

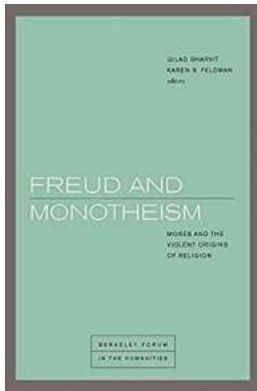
Moses And The Violent Origins Of Religion



Religion has played a significant role throughout human history, shaping societies and individuals in profound ways. Understanding the origins of religion provides valuable insights into our own beliefs and the nature of human existence. One pivotal figure in religious history is Moses, a prophet who, according to biblical accounts, received the Ten Commandments from God on Mount Sinai. However, behind the revered image of Moses lies a complex narrative that exposes the violent origins of religion, specifically within the context of Moses' leadership and guidance.

The Life of Moses

Moses was born during a time when the Pharaoh of Egypt sought the extermination of all male Hebrew babies, out of fear of their growing population. His life began with a profound act of violence, as his mother placed him in a basket and set him adrift on the Nile River to save him from the decree. Eventually, Moses was discovered and raised as an Egyptian prince, but he could not escape his Hebrew heritage.



Freud and Monotheism: Moses and the Violent Origins of Religion (Berkeley Forum in the Humanities) by Angela Paine (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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File size : 2850 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 242 pages
X-Ray for textbooks : Enabled



As he matured, Moses witnessed the oppression of his people, enslaved by the Egyptians. Angered by the injustices, Moses took matters into his own hands and killed an Egyptian taskmaster who was mistreating a Hebrew slave. This act, born out of violence, propelled Moses into a turbulent journey towards his own destiny and the foundation of a new religion.

The Exodus and Revelation

Fueled by guilt and anger, Moses fled Egypt and found himself in the land of Midian, where he married and started a new life. It was during this time that he

encountered a burning bush, which he believed to be a divine manifestation of God. The bush commanded him to return to Egypt and lead the Hebrew people to freedom.

Moses reluctantly accepted his calling and, with divine guidance, initiated the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt. The journey was filled with plagues, confrontations with the Egyptian army, and the miraculous parting of the Red Sea. However, the violence that marked Moses' past resurfaced when the Hebrews faced internal conflicts and began worshiping a golden calf during Moses' absence on Mount Sinai.

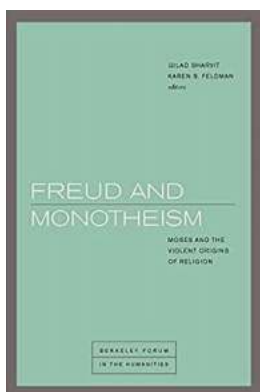
Upon witnessing this act of idolatry, Moses exploded in a fit of rage, smashing the stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments. He rallied loyal followers, and they exacted violent judgment on the idolaters. This episode demonstrated the extreme measures taken in the name of religion, where violence became a means of preserving divine laws and punishing transgressors.

Impact and Legacy

Moses' leadership and the formation of religious laws set a precedent for later religious systems that developed around the world. The Ten Commandments, despite their underlying message of moral guidance, were enforced through fear and violent retribution. This pattern of using violence as an instrument of religious authority has persisted throughout history, further enhancing the argument concerning the violent origins of religion.

Moreover, the concept of zealotry, a fervent belief system that can drive individuals to extreme acts, traces back to Moses and the idolatry incident. This fervor, when manipulated or unchecked, has led to numerous conflicts and atrocities committed in the name of religion.

Exploring the life of Moses and the violent origins of religion sheds light on the complex nature of faith and its relationship with violence. While religion has undoubtedly brought solace, morals, and guidance to millions of people, it is essential to reflect on its roots and the historical dynamics that shape religious beliefs and practices. By understanding the origins of religion, we gain a deeper understanding of our own spiritual journeys and the potential for violence that lies within their narratives.



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Over the last few decades, vibrant debates regarding post-secularism have found inspiration and provocation in the works of Sigmund Freud. A new interest in the interconnection of psychoanalysis, religion and political theory has emerged, allowing Freud’s illuminating examination of the religious and mystical practices in “Obsessive Neurosis and Religious Practices,” and the exegesis of the origins of ethics in religion in Totem and Taboo, to gain currency in recent debates on modernity. In that context, the pivotal role of Freud’s masterpiece, Moses and Monotheism, is widely recognized.

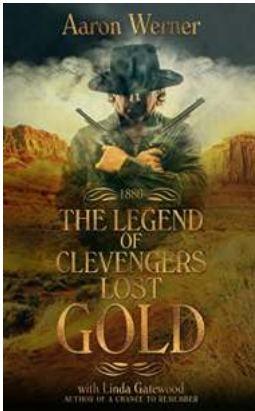
Freud and Monotheism brings together fundamental new contributions to discourses on Freud and Moses, as well as new research at the intersections of theology, political theory, and history in Freud's psychoanalytic work. Highlighting the broad impact of Moses and Monotheism across the humanities, the contributors hail from such diverse disciplines as philosophy, comparative literature, cultural studies, German studies, Jewish studies and psychoanalysis.

Jan Assmann and Richard Bernstein, whose books pioneered the earlier debate that initiated the Freud and Moses discourse, seize the opportunity to revisit and revise their groundbreaking work. Gabriele Schwab, Gilad Sharvit, Karen Feldman, and Yael Segalovitz engage with the idiosyncratic, eccentric and fertile nature of the book as a Spätstil, and explore radical interpretations of Freud's literary practice, theory of religion and therapeutic practice. Ronald Hendel offers an alternative history for the Mosaic discourse within the biblical text, Catherine Malabou reconnects Freud's theory of psychic phylogenesis in Moses and Monotheism to new findings in modern biology and Willi Goetschel relocates Freud in the tradition of works on history that begins with Heine, while Joel Whitebook offers important criticisms of Freud's main argument about the advance in intellectuality that Freud attributes to Judaism.



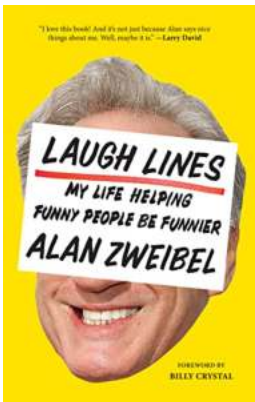
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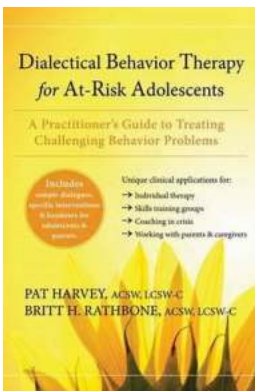
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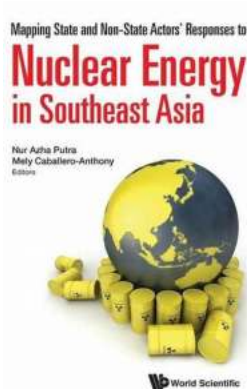
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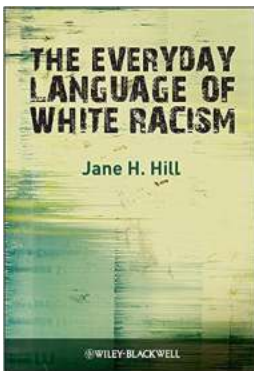
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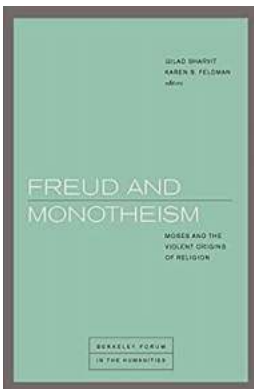
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