

Preface

This book constitutes an original analysis of Freud and his method of interpretation. It examines the inner workings of his thought processes and the rich mine of knowledge that led him toward his theories and therapies. In the beliefs of ancient Egypt, with its sexuality and ambiguous deities, and ancient Israel, with its biblical accounts of madness and feigned madness, are found surprising sources of inspiration for core Freudian concepts such as free association, dream interpretation, the psychosexual stages, the libido, and the unconscious. Psychoanalysis is seen in its early growth stages, and nurtured by philosophers, scientists, and fearless mind explorers. Here, Freud is boldly synthesizing loads of knowledge in an age when science and superstition were rarely separate. The book consists of the following major themes: (1) Overviews of the pre-Freudian history of psychology in the writings of Herbart, Morel, and Craft-Ebing; (2) explorations of Freud's interest in ancient Egyptian creation myths and a Kabbala, and their influences on his work; (3) discussions of the paradoxes inherent in the interpretation of the mind; (4) a unique history of the origins of the Rorschach test; (5) the consideration of the real meaning behind Freud's self-identification as a determinist; and (6) a list of Freud's library titles on ancient Egypt.

In broad brush strokes, this is the essence of the subject matter of this book. A slow and satisfying insight of this material began to generate in my mind in the 1980s. This version was clearly the outcome of many interests that had to be clarified and connected. It was my friendship and close association with the late David Bakan that led to the writing of this book. David and I spent many, many hours figuring out how to present material in book form before his death. Unfortunately, his death prevented him from editing of his section of the book, which I accomplished some years after he died. When I formally began to put this book together, I was absolutely certain of its ultimate structure. Nevertheless, the work of Eric Fromm, Abram Kardiner, and Gregory Bateson would turn out to be important foundations of much of my work. My personal friendships and associations with these people provided me with the opportunity to gain first-hand information and insights that were necessary to do the job. Many friends and colleagues have given me the benefits of their criticisms of my ideas and early drafts, and in many instances,

have offered helpful suggestions. I have given every criticism that has come my way the most earnest attention, many I accepted and made the appropriate changes. In some instances, I felt that at some points I was misunderstood, and attempted to revise my presentations to lessen the likelihood of similar misunderstandings by others. I wish to thank especially David Forrest for his contribution in this book, which clarifies the real meaning behind Freud's self-determination as a determinist.

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Freud on Interpretation

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