

THE JEWISH THOUGHT AND PSYCHOANALYSIS LECTURES

Edited by
Harvey Schwartz



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firing the mind

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*For Jan and Eric
and
Gary and Steve*

“The vast majority of the words of the sages are meant in a metaphorical and allegorical way ... therefore, don’t be alarmed when you see words which appear foolish and distant from wisdom ... they are really hidden messages which are very profound and intelligent.”

*Be’er haGolah (1598)
Judah Loew ben Bezalel (The Maharal)*

“In short what according to the opinion of other authors [on dreams] is supposed to be merely an arbitrary improvisation hurriedly brought together in the embarrassment of the moment, this we treat as a holy text.”

*The Interpretation of Dreams (1900)
Sigmund Freud*

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Stephen Frosh, PhD, is professor in the Department of Psychosocial Studies (which he founded) at Birkbeck, University of London. He has a background in academic and clinical psychology and was consultant clinical psychologist at the Tavistock Clinic, London, throughout the 1990s, specializing in family and individual psychotherapy with children and young people. He is a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, an academic associate of the British Psychoanalytical Society, a founding member of the Association of Psychosocial Studies, and an honorary member of the Institute of Group Analysis.

Stephen Frosh is the author of many books and papers on psychosocial studies and on psychoanalysis. His books include *Hauntings: Psychoanalysis and Ghostly Transmissions*; *Feelings*; *A Brief Introduction to Psychoanalytic Theory*; *Psychoanalysis Outside the Clinic*; and *Hate and the Jewish Science: Anti-Semitism, Nazism and Psychoanalysis*. His most recent book is *Simply Freud* (Simply Charly, 2018). His current research interests are in processes of acknowledgment and recognition after social violence and in questions of social and ethnic identity. A book on this topic, *Those Who Come After*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2019.

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Marsha Aileen Hewitt, PhD, is a professor in the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto, and the Faculty of Divinity at Trinity College. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice, psychoanalytic psychology of religion, critical theory, and method and theory in the study of religion. Her most recent publications include *Freud on Religion* (2014), “Christian Anti-Judaism and Early Object Relations Theory” (2018), “The Psychoanalytic Occult in Freud and Contemporary Theory” (2017), and “Spirits in the Mind, Gods in the Brain: Contemporary Psychologies of Religious

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Harvey Schwartz, MD, is a training and supervising analyst at the Psychoanalytic Association of New York (PANY) and the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia (PCOP). He is a clinical professor of psychiatry and human behavior at the Sidney Kimmel Medical School, Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, where he is in the private practice of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. He is the founder and executive producer of the IPA Podcast *Psychoanalysis On and Off the Couch*, and he is the founder of the *Jewish Thought and Psychoanalysis* website and lecture series.

Eli Zaretsky, PhD, is professor of history at the New School for Social Research, New York City. He is the author of *Political Freud*, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis*, and *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life*.

Preface

Freud's relationship with his Judaism—his by virtue of his self-description as a “fanatical Jew”—was framed by two of his convictions. He was centered both by his passionate cultural affiliation and by his atheism. Within these internal guideposts lay a Jewish life layered by tensions, pleasures, and identifications. His creation, psychoanalysis, has labored to honor its Jewish influences. Recent studies of these insights have contributed to the current clinical interest in more carefully listening to the individual meanings of analysands' religious life.

The lecture series from which this book evolved was designed to introduce to the public both the similarities and the differences between the psychoanalytic and the Jewish world views. The lectures began in 2013 in a synagogue in downtown Philadelphia. The audiences for these lectures reflected a mix of varied interests. Psychoanalytic colleagues as well as other mental health professionals joined with synagogue members along with other urban and suburban Philadelphians.

The theme of each presentation was to consider an aspect of the Jewishness of psychoanalysis. The topics covered included Freud's own relation with his cultural identification, the times in which he and his circle of fellow clinicians lived, the similarities and differences between a religious and an analytic way of experiencing oneself, the impact of anti-Semitism on their work and their lives, and the dynamism of psychoanalysis in the

State of Israel. My introductions to the presentations have been kept in their spoken format as introductions to the chapters of this book. The chapters themselves have been edited by the authors to read more formally. The conversational format of my engagement with Ruth Calderon has been maintained and is presented verbatim.

A secondary intention of this lecture series was to make overt what has long been latent. The historically high percentage of psychoanalysts who have been Jewish is both well known and unspoken. That there are many reasons for both of these phenomena goes without saying. The purpose of this text, like clinical work in the office, is to bring to light that the fears we associate with speaking freely of such matters need not limit us. Curiosity, not to mention pride, in one's cultural affiliation invites others to feel the same about their own heritages. Irish, Italian, Indian analysts all bring their own cultural character to this work. We will enrich each other by acknowledging the idiosyncrasies of our lives and their impact on our work.

I wish to thank the contributors to this text. They are among the thought leaders of our generation who work at the interface of the intrapsychic and religious states of mind. We can learn how each has influenced the other and perhaps how each has been enriched by the other. Their scholarship is remarkable, and we are all wiser for studying it.

I would like to express my appreciation to the administrative staff at Beth Zion—Beth Israel synagogue in Philadelphia, the venue for these lectures. Special thanks to Terri Soifer, Tovah Rosenthal, Arlene Fickler, and Rabbis Ira Stone and Abraham Friedman.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues in the Psychoanalytic Study Group of Philadelphia who share with me a love for this work.

I also wish to acknowledge my wife who has supported this project for the past six years and has continued to be an inspiration for my personal and professional development.

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