

COMMENTS ON TRUDE WEISS-ROSMARIN'S  
"ADLER'S PSYCHOLOGY AND THE JEWISH TRADITION"

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Perceptive and courageous are the words that first come to me in evaluating Trude Weiss-Rosmarin's paper (7). The author is quite right in noting the unholy, and uneasy, alliance between Freudian psychoanalysis and religion and in stressing the much more natural affinity between religion and Adler's Individual Psychology.

In his biography of Freud, Ernest Jones quotes this comment, made by Freud at the time of Adler's death: "For a Jew boy out of a Viennese suburb a death in Aberdeen is an unheard-of career in itself and a proof of how far he had got on. The world really rewarded him richly for his service in having contradicted psycho-analysis" (5, vol. 3, p. 208). Actually, as time has now shown, it was Freud who had traveled farther from the cultural and ethical tradition to which both these men were born. David Bakan insightfully observes in his recent paper on "Moses in the thought of Freud" that Freud was fascinated by the Moses by Michelangelo (in Rome) because of a "fear of the wrath of Moses" aroused by his "defection" (1, p. 323).

Freud, in his book, *Moses and monotheism* (4), makes Moses out as being an Egyptian, i.e., a "Gentile", so that in turning against him (and the superego), Freud would not be so flagrantly repudiating Judaism. The fact seems to be that it was *Freud* who was the "Egyptian," the "Gentile."

Weiss-Rosmarin's paper very usefully draws attention to Adler's rather steadfast adherence to a set of values much closer to the great Jewish tradition than were those espoused by Freud. In this context it is interesting to examine Freud's break with Adler (in 1911), as interpreted by Jones (5, vol. 2, pp. 129-134). Here Adler is portrayed as a "naughty boy" who is "rapidly developing backwards and will soon end up by denying the existence of the unconscious" (Freud's words). "Adler's theory was essentially one of the psychology of the ego" (p. 131, Jones speaking). History seems to be reversing the verdict as to who was the "naughty" one. What is the New Look in psychoanalysis itself? *Ego* psychology!

Adler was probably not so gifted as Freud and was nothing like as brilliant a writer; but he was, it now appears, *sounder*. As Brodbeck

(2) has recently pointed out in a critique of Riesman's work, the new psychology of community, relatedness, and "respect" has by no means as elegant a systematic framework as Freud was able to give to psychoanalysis; but, system or no system, psychoanalysis has not been confirmed by the march of events. As Harry Emerson Fosdick would say, the universe has not *responded* to it (3, p. 106).

As Weiss-Rosmarin points out, the Judeo-Christian faith affirms the "perfectability of man." Freud held that this is the will-o-wisp that makes men ill. Now it seems we are discovering that the essence of illness is the *abandonment* of this goal, this ideal (6). The ill, the lost, the neurotic, the sinful are those who have *fallen*, not those who have *risen* too high.

"Adler's psychology and the Jewish tradition" is indeed stimulating and, I believe, highly significant.

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