between artists and us workers in the detail of science. We know that they possess in their art a master key to open with ease all female hearts, whereas we stand helpless at the strange design of the lock and have first to torment ourselves to discover a suitable key to it (Jones, 1953, 1, p. 111).

Perhaps nowhere is Freud's insistence on the intrinsic difference and antagonism between art and science sharper than in the essay on Leonardo da Vinci who had, after all, created in both domains. According to Freud this, precisely, was Leonardo's tragedy. 'The artist had once taken the investigator into his service to assist him; now the servant had become the stronger and suppressed his master' (Freud, 1910, p. 77).

Only in Goethe was some balance achieved between the opposing forces. In his acceptance speech for the Goethe Prize in 1930, Freud wrote:

In Leonardo's nature the scientist did not harmonize with the artist, he interfered with him and perhaps in the end stifled him. In Goethe's life both personalities found room side by side: at different times each allowed the other to predominate (Freud, 1930b, p. 208).

Whether we translate *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, the title of Goethe's autobiography, as 'Writing and Truth', 'Poetry and Truth', or 'Fiction and Truth', the two words are almost emblematic of the dilemma as Freud perceived it. Though his admiration for Goethe was such that he tended to identify with him on various levels, it is doubtful that Freud saw himself as having

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harmonized those very elements, which remained for him a source of tension and conflict. Indeed, if we closely scrutinize the negotiations concerning the Goethe Prize itself we shall find that they reveal Freud's lingering concern that he not be regarded primarily as a man of letters.

Contrary to a widespread assumption, the Goethe Prize awarded by the City of Frankfurt was not necessarily a prize for literature. Its terms only stated broadly that it is to be awarded in recognition of a personality 'whose creative influence is worthy of the honor devoted to Goethe's memory'.<sup>24</sup> Actually, of the three persons who received the prize before Freud, only one, the poet Stefan George, was a literary figure. The other prize-winners had been Albert Schweitzer and the philosopher Leopold Ziegler. Freud was delighted to accept the honour, yet his letter of acceptance to Dr Alfons Paquet, secretary of the fund, contains a curious passage to which no particular attention has hitherto been paid:

I have not been spoiled by public marks of honour and I have so adapted myself to this state of things that I have been able to do without them. I should not like to deny, however, that the award of the Goethe Prize of the City of Frankfurt has given me great pleasure. There is something about it that especially fires the imagination *and one of its stipulations dispels the feeling of humiliation which in other cases is a concomitant of such distinctions* (Freud, 1930a, p. 207, my italics).

To what can the enigmatic reference to an avoidance of a potential 'humiliation' possibly refer? The answer must be sought in Paquet's sensitive letter announcing the prize, to which Freud's letter was a direct response. Paquet had written:

Since, most esteemed Professor, the governing board has by now already awarded the prize, it wishes to bring to expression its high estimation of the revolutionary effects which the new modes of research created by you have had upon the seminal forces of our time. With the rigorous methods of the natural sciences, together with the bold interpretation of images coined by the poets, your research has paved a way of access into the driving forces of the mind and thereby created the possibility of understanding at their root the origins and development of many cultural forms, and of healing illnesses to which the medical art did not until now possess the key. Your psychology has not only disturbed and enriched medical science, but also the conceptual world of the artist, the pastor, the historian and the educator... (Paquet, 1930, pp. 417f.).

In thanking Paquet Freud expressed astonishment at his 'sympathetic penetration' into the nature of his work and 'the secret, personal intentions behind it'. What seems to have so specially pleased Freud was that he was being given the Goethe Prize primarily as a scientist 'employing the rigorous methods of the natural sciences', not a poet but a revolutionary interpreter of poets. If this be so, then it is also reasonable to assume that had the priorities been reversed, had his use of 'the rigorous methods of the natural sciences' not been stressed, he would have felt somehow 'humiliated'. As it was, he was deeply moved. The terms of the Goethe Prize coincided both with his self-image and the image he wanted to project to the world. He was, first and foremost, a scientist. 'And do not give me literature instead of science', he had rebuked his fictional interlocutor in 'The question of lay analysis' (Freud, 1926, p. 198). To Lou Andreas-Salomé he wrote, a month before hearing of the Goethe Prize: 'I am—all phrases notwithstanding—not an artist'.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See Alfons Paquet's letter to Freud announcing the award of the prize, published in *Die psychoanalytische Bewegung* (1930), 2, p. 417: 'Nach der Ordnung für die Verleihung des Goethe-Preises soll der Preis einer mit ihrem Schaffen bereits zur Geltung gelangten Persönlichkeit zuerkant werden, deren schöpferisches Wirken einer dem Andenken Goethes gewidmeten Ehrung würdig ist'.

<sup>25</sup> Freud/Salomé (1980, p. 213; 1985, p. 196). There is a curious parallel to all this in C. G. Jung's first encounter with the 'anima' as he was plunging deliberately into his unconscious and recording the fantasies and images that arose. According to Jung, the following occurred: 'When I was writing down these fantasies, I once asked myself, "What am I really doing? Certainly this has nothing to do

with science. But then what is it?" Whereupon a voice within me said, "It is art." ... I said very emphatically to this voice that my fantasies had nothing to do with art, and I felt a great inner resistance ... Then came the next assault and the same assertion: "That is art." This time I caught her and said, "No, it is not art! On the contrary, it is nature ..." What the anima said to me seemed full of a deep cunning. If I had taken these fantasies of the unconscious as art, they would have carried no more conviction than visual perceptions, as if I were watching a movie. I would have felt no moral obligation toward them. The anima might then have easily seduced me into believing that I was a misunderstood artist, and that my so-called artistic nature gave me the right to neglect reality.' See Jung (1961, pp. 185-7.)

## THE 'INARTISTIC' FREUD

We have come full circle. From the available evidence we have concluded that for Freud the term 'historical novel' as applied to *Moses and Monotheism* connoted neither art nor subjectivity. If our analysis is correct, the original subtitle was meant to indicate nothing more than Freud's awareness of the lack of corroborating facts for his thesis and so to disarm potential critics by anticipating such criticism. By 1937 the subtitle had been dropped, for any, or a combination of, the following reasons: (a) It might be misconstrued and, taken literally, defeat its defensive purpose; (b) Freud's confidence grew as he increasingly recognized in the work of Ernst Sellin a corroboration of his own thinking; (c) Even if no further historical evidence was forthcoming he was convinced that he had discovered, psychoanalytically, the 'historical truth' in monotheism and, by extension, in Judaism and Christianity; (d) The decision to eliminate the subtitle was in harmony with his life-long denial of any suggestion that his work represents 'art' rather than science.

This interpretation of the initial adoption and subsequent rejection of the term 'historical novel' seems to me fully coherent and self-sufficient. If so, it follows that although the subtitle does not preclude a psychoanalytic explanation, it also does not mandate it.

The point I am making can be generalized to other aspects of the book. If, for example, Freud's Moses is an Egyptian, are we entitled thereby to leap to the assumption that Freud is really referring metaphorically to himself and repudiating his own Jewish identity, or is the stress on Moses's Egyptian lineage, as Freud so emphatically insists in the manuscript, the absolute precondition for any further progress in the historical exploration of Moses's career and the origins of Israelite monotheism? Similarly, is Freud's long reluctance to publish his findings, especially in Part III, merely a matter of inner psychological ambivalence, however we interpret it, or should we not first explore with the utmost seriousness Freud's repeatedly stated fear of Pater Schmidt and the Catholic Church in Austria? My own investigations of the relations between Schmidt and Freud have persuaded me that on this score, at least, Freud has ample

reason for anxiety. To be sure, there may have been other inner reasons as well. But even if we can discover them, what is their hierarchy of significance? Motive and meaning are always related, but they are not synonymous.

The place of psychoanalysis in historical explanation, indeed the nature of historical explanation itself, will continue to trouble psychoanalysts, historians and philosophers alike. We shall not resolve such problems here. It will perhaps suffice if, at the risk of a temporary oversimplification, I indicate my own position as succinctly as I can. I would readily admit that psychoanalytic explanations can often enrich the reading of a text with new and unexpected resonances. They become imperative, however, only when historical and literary analysis have been exhausted and the results still cannot satisfy us, or when, as in the specific case of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, the text reveals tensions and fissures, hints and idiosyncraciēs, that virtually invite a psychoanalytic approach. Obviously different readers will differ as to where, precisely, such textual irritants are to be found, and so, if for no other reason, no one reading can be considered final. It should be clear by now that I do not deny the potential value or validity of psychoanalytic exegesis *per se*; I have only tried to show that Freud's use of the term 'historical novel' cannot, of itself, provide a warrant for it. For the rest—the way is open for a responsible psychoanalytic interpretation of many aspects of *Moses and Monotheism* which must otherwise remain enigmatic. But that is a task that cannot be undertaken here.

For the moment I will conclude with one aspect of *Moses and Monotheism* that is directly related to the central theme of this paper.

Even among Freud's admirers it has become fairly common to acknowledge the relatively poor literary quality of the book in its final version. *Moses and Monotheism* abounds in repetitions and digressions. It contains no less than three prefaces written at different times, two before Part III Section I, another ('Summary and Recapitulation') before Part III Section II. Some, following Freud's own lead (see Freud, 1939b, p. 54) have attributed the book's alleged structural and stylistic weaknesses to his illness and the fading powers of old age. The obvious reply to this has been to point out that his

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'Outline of psycho-analysis', written subsequently, reveals him still at the height of his intellectual and literary capacities. This being so, it has seemed that the imperfections of *Moses and Monotheism* must once more be attributed to Freud's inner conflicts over his identity and over his denial to the Jewish people both of their greatest figure and the originality of their religion. There is, however, another possible explanation, one which emerges out of the context of the book itself and which, if it has any merit, complements our interpretation of the meaning and vicissitudes of the original subtitle.

The fact is that it was not his readers, but Freud himself, who first underscored not only the historical but the stylistic defects of the book. In his preface to the second section of Part III he writes:

The part of this study which follows cannot be given to the public without extensive explanations and apologies. For it is nothing other than a faithful (and often word-for-word) repetition of the first part, abbreviated in some of its critical enquiries and augmented by additions relating to the problem of how the special character of the Jewish people arose. I am aware that a method of exposition such as this is no less inexpedient than it is inartistic [*unkünstlerisch*]. I myself deplore it unreservedly. Why have I not avoided it? The answer to that is not hard for me to find, but it is not easy to confess. I found myself unable to wipe out the traces of the history of the work's origin, which was in any case unusual... (Freud, 1939b, p. 103).

After describing some of the stages and circumstances of composition, Freud continues:

...I could not make up my mind to give up the earlier versions entirely. And so it has come about that I have adopted the expedient of attaching a whole piece of the first presentation to the second unchanged—which has brought with it the disadvantage of involving extensive repetition...

...There are things which should be said more than once and which cannot be said often enough. But the reader must decide of his own free will whether to linger over the subject or to come back to it. He must not be surreptitiously led into having the same thing put before him twice in one book. It is a piece of clumsiness for which the author must take the blame...

This series of apologies must strike us as somewhat bizarre, not only in what is being confessed, but in the very necessity of confession.

Why, indeed, could Freud not have avoided it? Would it have been so difficult for him to have further reworked his earlier materials and integrated them into a more homogeneous and seamless whole? Why, at the price of appearing 'inartistic' and 'clumsy' did he choose to leave the various strata more or less intact and, having done so, why did he feel it necessary to draw so much attention to it? All this can only have been deliberate.

I would suggest, with some diffidence, that we may find some partial enlightenment if we go back to an earlier, well-known passage in the book whose links to those just cited become apparent as soon as we juxtapose them. At one point in Part II Freud writes of the conflicting tendencies of biblical narratives to reshape and level out inherited materials in accordance with later tendencies, while at the same time attempting to preserve what has been recorded:

It is, of course, beyond our knowledge to discover how far reports about former times go back to early records or to oral tradition and how long an interval of time there was in individual instances between an event and its recording. The text, however, will tell us about its own vicissitudes. Two mutually opposed treatments have left their traces on it. On the one hand it has been subjected to revisions which have falsified it in the sense of their secret aims, have mutilated and amplified it and have even changed it into its reverse; on the other hand a solicitous piety has presided over it and has sought to preserve everything as it was, no matter whether it was consistent or contradicted itself. Thus almost everywhere noticeable gaps, disturbing repetitions and obvious contradictions have come about—indications which reveal things to us which it was not intended to communicate. In its implications the distortion of a text resembles a murder: The difficulty is not in perpetrating the deed, but in getting rid of its traces... (Freud, 1939b, p. 43).

The parallels between Freud's comments on the development of biblical texts and on his own work on *Moses* are too striking to be accidental. Certain key words appear in each. Both the biblical text and that of *Moses and Monotheism* have been revised more than once, both contain 'repetitions' and 'gaps'. Yet in both there has also been a tendency to preserve at least some of the earlier strata. There is, however, also a crucial difference. Through its resultant flaws, the biblical text tells us 'about its own vicissitudes', but it does so inadvertently, against its

own will. Freud has chosen to tell us of the vicissitudes of his text—deliberately. The ‘murder’ of a text (the brutal metaphor has other implications which we will not pursue here) is relatively easy, but it is always difficult to get rid of the traces. The Bible tries to efface those traces but does not succeed. In his own work Freud does not even try and thereby he distances himself on yet another level from the very tradition he himself seeks to slay.

And if the result, from a literary point of view, is ‘inartistic’? That only means that *Dichtung* has been sacrificed to *Wahrheit*. Here too there is for Freud a seemingly perverse yet palpable gain. The open renunciation of any aesthetic claim for the work only reinforces, within Freud’s frame of reference, its claim to historical and scientific truth. In so doing, it also marks his repudiation of the last possible associations to the ‘historical novel’.

## APPENDIX

### Freud’s Introduction to the Manuscript Draft of ‘Moses and Monotheism’<sup>26</sup>

9-8-34

#### *Der Mann Moses*

#### Ein historischer Roman

[1] Wie die geschlechtliche Vereinigung von Pferd und Esel zwei verschiedenen Hybriden den Ursprung giebt, dem Maulthier und dem Maulesel, so laesst auch die Vermengung von Geschichtsschreibung und freier Erfindung verschiedene Produkte entstehen, die unter der gemeinsamen Bezeichnung “historischer Roman” bald als Historien, bald als Romane gewuerdigt werden wollen—die einen von ihnen handeln von Personen und Begebenheiten, die historisch bekannt sind, aber sie legen es nicht darauf an, deren Eigenart getreu wiederzugeben. Sie entlehnen zwar das Interesse von der Historie, aber ihre Absicht ist die des Romans; sie wollen auf die Affekte wirken.<sup>27</sup> eindrucksvolle Schilderungen entwerfen, und] Andere dieser literarischen Schoepfungen benehmen sich grade entgegengesetzt. Sie tragen kein Bedenken, Personen und selbst Begebenheiten zu erfinden, wenn sie hoffen den eigentuemlichen Charakter einer historischen Epoche durch diese Hilfsmittel besonders zutreffend beschreiben zu koennen. Was sie anstreben ist also in erster Linie geschichtliche Wahrheit trotz der eingestanden Erdichtung. Anderen noch gelingt es, die Ansprueche der Kunstschoepfung mit denen der historischen Treue ein Stueck weit oder weitgehend zu versoehnen. Wieviel Dichtung sich noch gegen die Absicht des Geschichtsschreibers in seine Darstellung einschleicht bedarf nur einer leisen Andeutung!

<sup>26</sup> Copyright © 1988 by A. W. Freud et al. The transcription reproduces the length of the lines as they appear in the manuscript.

<sup>27</sup> The phrase is transposed in this manner in the manuscript.

Wenn aber ich, Kuenstler ist, eine “historischen Roman Name noch eine a lassen. Ich bin zur eines gewissen Ers an Erdichtung un fuer mich leicht de

[2] Meine naechste des Moses zu gew auf solche Art zur ellen Problems bei genannt werden k fordert zu ihrer B Material, aber nic Moses zu Gebote genannt werden. I aus einer einzigen Seite bestaetigt, w fixiert, in sich wid mehrfach uebera fluss neuer Tende religioesen und na Volkes innig verw berechtigt den Ve brechen, wuerde i der Gestalt ihrer gewicht bieten un ung auffordern. M jede einzelne der Moeglichkeiten a und die Luecken dem naechsten, s kleinsten Widerst heisst, jene Annal man die groessere schreiben darf. W Technick erhaelt, Art von “historis es hat keinen ode mbaren Wirklich noch so grosse W nicht mit der Wa die Wahrheit ist scheinlich und ta sind auch in kaer Ableitungen und setzen.

Wenn aber ich, der weder Geschichtsforscher noch Kuenstler ist, eine meiner Arbeiten als "historischen Roman" einfuehre, so muss dieser Name noch eine andere Hinwendung zu-lassen. Ich bin zur sorgsamten Beobachtung eines gewissen Erscheinungsgebietes erzogen, an Erdichtung und Erfindung knuepft sich fuer mich leicht der Makel des Irrtums.

[2] Meine naechste Absicht war eine Kenntnis der Person des Moses zu gewinnen, meine entfernteres Ziel auf solche Art zur Loesung eines noch heute aktuellen Problems beizutragen, das erst spaeterhin genannt werden kann. Eine Charakterstudie erfordert zu ihrer Begruendung zuverlaessiges Material, aber nichts was ueber den Mann Moses zu Gebote steht, kann zuverlaessig genannt werden. Es ist eine Tradition aus einer einzigen Quelle von keiner anderen Seite bestaetigt, wahrscheinlich zu spaet schriftlich fixiert, in sich widerspruchsvoll, sicherlich mehrfach ueberarbeitet und durch den Einfluss neuer Tendenzen entstellt, und den religioesen und nationalen Mythen eines Volkes innig verwoben. Man waere berechtigt den Versuch als hoffnungslos abzugeben, wuerde nicht die Grossartigkeit der Gestalt ihrer Entlegenheit ein Gegengewicht bieten und zu erneuter Bemuehung auffordern. Man unternimmt es also, jede einzelne der im Material gegebenen Moeglichkeiten als Anhaltspunkt zu behandeln und die Luecken zwischen einem Stueck und dem naechsten, sozusagen, nach dem Gesetz des kleinsten Widerstandes auszufuellen, das heisst, jene Annahme zu bevorzugen, der man die groessere Wahrscheinlichkeit zuschreiben darf. Was man mit Hilfe dieser Technick erhaelt, kann man auch als eine Art von "historischem Roman" auffassen, es hat keinen oder nur einen unbestimmbaren Wirklichkeitswert, denn eine noch so grosse Wahrscheinlichkeit faellt nicht mit der Wahrheit zusammen, die Wahrheit ist oftmals sehr unwahrscheinlich und tatsaechliche Beweismittel sind auch in kaerglichem Ausmass durch Ableitungen und Erwaegungen zu ersetzen.

## SUMMARY

Despite Freud's explicit statements on his intentions in writing *Moses and Monotheism*, there has been a growing tendency to interpret the work as a coded document of his inner life. Moreover, it has been known for some time that the original subtitle of the book had been: 'Ein historischer Roman' ('A Historical Novel'). This phrase in itself would seem to validate a reading of the book as a kind of personal fiction, especially since the German *Roman* can also easily be associated with the 'Family romance' (*Familienroman*).

This paper argues on a number of levels that before subjecting the book to psychoanalytic exegesis every effort should be made to understand its conscious intentionality. Focusing on the abortive subtitle, the core of the paper is a close examination of the original manuscript draft of *Moses and Monotheism*, completed in 1934. From Freud's introduction, published here for the first time, it becomes clear that he employed the subtitle merely to indicate his own awareness that he had not found sufficient independent historical data to fully corroborate his reconstruction. In this sense, however, he claimed that modern biblical scholars are also historical novelists. They, no less than he, must resort to speculation, the only difference lying in the modes employed and the explanatory power of the results.

Finally, the paper considers Freud's position on the problem of 'art' versus 'science' generally and his own self-perception in this regard.

## TRANSLATIONS OF SUMMARY

Malgré les déclarations explicites de Freud sur ses intentions quand il écrivit 'Moïse et le monothéisme', on a eu de plus en plus tendance à interpréter cette oeuvre comme un document codé de sa vie intérieure. On sait en outre que le sous-titre original de l'oeuvre a été pendant un certain temps: 'Ein historischer Roman' (Un roman historique). Cette phrase en elle-même semblerait valider une lecture du livre comme une sorte de fiction personnelle, notamment dans la mesure où le *Roman* allemand peut aussi facilement être associé au 'Roman familial' (*Familienroman*).

Cet article défend, à un certain nombre de niveaux, l'idée selon laquelle avant de soumettre ce livre à l'exégèse psychanalytique, il faudrait d'abord tenter d'en comprendre l'intentionnalité consciente. En se centrant sur le sous-titre avorté, l'article consiste principalement à étudier de près une première version du manuscrit original de 'Moïse et le monothéisme', achevée en 1934. L'introduction de Freud, publiée ici pour la première fois, montre clairement qu'il employait ce sous-titre uniquement pour indiquer sa propre conscience du fait qu'il n'avait pas trouvé suffisamment de

données historiques indépendantes pour corroborer pleinement sa reconstruction. En ce sens, il affirmait que les chercheurs modernes sur la Bible sont également des romanciers historiques. Ils durent tout autant que lui recourir à la spéculation, la seule différence étant dans les modes employés et dans la force explicative des résultats.

Enfin, cet article examine la position de Freud sur le problème de 'l'art' par rapport à la 'science' en général, et sa propre perception de lui-même à ce sujet.

Trotz Freuds ausdrücklicher Aussagen über seine Absichten beim Schreiben von *Moses und Monotheismus* gibt es eine zunehmende Tendenz, das Werk als ein kodiertes Dokument seines inneren Lebens zu interpretieren. Darüberhinaus ist seit einiger Zeit bekannt, daß der originale Untertitel des Buches 'Ein historischer Roman' gewesen war. Diese Phrase allein läßt ein Lesen des Buches als eine Art persönlicher Fiktion als gerechtfertigt erscheinen, zumal der deutsche 'Roman' leicht mit dem 'Familienroman' in Verbindung zu bringen ist.

Dieser Beitrag argumentiert auf einer Anzahl verschiedener Ebenen, daß alle Anstrengungen, die bewußten Absichten des Buches zu verstehen, gemacht werden sollten, bevor man es einer psychoanalytischen Exegese unterzieht. Der sich auf den fehlgeschlagenen Untertitel konzentrierende Kern des Beitrages ist eine sorgfältige Untersuchung des Originalmanuskripts 'Moses und Monotheismus', das in 1934 vollendet worden war. Aus der hier erstmals veröffentlichten Einführung von Freud wird deutlich, daß er den Untertitel lediglich als Indikator seines eigenen Bewußtseins darüber verwendete, daß er keine ausreichenden historischen Unterlagen zur vollständigen Bestätigung seiner Rekonstruktion gefunden hatte. In diesem Sinne aber, so behauptete er, seien moderne Bibelforscher auch historische Novellisten. Auch sie, genau wie er, müßten auf Spekulation zurückgreifen, wobei der einzige Unterschied in den benutzten Methoden und der erklärenden Macht der Resultate besteht.

Schließlich untersucht der Beitrag Freuds Position zur Frage 'Kunst' kontra 'Wissenschaft' im Allgemeinen und der Art, wie er sich selbst in dieser Hinsicht sieht.

A pesar de que Freud explícitamente declaró sus intenciones al escribir 'Moisés y el monoteísmo' ha habido una tendencia creciente a interpretar el libro como un documento en clave de su vida interna. A ello contribuye el hecho de que se ha sabido durante algún tiempo que el subtítulo original era: 'Ein historischer Roman' ('Novela histórica'). La frase en sí justificaría la lectura del libro como un tipo de ficción personal, sobre todo dado que el término alemán *Roman* se puede asociar fácilmente con 'Novela de familia' (*Familienroman*).

Este artículo arguye a varios niveles que antes de someter el libro a la exégesis psicoanalítica, se debería tratar de entender su intencionalidad consciente. Enfocándose en el fallido título, el núcleo del artículo consiste en un examen detallado del borrador original de 'Moisés y el monoteísmo' concluido en 1934. La introducción de Freud, publicada aquí por primera vez, deja claro que empleó el subtítulo meramente para indicar que era consciente de que no había encontrado suficientes datos históricos independientes que corroboraran firmemente su reconstrucción. Pero arguía también que los investigadores bíblicos modernos son novelistas históricos igualmente. Tanto ellos como él tienen que recurrir a la especulación, difiriendo únicamente en las formas empleadas y en el poder de explicación de los resultados.

El artículo trata por último de la postura que adopta Freud en la cuestión del 'arte' por oposición a la 'ciencia', y de dónde se ve él a este respecto.

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