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“Of Snips . . . and Puppy Dog Tails”: Freud’s Sublimation of *Judentum*

Freud claimed that he conceived his idea of sublimation while reading about the youthful dog-tail-cutting adventures of the future surgeon J. F. Dieffenbach in Heinrich Heine’s The Harz Journey. Although Heine does mention a prohibition against docking dog tails in the work, the Dieffenbach anecdote actually appears in Heine’s memorial to Ludwig Börne. This article argues that Freud’s parapraxis is entwined with an irony that, if recognized, might undermine the general approbation given to sublimation. By mapping the Jewish matrix of the two passages that converge upon Freud’s errant account of the origin of his concept, the author uncovers a third canine caudal caesura in the work of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, an author Freud closely associated with Heine. This triangulation leads the author back to Freud’s early formulations of sublimation, which betray its further imbrication with Judentum and suggest that what may be most sublimated by sublimation itself is the correlation between psychoanalytic discourse and Freud’s Jewish identifications.

In his classic hagiography of Sigmund Freud, Ernest Jones reports on Freud’s comments at a board meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society on March 13, 1938, the day following the *Anschluss*, the Third Reich’s annexation of Austria. Freud makes a historical reference that he would repeat in his discussion of Jewish “intellectuality” (*Geistigkeit*) in *Moses and Monotheism*: “After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by Titus, Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai asked for permission to open a school at Jabneh for the study of Torah. We are going to do the same. We are, after all, used to persecution by our history, tradition and some of us by personal experience,’ adding laughingly

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and pointing at Richard Sterba, ‘with one exception’” (Jones 1953–57, 3:221; see Freud 1939, 115). The Austrian Gentile Sterba, at least in Jones’s version, was supposed to hold down the fort in Vienna while his Jewish colleagues would—with any luck—emigrate to safety and reconstitute the movement in exile. Recognizing that the independence of the psychoanalytic movement and its practitioners, regardless of their Aryan *bona fides*, would not survive coordination (*Gleichschaltung*) with the Berlin association, Sterba (together with his wife Editha) soon escaped to Switzerland, earning the dismissive label of “our one shabbes goy” (Jones 1953–57, 2:163) from the no less Gentile Jones. Sterba eventually made his way to Detroit where he continued to practice and published not only clinical contributions but also accounts (1978; 1985) of his encounters with Freud.

One meeting in particular made an impact upon Sterba. This was his only presentation to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, at which he offered his recently published paper (1930) on his mentor’s theoretical formulations about sublimation. While Freud did not express complete agreement with the young analyst and displayed no pleasure at the critiques of his theoretical formulations by others present, he did share, in the ensuing discussion, an anecdote about how he first came upon the idea of sublimation. Freud recalled reading about the youthful exploits of Johann Friedrich Dieffenbach (1795–1847) in Heinrich Heine’s *The Harz Journey* (1855a). As a student, Dieffenbach, a future surgeon and pioneer in rhinoplasty, apparently had a penchant for cutting off the tails of all dogs that he came upon. This led Freud to conclude: “There someone does the same thing during his whole lifetime, first out of sadistic mischief and later to the benefit of mankind. I thought one could appropriately call this change of significance of an action ‘sublimation’ [*Sublimierung*]” (Sterba 1978, 190; Sterba 1985, 122).

Freud then comments on the approbation this concept has received, especially in comparison to the opprobrium visited on other notions bearing his imprimatur: “People say: ‘This Freud is an abominable person; however, he has one rope, with the help of which he can pull himself out of the sewer [*Jauche*, literally “liquid manure”] in which he dwells, and this is the concept of sublimation’” (Sterba 1978, 190). In other words, by allowing

for the redirection of psychic energy toward nonsexual aims and objects, the concept of sublimation appears to redirect psychoanalysis itself away from those sexual concerns that many opponents considered to be evidence of its creator's Jewish character.¹ Freud does not further comment on this gloss; he leaves unremarked the irony that this most genteel and Gentile notion derived its inspiration from the enactment of the very "bedrock" (Freud 1937, 252) of psychoanalysis, the fantasy of castration, which is itself, as I have argued previously (2007), Freud's own transferential fantasy of the dispositive circumcision that codified Jewish identification.² Nor does Freud realize that he had conflated two separate discussions of docked dog tails in Heine's work.

In what follows, I examine how Freud's parapraxis entailed more than the simple mixup of a pair of Heine anecdotes and how it was entwined with an irony that, if it were more widely recognized, might undermine the general approbation with which sublimation has been greeted. After I survey the extensive Jewish allusions and associations to the two passages that converge upon Freud's witty but errant account of the concept's origin, a third canine caudal caesura will emerge, clearly Jewish-coded and performed by an author Freud both esteemed and closely associated with Heine, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg. This triangulation then points to other Freudian discussions of sublimation that betray its further imbrication with *Judentum*. Such an epidemiological mapping does not seek to supplement the psychoanalytic theory of sublimation (see Loewald 1988), but rather to indicate that the sheer density of Jewish reference out of which that theory emerged suggests that perhaps what is most sublimated of all is the correlation of psychoanalytic discourse with Freud's Jewish identifications.

Genealogy of a Freudian Slip

The value ascribed to sublimation—it serves, in Heine's expression, as the "*entrée-billet*" of psychoanalysis to European acceptance—makes the recognition that Freud's recollection was in error even more striking. The story of Dr. Dieffenbach's career change actually opens Heine's memorial to the baptized Jewish

critic and liberal publicist, Ludwig Börne.³ Heine’s ambivalent tribute begins by recalling the first time he set eyes on the older writer—in 1815, when, as a young poet, he had accompanied his father to the reading room at a Masonic Lodge during a trip to Frankfurt. In order to illustrate how Börne’s theatrical criticism of that time, by directing surgical strikes not only at the plays but also at the players, anticipated his later political journalism, Heine invokes his Berlin friend Dieffenbach, “who, whenever he could catch a dog or cat, would cut off its tail [*die Schwänze abschnitt*] out of the pure pleasure of cutting (*Schneidelust*), which at first was very much held against him when the poor beasts howled horribly, though he was later forgiven since the same joy of cutting made him into Germany’s greatest surgeon” (1840, 2). Analogously, Heine concludes:

so Börne first experimented by going after the actors, and we must excuse any youthful excesses that he perpetrated against the Heigels, Weidners, Urspruchs, and other innocent animals who have since been running around without tails on account of the nobler services that Börne was later able to render as a political surgeon with his finely honed criticism. (2)

Heine’s passage calls attention to (the circumcised) Börne’s scalpel-like wit that, as it were, unmanned its recipients or, at least, cur-tailed their careers.

Freud’s response to Sterba’s paper was not the first time that he misidentified a source associated with Ludwig Börne. In “A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Analysis” (1920), Freud confesses that his claim to have originated the technique of free association betrayed the “cryptomnesiac” influence of Börne. He relates that when he had recently (re)read the critic’s ironically entitled “The Art of Becoming an Original Writer in Three Days,” he suddenly realized that the recommendation that aspiring authors should engage in free association had been included in the single-volume edition of Börne’s collected works that was, Freud adds, “the only book that he had retained since childhood” (265).

Heine’s tail-cutting narrative in *The Harz Journey*, the first of his *Pictures of Travel*, presents an inverse situation: a prohibi-

tion rather than a proliferation and eventual redirection. While Heine was dining at the Crown Inn in Klausthal, a young traveling salesman accosted him with a request for news from Göttingen. As the poet reports, he reluctantly obliged:

A decree had been recently published there by the academical Senate, forbidding any one, under penalty of three dollars, to dock puppies' tails [*die Schwänze abzuschneiden*]—because during the dog-days, mad dogs invariably ran with their tails between their legs, thus giving a warning indication of hydrophobia, which could not be perceived were the caudal appendage absent. (1855a, 29)

Aside from their references to the cutting off of dog tails, this passage and that concerning Dieffenbach appear to have nothing in common. Yet upon closer examination of the context of both passages, other shared—and preeminently Jewish—associations emerge.

Right after recounting his first sighting of Börne, Heine describes how, more than a decade later, while traveling to Munich in 1827 to assume the co-editorship of a new journal, the *New General Political Annals*, he made a side trip to Frankfurt for the sole purpose of finally making the personal acquaintance of the critic. Most of the account of the three days they spent together is devoted to the guided tour of Jewish Frankfurt that the elder native provided his visitor. Along the way, Heine also has Börne voice his observations and opinions on the local Jewish population—from “old Rothschild” (1840, 18) to “the dirty bearded Jews who came out of their Polish cloaca” (22)—as well as on Jewish customs, Semitic histories, and conversions to Christianity.

The Harz Journey, though published before this meeting, opens with an epigraph from Börne, one devoid of any explicit Jewish reference.⁴ Heine’s discussion of the dogs of Göttingen in Klausthal, however, emerges in the one section of his travelogue that is thick with associations to matters Jewish.⁵ Upon entering the village, Heine encounters a group of children who have just left their school. One of them shows the visitor “the Royal Hanoverian Catechism, from which they were questioned on

Christianity” (1855a, 27). Heine notices that the catechism has the multiplication tables printed on its last page, the presence of which, he muses, might lead their young minds “to the most sinful skepticism.” The last word that he passes on the matter before entering the Crown for his informative dinner makes a clear allusion to the Jews—those calculation-savvy objects of Christian proselytism: “We Prussians are more intelligent and, in our zeal for converting those people who get on so well with counting, take good care not to print the multiplication table behind the catechism” (27).

Immediately after his dinner at the Crown Heine visits the local mint and observes how money is made. He playfully jokes that making money is a skill that he has never mastered. Even were it to rain dollars from heaven, it would be to no avail. This “silver manna” would knock holes in his head, whereas “the children of Israel would merrily gather [them] up” (1855a, 29). He then apostrophizes, with a mix of comic reverence and mock parental pride, one of these so-called other children of Israel, the “newborn, shining dollars.” Drawing on the figuration of monetary production as unnatural reproduction that goes back to Aristotle and Aquinas, Heine concludes his prophecy of the ambivalent path (“what a cause wilt thou be of good and of evil”) that this newly begotten coin will travel: “thou wilt be gathered again unto thine own, in the bosom of . . . Abraham, [who] will melt thee down and purify thee, and form thee into a new and better being” (31).⁶

As noted, these two evocations of *Judentum* frame Heine’s encounter with the traveling salesman. Although the unfortunate young man is not referred to as a Jew, Heine’s characterization strongly suggests that he is Jewish. Like the Jewish used-clothes peddlers who traveled Germany’s backroads of the time, he is “wearing twenty-five variegated waistcoats, and as many gold seals, rings, breastpins, etc.” (1855a, 29). He then is said not only to look like an ape—an animal often employed to caricature Jews—but also to be distinguished by imitation. Incapable of true creativity, simians merely copy what they see and hear without awareness of the original’s proper meaning. So Heine comments that the young salesman knew by heart a slew of riddles and anecdotes, “which he continually repeated in the most inappropriate places.” Further like the stereotypi-

cal Jewish *parvenu* ridiculed in the infamous antisemitic farce, *Our Gang (Unser Verkehr)*, that had been performed on German stages just years earlier, the young salesman, Heine deduces, must have dressed himself, having “resolved within himself that clothes make the man” (29).

There is one more possible Jewish allusion when Heine comments that the young man’s conversation “ran on in such an outrageous strain of noise and vanity [*entsetzlich schwadroniert*] that [Heine’s] milk was soured” (1855a, 29). Responsibility for spoiling milk before the identification of bacterial action was ascribed not only to the “dog days of summer” that Heine would soon invoke with his news from Göttingen, but especially to groups often associated with Jews: those with a ghastly [*entsetzlich*] countenance and those accused of witchcraft. Heine is implicitly analogizing this noisy interruption with a thunderclap characteristic of summer storms that loudly discombobulates the hearer and also is said to sour milk. Yet even the allusion to storms carries a possible Jewish association. When Heine returns to the Crown to sleep after his visit to the surrounding silver mines, mint, and refinery, he notices in the inn’s registry “the honored autograph of Adalbart von Chamisso, the biographer of the immortal ‘Schlemihi.’” The landlord then informs him that “the gentleman had arrived during one terrible storm and departed in another” (41).

The work to which Heine refers, with which Freud without a doubt would have been familiar, is Chamisso’s popular romantic novella “The Amazing Story of Peter Schlemihi” (1814).⁷ Chamisso, no less than Heine or Freud, knew the Jewish derivation of his eponymous protagonist’s surname. In the first and every subsequent edition of his psychoanalytic study, “The Double” (1914), Otto Rank includes in a footnote an excerpt from Chamisso’s letter to his brother Hippolyt in which he informs his sibling that “Schlemihi—or better, Schlemiel—is a Hebrew name.” Chamisso expatiates on the “proverbial” Schlemihi character-type: “A schlemiehl breaks off a finger in his vest-pocket, falls on his back, and breaks his nasal bone and always shows up where he is not wanted” (Rank 1914, 143–44). He sounds rather like the vest-wearing traveling salesman who interrupted Heine’s dinner and spoiled his milk and his mood. Chamisso adds that there is even a story of the ever-unfortunate

Schlemihl in the Talmud. In the same note, Rank discusses Heine’s reworking of that Talmudic story in his poem “Jehuda ben Halevy,” where the poet had ironically remarked:

What the word Schlemihl denotes is
Known to us. Long since, Chamisso
Saw to it that it got German
Civil rights—I mean the *word* did. (Heine 1851, 126)

Freud’s conflation of these two tales of lost tails may have been further mediated by a third depiction of, as it were, canine castration. That other image—both verbally described and pictorially illustrated—occurs in the aphorist and physicist Georg Christoph Lichtenberg’s “Fragment on Tails” (1783), a bitingly funny parody of Johann Caspar Lavater’s *Physiognomic Fragments* (1775–78). Lichtenberg’s brief work moves from the cut-off tail of a sow—the Jewish character of which observers can “smell, with your eyes, as if you had a nose in them” (1783, 111)—to the pigtails [*Zöpfe*] of young knaves, with ready allusions to their phallic character.⁸ In between, Lichtenberg undertakes a physiognomic contrast between the tail of the *Judensau* and the manly tail of an English hound, specifically of Caesar, Henry VIII’s guard dog.⁹

Freud had been a great enthusiast of Lichtenberg since his days in Gymnasium. Writing on January 30, 1875 to his friend Eduard Silberstein, Freud speaks of his “great pleasure” in reading Lichtenberg (Boehlich 1990, 87), and in another letter on December 6, 1874 Freud copies out “the famous list of ‘implements offered for auction at the home of a collector’” (73–76). His delight in the German polymath did not end with his school days. In *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), Freud draws almost as many exemplary witticisms from Lichtenberg as he does from Heine. On one occasion Freud yokes the two together to exemplify how “negative particles make very neat allusions possible at the cost of a slight alterations” (77). Freud first quotes without commentary Heine’s “my fellow unbeliever Spinoza,” and then immediately continues with Lichtenberg’s “We, by the *ungrace* of God, day-laborers, serfs, negroes, vilenefs. . . ,” to which Freud then appends “is how Lichtenberg begins a manifesto (which he carries no further) made by these

unfortunates—who certainly have more right to this title than kings and princes have to its unmodified form.”

As Freud parenthetically admits—though his addition of an ellipsis would seem to gainsay—that *bon mot* is all that Lichtenberg wrote before moving on to the next in what he described as a series of “witty and comical expressions and collations” (1793–99, 102). Consequently, Freud’s citation conveys the impression that Lichtenberg had included others who also lacked divine grace, perhaps including Spinoza’s (or Heine’s or Freud’s) ethnic and religious comrades. Moreover, the ensuing exegesis, grammatically and syntactically specific to the Lichtenberg passage, is Freud’s alone. Lichtenberg’s own text contains no overarching thematic, aside from the “witty and comical,” and certainly no suggestion of the opening of a mock manifesto.

Freud, uncharacteristically, does not provide references for either of these two witticisms. A funny thing becomes apparent, however, once one has tracked down the source of Heine’s witticism to his travel narrative, “The North Sea, Part III,” in the second volume of *Pictures of Travel* (1855b), published the year after *The Harz Journey*. Heine’s clever epithet is embedded in a rather long sentence that reads: “These people [i.e., minor royalties—who no longer rule but still assume their customary privilege and support] have of late suffered great injustice, inasmuch as they have been robbed of a sovereignty, to which they had as good right as the greater princes, unless one, like my fellow unbeliever Spinoza, were to assume that that which cannot maintain itself by its own power, has no right to exist” (156). Freud’s speculative exegesis of Lichtenberg has obviously been influenced by Heine’s own reflections, which allude to Spinoza’s (1670, 100) denial of Jewish divine election in the absence of their own state. It should be noted, however, that in subsequent editions of his *Pictures of Travel* Heine clipped from his commentary on the newly disenfranchised nobility the quip about Spinoza that would catch Freud’s eye (Goetschel 2004, 318n1, 321n26).

Listening to Freud

After this extended mapping of Jewish associations to Freud’s slip, one may wonder whether sublimation has itself

been sublimated. One thread that allows us to weave sublimation back in passes through Heine’s witticism about Spinoza. Freud explicitly refers to Spinoza only one other time in the *Standard Edition*: in *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood* (1910). Rather than accepting the common identification of Leonardo with the polymorphously perverse figure of Faust, Freud finds Leonardo’s “insatiable and indefatigable thirst for knowledge” to be more like “Spinoza’s mode of thinking” (75). The context of Freud’s characterization—he cites in the original Italian one of Leonardo’s admiring biographers, E. Solmi, that “a transfiguration of natural science into a sort of religious emotion is one of the characteristic features of Leonardo’s manuscripts”—suggests that Freud is referring to the Spinozan intellectual love of God that was celebrated by two other omnivores—Goethe and Heine. This conversion of loving into investigating becomes, after he describes other moments in Leonardo’s artistic and social development, identified as sublimation of the sexual drive. Freud then opens his first extensive discussion of art, science, and other knowledge-producing acts as instances of sublimated instinct (80).¹⁰

In *Leonardo* as in most subsequent discussions, Freud ties sublimation to “the scopophilic instinct” (1910, 132); however, when the term *Sublimierung* first emerges in Freud’s extant writings, he describes a scene of hearing—indeed, overhearing. Moreover, in contrast to the later instantiations, facts rather than instincts are what are sublimated. Finally, the products of these sublimations are characterized as fantasies rather than as works of art. Thus, in a May 2, 1897 letter to Fliess, Freud builds upon a communication of April 6 about how children “understand only subsequently” and generate “hysterical fantasies” out of things that they “overhear at an earlier age” (Masson 1985, 234) in order to argue: “The fantasies stem from things that have been *heard* but understood *subsequently* [*nachträglich*], and all their material is of course genuine. They are protective structures, sublimations of the facts, embellishments of them, and at the same time serve for self-relief” (239).

Under the rubric “Architecture of Hysteria” in the theoretical supplement known as “Draft L” that accompanied the letter, Freud reiterates, albeit with some qualifications, his view that hysterical fantasy “thus combines things experienced and heard,

past events, and things that have been seen by oneself" (Masson 1985, 240). He then contrasts these fantasies, which catalyze auditory data, with the predominantly visual modality of dreams.

In order to demonstrate a possible additional correlation between Freud's theorization of sublimation and his entanglement with *Judentum*, I wish to focus on two aspects of Freud's initial use of this term and concept. First, the objects subjected to sublimation are principally things heard. Although Freud acknowledged that data from all of the senses can constitute sources of trauma, he is usually thought to have emphasized visual encounters—whether actual, reconstructed, or imagined (Benson 1994). Two pivotal scenes in Freudian theories of development have been represented in terms of sight: the primal scene, in which the infant witnesses parental intercourse without understanding it, and the narcissistic crisis that comes with the recognition of (the possibility of) castration. The preoccupation of both Freud and his interpreters with the ocular has tended to occlude the auditory dimension of castration anxieties and fantasies generated by circumcision. In his first published references to circumcision, in the famous footnote on the origin of antisemitism and misogyny in the case of Little Hans (1909, 36), and in a footnote about dismembered son-gods in *Totem and Taboo* (1913, 153), Freud quite clearly states that Gentile knowledge about circumcision arises first from hearing about it and not from observing little Jewish *schmucks*.

The second aspect of the initial discussion of sublimation is that the product of this psychic process is a fantasy. In his metapsychological paper, "The Unconscious," Freud situates fantasies in his first topographical model of the psyche:

On the one hand, they are highly organized, free from self-contradiction, have made use of every acquisition of the system Cs. and would hardly be distinguished in our judgment from the formations of that system. On the other hand they are unconscious and are incapable of becoming conscious. Thus *qualitatively* they belong to the system Pcs., but *factually* to the Ucs. (1915, 190–91; italics in original)

He supplements this technical description of the origin of fantasies with a startling image that, although written during a period, from 1905 to 1915, when Freud’s published work eschewed any formulation that might associate psychoanalysis with *Judentum*, reproduced the anxieties of many *Ostjuden*—that is, East European Jews—like himself, who had made their way into the educated Viennese middle class:

Their origin is what decides their fate. We may compare them with individuals of mixed race who, taken all around, resemble white men, but who betray their colored descent by some striking feature or other, and on that account are excluded from society and enjoy none of the privileges of white people. (191)

In this instance, the original goal of sublimation—what Freud describes to Fliess as the erection by means of fantasy of a “psychic facade . . . in order to bar access to these memories” (Masson 1985, 240)—has failed with a most unfortunate consequence. Neither mimetic disguise nor the appropriation of education or *Bildung*, those successful sublimations that constitute German culture, will ultimately prevent the disclosure of some telltale sign of *Judentum*.

The notion of sublimation may have appeared to provide psychoanalysis with an entry into reputable and respectable European culture. But did it? Would its Jewish origin decide its fate? Such were the questions that the *Anschluss* posed in 1938 to Freud, who finally managed to escape to London and complete *Moses and Monotheism*. In what is often called his “last testament,” he proffers a genealogy of intellectuality or *Geistigkeit* that many current analysts identify with sublimation. Rather than being obscured, the Jewish source of sublimation is here placed in the foreground as both the distinctive mark and enduring contribution to humanity of *Judentum*. Yet is intellectuality, that avatar of sublimation, no less a “facade” meant to screen recognition of the true source of the odium that threatened the survival not only of psychoanalysis but of *Judentum* as well? Elsewhere (2007; 2008) I have argued that *Geistigkeit* functions as a fetish by which Freud disavowed the fundamental threat to European narcissism posed by the persistent presence of *Judentum* as medi-

ated by circumcision. The genealogy of sublimation that I have reconstructed here suggests that psychoanalysis is not, as Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1991) would have it, the sublimation of the *Geist*, the spirit, of *Judentum*, but rather that psychoanalysis, which Freud founded upon the “bedrock” of (the transference fantasy of) castration, may well be, in large measure, a consequence of the attempted sublimation of the assumed fact that, as Freud says in Little Hans, “little boys hear . . . a Jew has something cut off his penis—a piece of his penis, they think” (1909, 36). Still, my genealogical exercise remains agnostic on motivation. It remains an open question whether Freud, who often invoked but neither sufficiently nor conclusively theorized sublimation (Loewald 1988), attempted thereby either to redirect or to work through the relationship to his own Jewish identity. But it is beyond dispute that texts and terms associated with *Judentum* permeated the discourse with which Freud generated his accounts of sublimation.

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Notes

1. Perhaps the most notorious expression of this attitude was offered in 1934 by Carl Jung: “In my opinion it has been a grave error in medical psychology up till now to apply Jewish categories—which are not even binding on all Jews—indiscriminately to Germanic and Slavic Christendom. Because of this the most precious secret of the Germanic peoples—their creative and intuitive depth of soul—has been explained as a morass of banal infantilism, while my own warning voice has for decades been suspected of anti-Semitism. This suspicion emanated from Freud” (1934, 166).
2. Although in the first third of the twentieth century circumcision was only about as likely as not for eight-day-old, registered Viennese male Jews—after 1871 it was no longer required for registration—the assumption of circumcision remained inseparable from Jewish male identity, whether or not it had been ritually performed. Hence, in Freud’s time, circumcision became, to employ Bruno Latour’s terminology (1991, 51–55), a “quasi-object” and functioned as a knowledge-producing, identity-authorizing discursive apparatus that connected biblical citations, stories, images, fantasies, laws, kosher slaughterers (mohels were also referred to as *Schochets*), ethnographic studies, medical diagnoses, and ritual practices, among other deposits in that noisome landfill called Europe in order to construct *Judentum*. Freud’s preferred term condenses three referents often kept distinct in English—Jewry (people), Jewishness (character and custom), and Judaism (religious practice and belief).
3. Heine’s memorial essay to the Frankfurt-based Börne appeared during the same summer (1840) as Heine’s only Jewish novella, the fragmentary *Rabbi of Bacharach*,

with its unromantic narrative of his eponymous protagonist’s arrival in medieval Frankfurt’s Jewish ghetto. It is hardly accidental that Heine would repeat Börne’s comment on the Judengasse: “Look at this alley and then praise me the Middle Ages! The people who lived and wept here are dead and cannot protest when our crazy poets and still crazier historians, when fools and knaves print their raptures about the old glory; but where the dead people are silent, the living stones speak all the more loudly” (Heine 1840, 13). In his translator’s introduction, Jeffrey Sammons (2006, xxxiii–xxxiv) leaves it open whether or not Heine was ventriloquizing Börne’s commentary.

4. But are there echoes of Rachel Levin Varnhagen’s March 22, 1795 letter to David Veit in which she described how the command “Be a Jewess” was inscribed at birth on her heart with a knife by a supernatural being (qtd. in Arendt 1957, 88)? She wrote to Veit that, as a consequence of this neonatal cutting, her “whole life is a bleeding [*Verblutung*] to death,” a sentiment closely akin to Heine’s epigraph from Börne: “Every pulsation of the heart inflicts a wound, and life would be an endless bleeding [*Verblutung*], were it not for Poetry. She secures for us what Nature would deny” (Heine 1855a, 3). Heine had been a constant and indulged attendee at the Varnhagen Berlin salons during the years prior to writing his *Harz Journey*. While Börne and Varnhagen’s personal contacts seem to have been much less frequent, they did maintain a correspondence in which the latter identified the former as her soulmate.
5. There is only one explicit mention of Jews in the published version of *The Harz Journey*. Not surprisingly, the comment is made by a Frankfurt-am-Main merchant with whom Heine shares a room at an inn on the Brocken; this gentleman “spoke at once of the Jews, declared that they had lost all feeling for the beautiful and the noble, and that they sold English goods twenty-five percent under manufacturer’s prices” (1855a, 113).
6. I have no reason to assume that Heine was familiar with the midrash in *Genesis Rabba* 48 where Abraham sits at the gate of Gehenna to save the circumcised, although he would have encountered this story in Eisenmenger’s *Judaism Unmasked* (1711, 2:49), a copy of which he sought in 1853. In German, the term for counterfeiting coins by clipping off some of their value is *Beschneidung* or circumcision. Nevertheless, there is the traditional, usually defamatory, association of Jews and money.
7. Freud’s only explicit reference to Chamisso in the *Standard Edition* occurs in the opening essay of *Moses and Monotheism*. To support his speculation that Moses was an Egyptian, Freud first draws upon the probable Egyptian derivation of the name Moses and then invokes, among others, the French-sounding surname of the German poet Chamisso, “who was French by birth” (1939, 9), to illustrate the frequent correlation between name origin and ethnic identity. Curiously, in “The ‘Uncanny’” (1919) Freud makes no mention of either Chamisso or his story of the man who sold his shadow to the devil, Peter Schlemihl, although Chamisso’s name does appear twice among the many examples in the lengthy entry for “heimlich” from Sanders’s 1860 *Dictionary of the German Language* that Freud embedded in his essay. One of the Chamisso citations is from “Peter Schlemihl”; however, the dictionary lists only the volume and page number from Chamisso’s collected works. One of Freud’s primary sources on the uncanny was Rank’s “The Double” (1914), which had likewise been published in *Imago* five years earlier. Freud elaborates Rank’s discussion of the double in terms of the denial of death and the ego’s insurance against destruction. Rank employs Chamisso’s work to exemplify this claim in his original article.
8. During Heine’s tour of Jewish Frankfurt with Börne, the narrator observes, “The beard does not make the Jew nor the *Zopf* the Christian” (Heine 1840, 10). With this coupling the ironic poet recognized the disjunction between both character and ascribed identity, on the one hand, and stereotypical physical signifiers of identity, on the other.
9. The *Judensau* or Jew Sow was a medieval antisemitic icon that adorned numerous churches in German lands. It was likewise displayed on the tower, demolished in

- 1801, that rose on the bridge that crossed the Main River to Frankfurt's principal harborside gateway. The painting of the tower not only drew the attention of such noted travel writers as Goethe, but thanks to its reproduction in Johann Jakob Schudt's popular compendium *Jewish Curiosities* (1714), it became perhaps the most frequently disseminated depiction of the Jew Sow (see Shachar 1974, 35–37, 52–61).
10. Strikingly, this discussion of Spinoza and sublimation is soon joined by Freud's last significant reconsideration of the nature of fetishism prior to his 1927 essay on the topic, and it is in this connection that Freud begins to theorize the relations between the castration complex and fetishism as exemplified by, among others, the braid-cutter (*Zopfabschneider*) (1910, 96).

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