

Review

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second-generation counterparts in America and elsewhere, Finkelkraut begins to understand his parents' mortality. The world they knew is a secret, rather than a fact, which will forever elude him. Further, the ambience of a survivor home, whether religious or secular, proves both that Judaism lives and that it will perish once the last survivors have disappeared. Seeking to discover all that he can about prewar Jewish culture in Poland, Finkelkraut concludes that he now experiences his Jewishness as an absence.

Nor is this the end of the matter. Linguistically, this absence is felt in his lack of knowledge of Polish and Yiddish. Culturally and textually, the author is innocent of knowledge of the Talmud. And although an avowed secularist, Finkelkraut also understands that in religious terms he is bereft of familiarity with *halakha* (normative Jewish practice). Unlike his teacher Levinas, Finkelkraut does not have access to classic Jewish sources.

Yet his search continues. His autobiography is distinctively postmodern in its exposure of identity without substance. Moreover, his reflections reveal the paradoxical role played by the Holocaust as a source for contemporary Jewish self-identity. On the one hand, the destruction of European Jewry is an unmastered and unmasterable trauma. The very fact that the Holocaust happened is a continuing assault on all of the alleged verities of the postwar era. But, on the other hand, this very event defines Finkelkraut's second-generation identity. He and other members of his generation must continue to seek ways of confronting both the Holocaust past and their own possible Jewish future. The religious among them have embarked on a course of *tshuva* (turning or returning). This word can best be understood in its postwar context as seeking to turn toward the world of Jewish tradition. Secularists, for their part, wish to search for their own path to Jewish authenticity. For both groups the past holds the key to the future.

Finkelkraut's book is an insightful and compelling study of the sense of *déracinement* felt by those who live in the aftermath of the death camps. His sense of exclusion is exacerbated by the realization that what was lost can never be recovered. The search for *enracinement* carries with it the recognition that, as Maurice Blanchot contends, "the disaster ruins everything." Beneath the masks of cultural identity lies the void of the Holocaust. The arguments of *The Imaginary Jew* have lost none of their force in the years since they first appeared.

ALAN L. BERGER, *Florida Atlantic University*.

GRESSER, MOSHE. *Dual Allegiance: Freud as a Modern Jew*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994. xii+337 pp. \$59.50 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

This idealized portrait of Sigmund Freud makes two primary claims. First, Moshe Gresser argues that Freud's Jewish identity developed in three stages: an early period (1856–1906) of familial Jewish affirmations, extensive Jewish associations, defiant attitude toward anti-Semitism, and psychoanalytic universalization of "typically" Jewish traits; a middle "recessive period" (1907–22) in which Freud's Jewishness as well as the Jewish character and concerns of psychoanalysis recede from view but are never lost; and a late period (1923–39) of Freud's renewed identification with and attempt to vindicate both his father and his Jewishness. Gresser's second claim is that Freud's Jewish identity is built on a dual allegiance to *Judentum* ("Jewish ethnicity and a Freudian version of Judaism") and to *Humanität* ("German Enlightenment humanism and its liberal values") that provides a "model for modern Jewish identity" (p. 1). To these ends Gresser draws on

the vast array of biographical and textual material generated by previous researchers.

Gresser's volume builds on his 1989 University of Chicago dissertation on the relationship of Freud's written correspondence to his Jewish identity. To that frame Gresser appends frequent citations of Yosef Yerushalmi's *Freud's Moses* (New Haven, Conn., 1991) to make or validate claims about Freud's Jewish identity. Following Yerushalmi and others, Gresser employs Freud's father's inscription in the family Bible—calling his son to return to the faith of the father(s)—to underscore Freud's Jewishness in general, and his “deliberately Jewish” *Moses and Monotheism* in particular.

Whether this inscription so functions is itself debatable, but there are many other more dubious arguments and interpretations in Gresser's text. Not the least are errors of fact (e.g., placing Galicia in the Pale of Settlement) and misreadings of sources (combining both are, e.g., his 1897 dating of the Graf-Freud correspondence about baptizing Graf's son [“Little Hans,” born ca. 1903], and asserting that Freud wrote a letter to Wilhelm Fliess in 1929—Fliess died in 1928, twenty-four years after Freud had last written to him). Problematic as well are Gresser's use of periodization as explanation, overly broad determinations of the dual allegiances, slippery rhetoric, and faulty argumentation.

For works like *Totem and Taboo* that poorly fit the periodization, Gresser employs the language of anticipation or vestige. Especially undermining the periodization is a crucial development in Freud's theory that Gresser omits: in 1908–9 Freud “discovered” the castration complex and its fundamental role in individual development. Castration anxiety is also, argued Freud (cf. the case of “Little Hans”), the “deepest unconscious root” of anti-Semitism because the “equivalent” of castration is circumcision (cf. *Totem and Taboo*). Hence, during his so-called recessive period Freud universalized circumcision, that most emblematic and most threatening aspect of Jewish particularity.

Gresser correctly assumes Freud affirmed *Judentum* and *Humanität*. But his construing any possible Jewish connection as allegiance to *Judentum*, and virtually anything else as commitment to *Humanität*, overgeneralizes both notions. Further, Gresser ignores or collapses into one or the other commitment Freud's additional and conflicted identifications—notably male, heterosexual, bourgeois, and scientist—implicated in the construction of his Jewish identity, as numerous studies have demonstrated. Ultimately the dual allegiances merge as Gresser derives Freud's ties to universalistic *Humanität* from his allegedly particularistic *Judentum*; thus, Freud's Jewishness comes to underlie everything.

Stylistically, Gresser hedges almost all of his often speculative points and then gives them the seal of deductive argument through the voice of some outside authority. Obversely, he seeks to accomplish through rhetorical force what his argument cannot sustain. The most pervasive instance of this strategy is his adopting the trope “natural Jewish” to characterize Freud's actions. While at times alluding to Freud's own essentialist descriptions, at other times Gresser too posits a monolithic, exclusively Jewish essence that Freud evidences in his “strong, natural Jewish pride and self-confidence” (p. 39), “Jewish tendency to identify with biblical characters” (p. 87), “essentially Jewish” self-subordination (p. 135), and so on. Gresser's essentialism leads to “wild analysis” when he resorts to the Hebrew root of a word in a traditional Jewish phrase in order to explain the Hebrew-ignorant Freud's “indignation and shame” over a fellow Jew's “pitiless” funeral oration in the presence of Christians (p. 99).

Exemplifying the many problems of this study is Gresser's extensive analysis of

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an 1882 letter in which Freud describes a Jewish traveling companion nicknamed after *Nathan the Wise*. In this letter, which for Gresser is key to understanding Freud's "strong and proud identification at this [early] stage" (p. 87) and a fortiori in his late stage (cf. p. 60), Freud notes how Nathan's comment that "The Jew . . . is made for enjoyment [*Genuss*]" reminded him of a Latin citation uttered by his future brother-in-law when drunk. Gresser concludes, "Freud's association of the pleasure of drinking with . . . *Genuss* is a natural Jewish one . . . because wine is 'the symbol of joy' in Jewish tradition." He continues: "Freud must have heard his father 'make kiddush' many times at home using the family's kiddush cups" and then claims that these cups "found a prominent and honored place among Freud's antiquities collection. . . . perhaps [as] a reflection of the affection and respect for his father, and they appear as a symbolic statement of the balance Freud found between Judaism and humanism" (p. 80). In an appendix written when his work was in proof, Gresser notes that he has just learned that the cups were a gift Freud received in 1917. Yet he finds Freud's 1938 description of them as likely indicating that "Freud had tasted his father's kiddush in his youth" (p. 303). Finally, in seeming contradiction to the public Jewish identification of the "late period," Gresser takes Freud's attempt to hide the cups from a photographer as "protecting . . . his renewed attachment to *Judentum*" (p. 304). Ironically, Gresser's final revision is based on a work of fiction: Lawrence Douglas and Alexander George's "Freud's Phonographic Memory and the Case of the Missing Kiddush Cups" (*Tikkun*, vol. 9, no. 1 [1994]) parodies the speculative exegeses generated by psychobiographers of Freud.

While *Dual Allegiance* offers little new substance to the discussion of the relationship among Freud, psychoanalysis, and *Judentum*, it explicitly addresses the tacit primary concern of much of this discussion: the need to seek models for a viable Jewish identity in contemporary diasporic societies. By making manifest the stakes of this discussion, Gresser has added to it.

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AMISHAI-MAISELS, ZIVA. *Depiction and Interpretation: The Influence of the Holocaust on the Visual Arts*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1993. xxxiii+509 pp. 99 plates. \$195.00 (cloth).

Jewish culture and civilization is no stranger to tragedy and death. It is etched everywhere—in Scripture and rabbinic literature, in liturgy and ritual, in chronicles and poetry, memorial books and historiographies, in monuments and museums, and in living memory. Indeed, there is even a religious duty to remember, for forgetfulness is a betrayal of the past, a distortion of the truth of historical existence. No event was too large or too small to escape the shapes of memory. Accounts of the destruction of the first and second Temples, endless exiles and persecutions, and cycles of persecution are recited on sacred occasions. But what of the Holocaust? How could one imagine it—even if one knew the details? And if there are details, is not the artistic imagination a betrayal of its brute reality? It has been argued that there can be no art after Auschwitz.

Fortunately, artists have resisted this assertion—for reasons of internal necessity, and because of fears that without its representations memory of this horror would be depleted forever. Much of the artistic response has been in memoirs, novels, poetry, and film. Less known are the many paintings and sculptures that have been created on this subject. It is thus Ziva Amishai-Maisels's great merit to