

anti-Semitism:

- 1) Anti-Semitism is increasing independent of the action of Israel.
- 2) Israel's violent behavior and occupation of Palestinian territories is the catalyst for anger toward Israel, and there is not an increase in anti-Semitism.
- 3) Anti-Israel sentiment is a disguise for anti-Semitism.

In my opinion, all three groups are both right and wrong. This situation reminds me of the story of the four blind men who were touching an elephant and trying to explain what the elephant looked like. All were right yet wrong as they felt only part of the elephant and not the whole animal, because that's what they perceived. The "whole elephant" must include the suffering of tortured Palestinians in Gaza and West Bank, which should remind the world of the Jews' similar past experiences and agonies.

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"A State within a State": Freud's Disavowal of Anti-Semitism

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Freud undertook his most significant discussion of

the different sources of anti-Semitism in his last completed work, *Moses and Monotheism*. This subject concludes the "Application" chapter in the third essay, in which Freud took the analogical model that he employed in his genetic speculations on the history of the Jewish religion—the temporal schema of trauma (early trauma, defense, latency, outbreak of the neurosis, partial return of the repressed material)—and applied it to the entire history of religion. That genealogical account culminated in the triumph of Christianity and its "true, if rightly interpreted" assertion that the Jews were a "decidial people. Freud then proceeds to suggest other possible reasons—necessarily so, given its "intensity and lasting strength"—for "the popular hatred of Jews" (*Standard Edition* 23:89-90). He begins with the frequently fallacious reproach that the Jews are foreigners and thus subjected to the animosity of a gentile majority toward a Jewish minority in order to maintain social cohesion. Then two other reasons that arise out of the Jews' particular historical happenstances are proffered: what Freud elsewhere called the "narcissism of minor differences" (*S.E.* 21:114)—in part to refute the accusation that the Jews are extremely or even wholly other than their "hosts"—and the irritation generated by the defiant survival of Jewry in the face of continuous oppression and persecution. Freud then elaborates several "deeper motives."

The first he finds is the jealousy of the younger sibling toward the older, favored child (as if accepting Jewish claims for chosenness). He then restates a version of his first and perhaps most well known theory: the castration anxiety that is here mnemonically triggered by circumcision. In *Moses*, Freud refers to a "portion [Stick] of the primaeval Jew's] penis" (*S.E.* 10:36n1). His final explanation draws upon the mechanism of projection: the resentment generated by the moral demands of Christianity is projected upon their original source in the Jewish religion. "The hatred for Juda-

ism [Judenhaß] is at bottom hatred for Christianity [Christenhaß]" (S.E. 23:92).

What is perhaps most startling about Freud's application of social psychological and psychoanalytic theories to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism is that he is not employing the new genetic model of trauma that he describes in the preceding "Analogy" chapter. There Freud discusses "the splitting of the ego," a restructuring of both his metapsychology and his theory of the genesis of psychopathology, that he presaged in his 1927 "Fetishism" essay and would begin to further develop in two of his last and never completed works: *The Outline of Psychoanalysis* and the essay "The Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence." In *Moses*, Freud describes a split in the ego that is created by a trauma: his primary example is the primal and paradigmatic trauma of (the threat of) castration. Freud theorized a piece of the psyche (other than either the id or the superego) that emerges with the traumatic encounter and remains coexistent with but inaccessible to the ego (that itself developed out of the reworking and integrating of the other earlier experiences). In contrast to the reality-responsive ego, this psychic fellow traveler obeys the paradoxical logic of reality disavowal and, when possible, substitutes a representation for that disavowed reality. There is neither a compromise nor dialectical relationship between these attitudes, but instead a supplemental one. The products of the latter piece of psyche are acted out, even if resisted, by the former. There are symptoms, restrictions on where the *Ich* will go (barriers against the incorporation of certain memories), and changes in an individual's personality, all of which are independent of our normal everyday, psychic processes by which we adapt ourselves to the demands of the world and of rational thought. Freud writes,

They exhibit a far-reaching independence [and] are insufficiently or not at all influenced by external reality...or its psychological representatives, so that they

may easily come into active opposition to both of them. They are, one might say [*gleichsam*], a State *within a State*...which may succeed in overcoming what is known as the normal party and forcing it into its service. If this happens...the path to a psychosis lies open (S.E. 23:76, emphasis added).

Here Freud has analogically characterized neurotic phenomena by one of the foremost anti-Semitic accusations (one initially coined about women by Montesquieu in his *Persian Letters*), namely that the Jews constitute a "State within a State." By implicitly connecting the Jew with the splitting process, Freud has perhaps shed additional light on his own solutions or non-solutions to the problems of anti-Semitism and of the persistence of the Jews. He has employed a social metaphor to describe an individual process that he will then apply to a social phenomenon. Readers are caught here in a series of perspective shifts. On the one hand, Freud describes actual phenomena (that is, the changes in the neurotic's psyche), and then he intimates ("one might say") the fantasy associated with such phenomena: the Jews are not a state within a state, but are represented as such. Moreover, it is not the split-off part that compels the compulsive behavior as it is the defense against the fantasy of Jewish *Zwang*. So Freud represents the psychic structure as *gleichsam* in relation to a phenomenon that is itself a *gleichsam* phenomenon, and this errant and inexact choice make this choice of example all the more interesting.

By making reference to the "State within a State" Freud suggests an extrapolation of splitting phenomena onto the collective level, such that relations between groups may be potentially psychotic (and therefore returns to the problem that, as I argued in *On Freud's Jewish Body* [2007], was already a primary concern in his much earlier *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*). In the case of the Jewish people, circumcision, the custom that keeps the Jews "apart from the foreign

peoples among whom their wanderings would lead them" (S.E. 23:30) is the foremost source for generating such a state of affairs. The reason is not just, as Freud argues, because circumcision is a "symbolic substitute" of castration (S.E. 23: 91) and thus motivates Christianity's efforts at disavowal; rather both circumcision and the circumcised embody the disavowal because circumcision is apotropaic. Circumcision both asserts the possibility of castration—the foreskin has been removed—and yet denies it—the *glans* is prominent as in an erection. Consequently, while Freud identifies *Judentum* with the advance in *Geistigkeit* (intellectuality) over sensuality and which therefore is identified with the law of paternity (cf. S.E. 23:114, 118) over and against maternity's dependence upon the senses, its paradigmatic sign places that "juridical revolution" (S.E. 23:114, cf. 83) in question.

Circumcision calls forth the castration complex, which is the crux of sexual difference. Yet even as circumcision asserts the truth of the threat of castration, it disavows it—the circumcised Jew seems to question sexual difference. The "circumcised" Jew, who like the castrated (phallic) woman is a "State within a State" threatening the "normal party" (S.E. 23:76), sets up a chain of disavowals that threaten the disavowal upon which the Central European bourgeois society of Freud's time was founded: that of the necessity of woman (and others) for individual (male) development and social cohesion. Where the series of motives for anti-Semitism that Freud explicitly delineates in *Moses* find their source in earlier psychoanalytic theory that are based in error or illusion and generate neurotic response, his new theory of splitting would find the basis of anti-Semitism in delusion and would result in a psychotic response. Perhaps Freud feared—and as subsequent events almost proved out—that to apply the analogy of the response to trauma as disavowal rather than as deferred action, the source of the fourth of his

theories of anti-Semitism, the remarkable survival of the Jews, would be rendered moot.

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Judeophilia and Ambivalence

The Appeal of Orthodox Judaism

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The Talmud teaches that when God gave the torah at Mt. Sinai, a covenant was made with all Jews—those standing there and those yet to come, because all Jewish souls were present at this moment of revelation (*Shavot*, 39a). Included among those gathered were the souls of people who would be born in a convert's body. Thus, when converts turn to Judaism, they are only becoming who they truly are—children of Abraham and Sarah, coming home after Sinai. The Sinai covenant, to guard the torah, was the agreement between God and Israel, and remains the key for conversion in the orthodox world today. Those who become Jews agree