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Preface

Like Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, I am a physician. I chose to pursue my interests in psychoanalysis after having first established a career as both a pulmonologist and pathologist at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), where I continue to practice in all of these areas. I trained in Freudian psychoanalytical psychotherapy at the Boston Institute of Psychotherapies and at the MGH, and served in the MGH Psychopharmacology Clinic where I gained a firm footing in biological psychiatry. I subsequently trained at the C. G. Jung Institute in Boston and received my diploma as a Jungian analyst.

However, I found myself often at odds with my Jungian colleagues. Some had little or no background in clinical psychology or psychiatry, and had received a classical Jungian training in Zurich. Their mode of analysis was focused on dream interpretation and active imagination, which, although fascinating, was in my opinion questionably effective in dealing with the neurotic problems of many patients. Many of my Jungian colleagues expressed little interest in developmental psychopathology, and there appeared to be few mutually agreed upon rules concerning how to conduct the treatment of patients, and a notable resistance towards instituting any.

This was antithetical to my Freudian training. If anything, I had found my Freudian colleagues overly focused on maintaining boundaries and on the analysis of Oedipal issues. Their approach to patients at times seemed formulaic and constrained. I began to suspect that the differences between my Freudian and Jungian approaches had identifiable roots in the tenets of Judaism and Christianity.

I was born into a family of first-generation American Jews and raised in a secular home, but one with strong ties to observant Judaism. My parents were not strictly kosher, although my mother only purchased meat from a kosher butcher, and the idea of mixing meat with dairy at the dinner table was anathema. Unleavened foodstuff (*chametz*) was

inadmissible to our house during Passover, yet we celebrated no family Seder. The major religious holidays of Sukkot and Shavuot were ignored, yet our home assumed an aura of scrupulous religiosity during the High Holy Days. We did not observe the Sabbath. In retrospect, I cannot explain why certain tenets of Judaism were firmly held while others were ignored by my family, except to say that the desire to assimilate into American culture and the atrocities of World War II had left traditional Judaism in disarray and in search of new directions.

I was educated in the Conservative synagogue, and taught to read Hebrew, but with little understanding of what I was reading. Like many of my peers, I did not adhere to my religion after my Bar Mitzvah, but neither did I abandon it. When my mother died in 1983, I began to say *kaddish*, the traditional prayer for the dead, and attended the synagogue service twice each day for eleven months. I read voraciously about Judaism but frankly found its legalisms arid. When I asked my teacher, Rev. Michael Domba, a survivor of the Holocaust who had been a student at the Slobodka yeshiva in Lithuania before the war, whether it would be possible to study the Kabbalah, the mystical writings and practices of Judaism, his answer was that it was an area best avoided. I was curious about his reply, and as to why Judaism needed to be limited to Talmudic study and ritual observance.

According to family lore, we were related to the Gaon of Vilna, the great Lithuanian scholar who had opposed the burgeoning Hasidic movement in the eighteenth century. As a physician and medical scientist, I had little inclination to associate with a sect whose members dressed like they were still living in the eighteenth century and who lived in a "world apart" from others. However, one day I decided to attend a Sabbath service at a local branch of Chabad, a Hasidic sect that welcomes Jews of all levels of observance. It was there that I found the spiritual underpinnings of Judaism that I had been searching for.

In order to explore the religious roots of psychoanalysis, I attended Harvard University and graduated with a master's degree in religion. My thesis explored Jesus' healing practices in the New Testament. I subsequently attended the Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts, where I studied the Kabbalah and Hasidic thought,

writing a master's thesis on the influence of Jewish mysticism on psychoanalysis. Through my journeys into psychoanalysis and religion, I have become convinced that Freudian analysis is in many respects a secular reworking of the tenets of Rabbinic Judaism, with Jungian analysis comparably indebted to Christianity. The present text is an effort to elucidate this thesis.

Introduction

Revolutions are a resolute and conscious attempt . . . to break with the past

—**Alexis de Tocqueville**

In the early twentieth century, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung developed two distinct theories of psychoanalysis based on their differing conceptions of the unconscious mind. Their schools of psychoanalysis remain active today, although they have witnessed substantial modifications. As secular psychological approaches, neither is based directly on religious tradition. Freud specifically rejected any link between psychoanalysis and religion, whereas Jung viewed his mode of analytical psychology as within the tradition of ancient religious healing practices.

The history of ideas includes an examination of conceptual borrowings. Secular thought did not spring de novo from the enlightened mind; instead, it emerged out of two millennia of religious tradition in the West. It would be naive to presume that this lengthy heritage has not contributed to how modern minds see the world. This is particularly evident in the field of psychology, where values and modes of thought can be traced back to once-prevalent religious ideas.

The discovery of the unconscious (Ellenberger 1970) has in fact been a process, not an event. It has been nothing less than the slow unfolding of ideas, some of which have gained the light of day only to sink back again into a barely perceptible darkness. As will be discussed below, the Judeo-Christian ethic continues to inform our modern conceptions, and often without our awareness. This extends to the

modes of psychoanalysis developed by Freud and Jung, whose debt to religious ideas has never been fully acknowledged.

Scholars have referred to the partitioning of Judaism and Christianity as the "parting of the ways" (Boyarin 2006). This was a process that took place over centuries, and was determined by mutual positive and negative influences, which tended to polarize the positions of the rival religions. It will be demonstrated here that a comparable process has sculpted, and in many respects also distorted, the positions taken by Freud and Jung. Following their final rift in 1912, Freud's writings were for a brief time aimed at refuting Jung's unorthodox ideas concerning the psyche. Jung, in turn, continued to take exception to Freud's notions concerning the unconscious, and he abandoned the domain of personal psychology in order to focus on the collective features of the psyche. While there are indications that each man kept abreast of the other's work, in their later years they rarely referred to each other. This has been the legacy for their intellectual heirs, as well. Unfortunately, such purposeful neglect has tended to limit the scope of their respective approaches.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Secular thought tends to obscure dependence on religious ideas by clothing them in the language of scientific empiricism. In order to discern the religious motifs that inform secular thought, this veil must be penetrated. Claims that new ideas arise de novo must be dismissed as incorrect, as they emerge necessarily from older ones, and continue to carry the latter's indelible impressions. According to the philosopher Amos Funkenstein:

> The "new" often consists not in the invention of categories or figures of thought, but rather in a surprising employment of existing ones. Of the variety of ways in which a new theory can be said to have been prepared by an older one, two ideal modes are particularly pertinent . . . the dialectical anticipation of a new theory by an older, even adverse one . . . and the transplantation of existing categories to a new domain. (Funkenstein 1986, 14)

This conclusion applies also to the debt that psychoanalysis owes religion. But identifying the religious underpinnings of psychoanalysis is complicated by a paucity of direct acknowledgements of the latter's borrowings, especially in Freud's writings, which convey a distinctly negative attitude towards religion. However, as will be demonstrated, this belies Freud's reliance on religious ideas, so that one must look carefully past Freud's manifest narratives in order to identify the latent motifs of religion. For Freud, religion, and specifically Judaism, is the unconscious element that must be defended against, yet manifests in much of his thought.

CURE OF THE SOUL

Until relatively recent times, religious practice was the dominant mode of countering psychological disturbances. The religious "cure of the soul" was the dominant mode of psychotherapy. Carl Jung acknowledged the therapeutic role of religion as follows:

> What are religions? Religions are psychotherapeutic systems. What are we doing, we psychotherapists? We are trying to heal the suffering of the human mind, of the human psyche or the human soul, and religions deal with the same problem. Therefore, our Lord is a healer; he is a doctor. He heals the sick and he deals with the trouble of the soul, and that is exactly what we call psychotherapy. (*Collected Works*, vol. 18, para. 181)

In his *Eight Chapters* (*Pirke Shemoneh*) the twelfth-century Jewish scholar and physician Maimonides (R. Moshe ben Maimon) (Figure 1) outlines how psychologically troubled individuals should be approached, offering prescriptions that read like modern cognitive-behavioral therapy (Bakan et al. 2009). Maimonides opines, like Aristotle, that actions are virtuous when they achieve a "middle path" between extremes. Accordingly, an individual who has become mentally unsound is encouraged to practice the extreme opposite of his undesirable behavior until the fault had been remedied. For example, if a man

Figure 1. Moses ben Maimon or Maimonides was a twelfth-century rabbinic scholar and Jewish philosopher who compiled the *Mishneh Torah* and authored *Guide of the Perplexed*. His standing as a sage is essentially unrivaled.

is a miser, he is encouraged to spend extravagantly until his niggardliness has been extinguished. Only then can he be persuaded to be generous in moderation. Maimonides' approach is active, directive, symptom-based, and highlights the importance of behavioral change in the cure of the soul.

RELIGION AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Other scholars have previously examined the influence of religion on psychoanalysis. During Freud's own lifetime, A. A. Roback argued that psychoanalysis was peculiar to the make-up of the Jewish mind (1929), a suggestion that Freud rejected.[1] The historian David Bakan opined that mystical Judaism had played a role in the development of psychoanalysis and that Freud had been a crypto-Sabbatean, i.e., a member of a messianic sect that secretly followed the banned teachings of Sabbatai Tzvi, although this claim has been rejected by most scholars (Bakan et al. 2009). The psychoanalyst Ana-Maria Rizzuto addressed Freud's ambivalent relationship to God, arguing that unresolved Oedipal issues with his father's Judaism were the primary cause of Freud's atheism (1998).

1. For detailed readings on this topic, see Lew Aron and Karen Starr, *A Psychotherapy for the People* (London: Routledge, 2013) and Stephen Frosch, *Hate and the Jewish Science* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).

The psychologist Sanford Drob has examined the role of the Kabbalah in both Freudian and Jungian analysis (2000), and more recently Karen Starr (2008) and Michael Eigen (2012) have addressed parallels between mystical Judaism and psychoanalysis. Many of these ideas are revisited in the present text. Whereas several neo-Freudian psychoanalysts, including Steven Frosh (2009) and Lew Aron and Karen Starr (2013), agree that Freud's Judaism influenced the directions of his thought, they are wary about labeling psychoanalysis a "Jewish science," as they are justifiably concerned that this might fuel anti-Semitic prejudice. Others have addressed the influence of Christianity on Jung's ideas, and in this regard the works of the Jungian analysts Edward Edinger (1976) and Murray Stein (2012) are noteworthy.

The present text demonstrates that the religious underpinnings of psychoanalysis are both more specific and extensive than have been previously entertained, and that the distinct tenets and practices of traditional Judaism and Christianity account in large measure for the differences that emerged respectively in the theories and practices of Freud and Jung.

RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Jung, a onetime disciple and colleague of Freud,[2] suggested that all aspects of human experience, including religious ones, are "psychological," and should be considered as such: "Everything to do with religion, everything it is and asserts, touches the human soul so closely that psychology least of all can afford to overlook it" (*CW* 11, para. 172). Jung's notion that religion is psychological raises few objections; however, the converse invariably raises many. This in part results from Freud's having viewed religion as steeped in superstition and

2. Many modern Jungian analysts take issue with the idea of Jung as a disciple of Freud's. They claim that Jung was already an established psychiatrist with his own theories concerning the psyche before encountering Freud. I do not tend to agree with this assessment, and it share similarities with the discomfort that early Christians had with the idea of Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist. As the Jesuit priest and scholar J. P. Meir argues in his magisterial opus *A Marginal Jew* (1991), stories in the New Testament that run counter to the dogma of the church likely reflect actual historical situations. In the same vein, there can be little doubt that Jung was a disciple of Freud's and espoused his doctrines at least for a limited time.

metaphysics, whereas psychoanalysis was, in his opinion, necessarily scientific and devoid of metaphysical underpinnings. Jung's stance on religion, to the contrary, was generally benevolent, and he agreed that religious ideas informed psychoanalysis. But neither man chose to address how their own religious beliefs influenced their theories of psychoanalysis, and this is the aim of the present text.

Whereas the Judeo-Christian ethic has contributed to modern psychotherapeutic thought, it must be acknowledged that Judaism and Christianity are complete soteriologies in their own right,[3] and they continue to compete with psychotherapy. There are large numbers of devotees of each tradition, who, as a result of the salutary effects of confession and ritual expurgation, rarely seek the assistance of a psychotherapist.[4] For them, religion is by itself a source of healing. Indeed, it may be argued that religions, when optimally practiced, may offer more opportunities for psychological healing than do modern secularized modes of psychotherapy, for reasons that will be addressed.

HEALING AND RELIGION

Healing is a rubric for a set of innate processes that antagonize the signs and symptoms of "dys-ease." The concept of healing remains ambiguous, in part, because it derives from a pre-scientific era when body and soul were still experienced as interdependent and interpenetrating. Whereas healing can be fostered by drugs, surgeries, and psychological interventions, it cannot succeed without the innate activities of the body.

Healing occurs beyond consciousness (Kradin 2011); one cannot consciously will oneself to be well. For those who profess deep religious beliefs, healing is attributed to divine intervention, whereas for the secular individual, it is credited to biological processes. However, these ideas are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as many modern theologians

3. One of the most detailed religious psychologies can be found in Theravada Buddhism, although it does not adhere to the notion of a soul. Nevertheless, it clearly has therapeutic and soteriological aims.
4. One can arrive at the same conclusion for any of the major religious systems, all of which offer modes of psychological healing together with the larger goal of salvation.

would agree that God acts through the natural laws of creation (Sacks 2011). Indeed, prominent scientists (e.g., Newton and Einstein), have historically held strong metaphysical beliefs. Nevertheless, a modern-day atheist and God-fearing religionist would likely disagree on this issue based on their distinct weltanschauungs.[5]

Healing must be distinguished from curing. "To heal," from the Old English *haelen*, means to restore to health or "to make whole." Health may be defined as a state of psychophysical well-being, in which mind and body are experienced as working harmoniously together (Kradin 2004). But words do not adequately convey the experience of wholeness. "Cure" is derived from the Latin *curare*, which means "to take care of." A second meaning refers to the treatment of flesh in order to remove undesirable elements, as, for example, in the "curing" of beef. In medical parlance, it is the latter that is most often implied, as it is possible to be "cured" of a disease yet remain in poor health.

In the realm of mental pathology and healing, it may be too optimistic to speak of health. Patients suffering from psychological ills may be cured of their symptoms (e.g., depression), without achieving enduring mental health. Indeed extensive arguments have been raised over the years as to whether symptomatic and goal-oriented cures may have advantages over efforts at reconstructing the psyche towards a state of ill-defined health.[6]

The history of healing is too extensive to rehearse here. As Guido Majno addresses in *Healing and Disease* (1975), *homo medicamentosa* is also *homo religiosus*, and virtually all religions include approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of disease (Eliade 1964). While it is easy with hindsight to dismiss ancient treatments as naive, there is little doubt that pre-scientific modes of therapy were often effective for reasons that modern science cannot explain. Historical perspective also dictates

5. Joseph Ratzinger, the former Pope Benedict XVI, in his *Introduction to Christianity*, makes the interesting argument that both religionists and atheists show an unusual interest in religion, pointing to how most atheists are not in the least impartial with respects to their strongly held antithetical beliefs in a God, and that "the Lady doth protest too much."
6. This controversy is reviewed by Aron and Starr, and the reader is encouraged to evaluate their arguments (2013).

that the currently accepted scientific approaches to disease will in some instances be in the future also be viewed as outmoded and naive.

Modern placebo-controlled clinical trials have repeatedly demonstrated that rational approaches to disease are by no means a guarantee of efficacy, whereas approaches that appear irrational can yield salutary outcomes (Kradin 2011). As the medical anthropologist Craig Moerman has suggested, the healing process includes mental structures of meaning that do not necessarily follow rational ideas (2002).

JUDAISM AND HEALING

Judaism is an ancient religious tradition that addresses ailments that afflict both mind and body (Biale 2002). The Torah (the Five Books of Moses, or Pentateuch) is the textual foundation of Judaism; however, healing plays a relatively minor role in its narratives. The Torah includes a single brief prayer by Moses in Numbers 12:13, which petitions YHWH to heal his sister Miriam of *tzaraat*. "Please God, heal her." This disorder, invariably mistranslated as "leprosy," in fact resembles no disease known to modern medicine, as it also "afflicts" articles of clothing and the walls of houses. *Tzaraat* was attributed to the sin of having spoken ill of others (*lashon ha ra*). It appears that the single example of healing in the Torah pertains to a metaphysical disorder.

Later rabbinic commentaries include numerous references to actual physical (*guf*) and mental (*nefesh*) disorders, and the modern Jewish liturgy is replete with supplications for healing. As a monotheistic religion, Judaism attributes disease and healing to divine intervention, and it was only in the apocryphal *Wisdom of Ben Sirah* (Skehan and DiLella 1995), authored in the third century BCE, that the beneficial role of the physician was first given credence.[7]

7. The *Wisdom of Ben Sirach* is frequently cited in the Talmud. It was originally authored in Hebrew and translated by the author's grandson into Greek. While apocryphal to the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible, it is included within the Greek Septuagint.

In the Hebrew Bible, the cause of disease was judged to be either sin (moral impurity), or ritual impurity left unattended (Klawans 2004). The most common Hebrew word for sin, *cheyt*, is an archery term that means "to miss the mark"—that is, a failure to observe the Law properly. Observance of the Mosaic Law with its 613 precepts—248 positive[8] and 365 negative—is the cardinal tenet of Rabbinic Judaism, and even rote observance of these precepts fulfills one's legal religious obligations, although concomitant proper intentionality in is considered optimal.

However, few individuals can consistently achieve righteous discipline in their observance, and as the intentions of others cannot be evaluated, objective action has traditionally been prioritized in Judaism, so that it is commonly viewed as a system of orthopraxy (right action) rather than orthodoxy (right belief). But the motivation to observe the Law is meritorious, as obligations, if approached with proper intention, offer frequent opportunities to sacralize the mundane world.[9] When practiced with the right attitude, rather than constituting a burden, the observance of Jewish Law can imbue meaning to personal, family, and community life. But if the Law is observed merely by rote, its rituals begin to resemble an obsessional neurosis, as Freud noted (Freud 1907).

Proverbs 9:10 states that, "The beginning of wisdom is fear of God." The Law with its commandments and proscriptions conjures notions of responsibility, culpability and punishment. While fear of God is viewed by some as an unduly harsh concept and one that is irreconcilable with a loving God, acceptance of the awesome effects of divine action is a cardinal tenet of Judaism. This is famously addressed in the dialogical arguments of the Book of Job concerning theodicy (Kradin 2014).

8. The 248 positive commandments correspond with the 248 "members" of the body. This emphasizes the requirement of the body in performing these positive commandments.
9. This text is largely based on this critical difference between Judaism and Christianity. Once again, without being properly and deeply understood, the Law quickly becomes burdensome, as it did for the early Christians and others throughout the history of Judaism.

SIN AND DISEASE

Evil is a poorly defined term that is linked conceptually with sin. One explanation within the Judeo-Christian tradition for how evil first entered the world is via Adam's original sin. Man's failure to obey the divine injunction of not eating from the Tree of Good and Bad was the first example of his failure to fear God.[10] The punishment for this disobedience included work, the pain of childbirth, and awareness of one's eventual death.

In the fourth century, the church father Augustine introduced the notion of original sin as the inherited predilection of Adam's descendants to disobey divine will. Man is born tainted by sin, according to Augustine, and lacks wholeness. But according to rabbinic interpretation, sin is not inherited, despite certain references in the Torah that suggest otherwise (e.g., Exodus 20:6), but rather attributable to man's hedonistic psychological inclination, the *yetzer*, which Freud later re-imagined as a pleasure-seeking drive in the unconscious (Rotenberg 1997). The rabbis in late antiquity postulated opposing mental impulses: one, the *yetzer ha tov*, or good impulse, attuned to the proper fulfillment of divine will; the other, the *yetzer ha ra*, or bad impulse, which seeks personal satisfaction in opposition to it. The rabbis had in fact developed a psychodynamic system, one based on contradictory impulses, and comparable to Freud's modern notion of mental conflict.

The idea of competing metaphysical forces of good and evil likely entered Jewish thought via Zoroastrianism during the Babylonian Exile of the late sixth century BCE. Adherence to a belief in radical duality has been identified by scholars within the writings of certain sects of Second Temple Judaisms. One of these sects, Christianity, viewed sin as having its origins as a metaphysical force that eternally opposes the will of God (Pagels 1995). The Gospel authors imagined Satan as the

10. Christianity takes a relatively negative view of this act and Augustine refers to it as the source of the original sin that was transmitted to all subsequent generations. Rabbinic Judaism is more ambivalent concerning the infraction. At one level, it is viewed as the first sinful behavior, on the other, its effects are recognized to have contributed to man's proper place in the world vis-à-vis knowledge and choice.

serpent in the Garden, who tempted Eve to transgress God's command not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge but failed to lure Jesus to sin while in the desert immediately following his baptism. Psychologically speaking, Satan acts effectively by introducing doubt; the Devil (from the Sanskrit *dva* meaning "double" or "dishonest") undermines man's undivided faith in God.

Ha Satan first appears in the canonical Job, where he is portrayed as a prosecutorial angel, who questions God's judgment but is obedient to God's will. Rabbinic Judaism eschewed radical duality as it undermines the ideal integrity of monotheism. The second-century rabbis were heirs to a fiercely monotheistic Deuteronomic tradition, which envisioned an unchallenged God who was responsible for all of creation, including what man might interpret from his limited perspective as a good and evil. As the Jewish prophet Isaiah (45:7) states in the name of YHWH,[11] "I form the light, and create darkness: I do the good, *and* the bad; I, YWHW, do all these things."

Yet the rabbis also embraced the idea that man was invested with free will and ultimately responsible for his choices. This idea was expressed by R. Akiva in the *Ethics of the Fathers* (*Pirke Avot*) 3:15, writing that, "All is fated, but free will is given." This idea shares features with modern deterministic chaos theory, which has been used to mathematically model complex systems, including the mind (Eigen 2013). According to chaos theory, the broad outlines of mental activity are determined, comparable to fate, yet sensitive to minor perturbations, analogous to individual choice.

The ancient Israelite religion addressed sin in a highly ritualized manner. Healing required first recognizing one's sin, confessing it to a priest, expressing genuine repentance (*t'shuva*)—which means returning to God—and then bringing an expiatory sacrifice to the Temple. As Maimonides notes in his *Mishneh Torah*, since the destruction of the Temple, confession and repentance have replaced sacrificial offerings (1990).

11. The acronym YHWH is referred to as the Tetragammaton and represents the ineffable name of God, which may be either unpointed or pointed as the word *Adonai*, which means "my Lord."

In the ancient Israelite sacrificial ritual, one discerns a parallel with the Freudian idea of "working through," in which initial cognitive awareness of motive deepens with time, until genuine change is realized. An ancient Israelite who believed that he had committed a transgression of the Law "in error" (*shogeg*), was required to bring a guilt offering in order to repent. But if upon further introspection, he recognized that what he had initially thought to be due to error had in fact been motivated by desire, then bringing a second appropriate sin offering was necessary.

The logistical confluence of the confessed sinner, the priest, the sacrifice, and God was required if the ritual was to be efficacious. During the sacrifice, man and God were imagined as drawn together in at-one-ment. One can only speculate as to whether modern psychological modes of expiation are as effective as the dramatic act of sacrificing the life of an animal in order to be cleansed of sin.

But after the Second Temple was destroyed, it was no longer possible to atone for sin through sacrifice, and alternative approaches were necessary (Neusner 1978). These had already developed following the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE, and while the Jews were in exile in Babylonia. There is a passage in an early biblical commentary, in which R. Yochanan ben Zakkai, who is credited with having instituted the earliest practices of Rabbinic Judaism in 70 CE, was asked by a student how sin would be forgiven in the absence of the Temple:

> Once as Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai was coming forth from Jerusalem, Rabbi Joshua followed him and beheld the Temple in ruins. "Woe unto us," Rabbi Joshua cried, "that this place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for is laid to waste!" "My son," Rabbi Yochanan said to him, "be not grieved. We have atonement as effective as this. And what is it? It is acts of loving-kindness, as it is said, 'For I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' [Hosea 6:6]" *Avot de Rabbi Nathan*, chapter 6 (quoted in Goldin 1990, 34)