

crucial clue to Freud's hesitation: "The dream work is ultimately indistinguishable from the interpreter's work." Such a realization of the arbitrariness of his interpretations was not acceptable to Freud, though the realization is deeply founded in Talmudic tradition. The authority of science, such as it was, was a psychic necessity for Freud.

One of the many values of Frieden's study is that it reminds us of the curious status of psychoanalysis today, at once an inescapable element in our intellectual lives, and yet also a rather literal-minded church, as it were, founded upon Freud's tropes. What Freud teaches is the freedom of interpretation, even though he himself was perhaps the most tendentious interpreter in all of Western intellectual tradition. His most Jewish quality was his deep conviction that there is sense in everything, and that such meaning could be brought up to the light. He read the unconscious as Judaic exegesis read the Hebrew Bible, with every nuance, every omission, being made to show an extraordinary wealth of significance. But, if everything has an ascertainable meaning, then all meaning is overdetermined, which amounts to affirming that everything has happened already, and is in the individual's past. Freud's theory of repression depends upon this belief that there never can be anything new. It is our responsibility, and our therapy, to learn and accept what has happened to us, even though so much of that is dreadful, indeed is *the* dreadful.

Dream interpretation became Freud's royal road to the Unconscious, and he could not accept the notion that anyone had walked that road properly before him. A master of evasions, Freud once joked that he had invented psychoanalysis because it had no literature. It had a vast literature, literature itself, and Ken Frieden demonstrates precisely how the Bible and the Talmud were part of that literature.

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## Foreword

In Ken Frieden's first book, *Genius and Monologue* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), the dilemmas of our current sense of textuality are not allowed to strand us in the deconstructive abyss. Frieden concludes by offering us a wary way out from an endless rhetoric: "The new transcendence is a transference, a *metapherein* that surpasses the present, transforms past figures through imaginative obsessions, and constitutes the self in endless dialogues" (p. 194).

Freud's only transcendence, his perhaps unknowing vestige of Platonism, was his worship of the Reality Principle. But since reality testing, for Freud, was pragmatically the constant acceptance of our mortality, such transcendence borders uneasily upon the Death Drive, beyond the Pleasure Principle. Part of Freud's interpretive heroism was his own refusal to yield up Eros or transference to Thanatos or the Death Drive, even though transference, in Freud, is one of the masterworks of emotional ambivalence, together with the taboo and the Oedipus complex.

Frieden's second book, *Freud's Dream of Interpretation*, is the best exegesis I have encountered of one of the ultimate sources of Freud's moral heroism, located by Frieden in the repressed Judaic aspects of Freudian dream interpretation. Partly, Frieden studies the intertextual relation between Freudian and ancient Jewish modes of reading, but more cunningly his book investigates the complexities of Freud's Jewish self-identity. Scientism, Freud's defense against anti-Semitism, led Freud to distance himself from the prophetic mode of such ancient seers of the dream as Joseph and Daniel. By placing all reality in the past, except for the dreamer's death, Freud had to abandon the dream's intuitive quarrying of the future. And yet, as Frieden shrewdly demonstrates, Freudian "free associationism" is the dreamer's future. To dream, and even more to interpret the dream, is to postpone or to modify reality, to ward off or at least to perspectivize the necessity of dying.

Freud's Jewishness had its equivocal or ambivalent elements, but this is hardly unique, whether in our era or in previous times. Like Kafka, Freud became a dominant and permanent figure in Jewish culture, without altogether intending such an achievement. Frieden's own conclusion is a