

N-3.-139

**New Perspectives on Freud's
»Moses and Monotheism«**

*Edited by
Ruth Ginsburg and Ilana Pardes*

Max Niemeyer Verlag
Tübingen 2006



Contents

New Perspectives on Freud's <i>Moses and Monotheism</i>	
Introduction	1
Jan Assmann	
The Advance in Intellectuality: Freud's Construction of Judaism	7
Peter Schäfer	
The Triumph of Pure Spirituality. Sigmund Freud's <i>Moses and Monotheism</i>	19
Robert S. Wistrich	
Sigmund Freud's Last Testament	45
Rachel B. Blass	
The Puzzle of Freud's Epistemology in <i>Moses and Monotheism</i>	65
Ruth Ginsburg	
Whose Trauma Is It Anyway? Some Reflections on Freud's Traumatic History	77
Betty Rojzman	
The Double Death of Moses	93
Shuli Barzilai	
Mind the Gap: Some Midrashic Propositions for <i>Moses and Monotheism</i>	117
Gannit Ankori	
Moses, Freud and Frida Kahlo	135
Ilana Pardo	
Freud, Zipporah, and The Bridegroom of Blood: National Ambivalence in the Bible	149
Alon Confino	
Freud, Moses and Modern Nationhood	165

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Bibliothek

Die Deutsche Bibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.ddb.de> abrufbar.

ISBN 13: 978-3-484-65160-9 ISBN 10: 3-484-65160-1 ISSN 0941-5866

© Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen 2006

Ein Unternehmen der K. G. Saur Verlag GmbH, München

<http://www.niemeyer.de>

Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen. Printed in Germany.

Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Papier.

Druck: Laupp & Goebel GmbH, Nehren

Einband: Industriebuchbinderei Nädele, Nehren

Ruth HaCohen Psychoanalysis and the Music of Charisma in the <i>Moseses</i> of Freud and Schönberg	177
Jakob Hessing A Special Case of German-Jewish Literature: Sigmund Freud's Book on Moses	197
Guy G. Stroumsa Myth into Novel: The Late Freud on Early Religion	203
Philip Wexler The Return of Alchemical and Messianic Judaism: A Social Scientific De-Sublimation of Social Psychology in Freud and Durkheim	217
H. Shmuel Erlich <i>Der Mann</i> Freud: A Contemporary Perspective on His and Our Jewish and Psychoanalytic Identity	235
Selected Bibliography	245
List of Contributors	249
Acknowledgements	253
Index	255

New Perspectives on Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*

Introduction

Moses and Monotheism was regarded for many years as a marginal, strikingly bizarre text within the Freudian corpus. The scandalous assertions that Moses was an Egyptian and that the Hebrews had murdered him in the wilderness during an unrecorded revolt, the fissures in the text, the strange, obsessive repetitions and the recurrent moments of doubt all seemed to perplex readers upon its publication in 1939 and for many decades later. Issued on the eve of the Second World War, it aroused much anger among Jewish readers, who accused Freud of betraying his own people in one of their darkest hours and of exhibiting, to top it all, an outrageous ignorance of Jewish history and religion. But not only Jewish readers were puzzled by the text. Its recklessly speculative method of argumentation was also troubling for Freud's committed advocates and disciples. Many theoreticians of psychoanalysis simply ignored it, and even those who were interested in the biographical insights provided by *Moses and Monotheism* did not fully acknowledge its theoretical innovation and importance.

During the past two decades, however, there has been a radical change in the book's status. It is now defined as one of Freud's finest achievements, a text whose importance to the understanding of cultural phenomena – be it collective identities, collective memory, or national traumas – cannot be exaggerated. Numerous books and articles have been published on *Moses and Monotheism*, among them, Hayim Yosef Yerushalmi's *Freud's Moses. Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (1991), Ilse Grubich-Simitis' *Freuds Moses-Studie als Tagtraum. Ein bibliographischer Essay* (1991), Jacques Derrida's *Mal d'Archive. Une impression freudienne* (1995), Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience. Trauma, Narrative, History* (1996), Jan Assmann's *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt and Western Monotheism* (1997), Richard Bernstein's *Freud and the Legacy of Moses* (1998), and Edward W. Said's *Freud and the Non-European* (2003).

Yerushalmi's *Freud's Moses. Judaism Terminable and Interminable* has played a major role in positioning the book at the center of critical discussion. His inspiring insights into the controversy surrounding Freud's feelings toward his own Judaism as well as his discussion of Freud as historian generated a fascinating series of responses and critiques. Derrida challenged Yerushalmi for his lack of attention to the revolutionary conception of archives in psychoanalytic theory, Assmann – with and beyond Yerushalmi – situated Moses/Freud within a wider Western tradition of a Moses/Egypt discourse, Bernstein highlighted the power of Freud's treatment of the psychical phenomena underlying