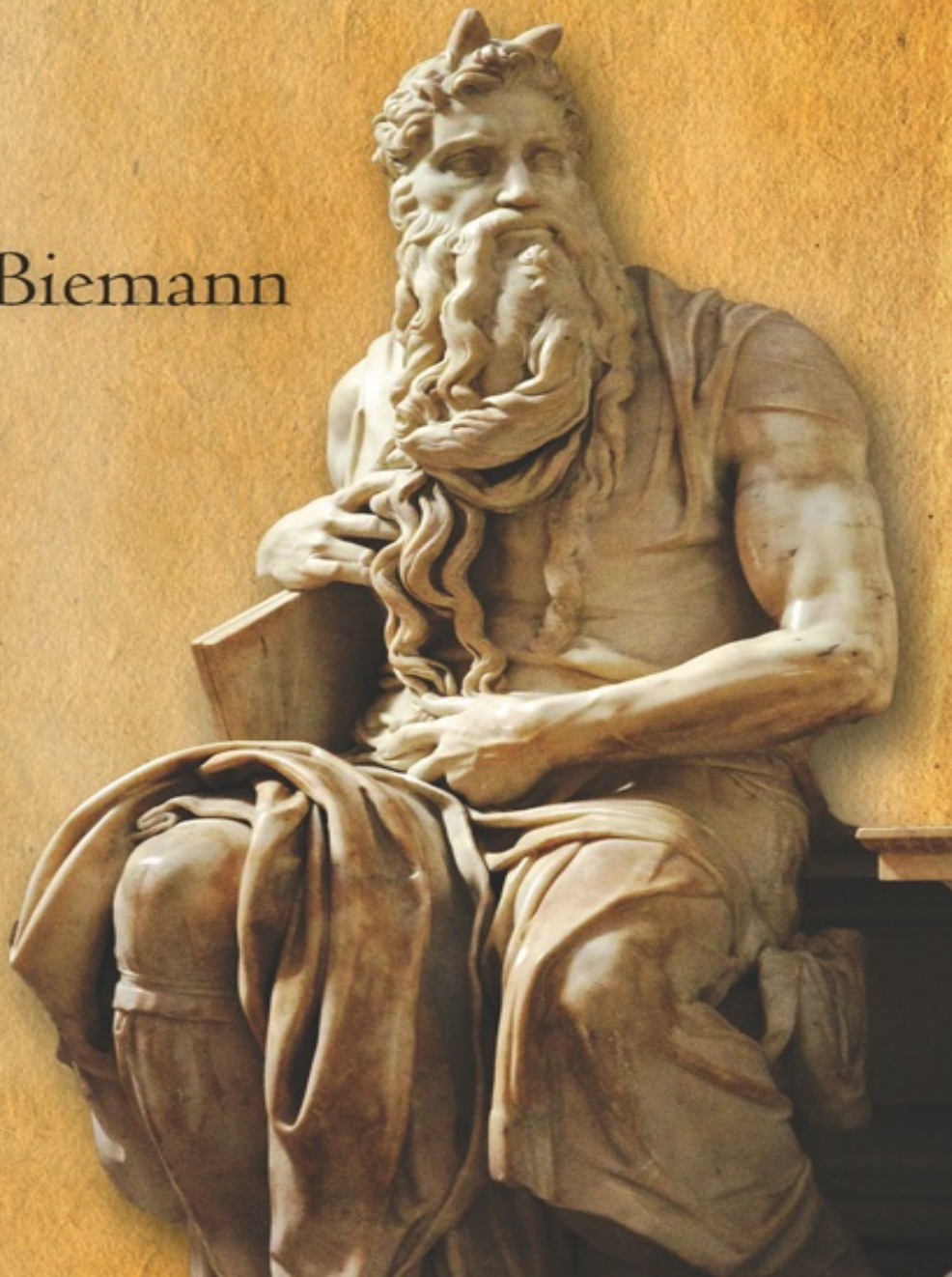
DREAMING *of* MICHELANGELO

Jewish Variations on a Modern Theme

Asher D. Biemann



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To my sister

always dreaming of Rome

Contents

Prefatory Note

> "The dream is the reawakening of the interminable."
> —Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*[1]

1

Michelangelo matters. In a recent essay for *Commentary*, the Renaissance scholar Theodore K. Rabb made this passionate point, explaining Michelangelo's significance to our age.[2] The present book is an exploration into why Michelangelo matters to modern Jewish thought. It encompasses the period from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, focusing, with some exceptions, on the German Jewish cultural context; but it is not, by any means, a book about Michelangelo. What is before you, rather, is an essay about Jewish imagination, about Jewish "dreaming" and dream work, about Jewish affinities and self-expression. It is a book primarily about German Judaism looking beyond German Judaism, an inquiry into elective affinity and cultural love as forms of self-creation. Thus, even if inspired by the Jewish reception of Michelangelo's works, this study is no reception history in the strict sense of the term. In fact, "reception" may not even be the correct concept for what this book seeks to accomplish. It is not the Jewish reception of Michelangelo that interests me but the Jewish confrontation: Not the response, but the calling forth.

Nor is this book, despite its intimate conversation with culture, a cultural history. Culture, that vast receptacle of Jewish reorientation in the modern period, can act only as a transitory concept for our study, a concept that thought needs to traverse, work through, in order to arrive at itself. Indeed, Jewish culture and material identity are often portrayed in opposition to practices of Jewish thought, while the history of thought and "ideas" has fallen, in recent times, into disrepute. I have no intention of rehabilitating intellectual history as a history "merely" of ideas. But I see, for the purpose of this book's argument, culture and material identity as leading into thought; I see thought as emerging from the encounter with the material world, from taking on its own "materiality"; I see ideas in their impure forms.[3]

Nor, for that matter, is the present study a history of art. Art history is its own discipline, to which *Dreaming of Michelangelo* could not claim to belong. If I write of art, then it is only through the screen of literature, through self-reflections of the beholders. Thus, the subject of Jewish artists inspired by and

responding to the works of Michelangelo, which, if it is not a matter of mere "influence," must itself be a substantial field of inquiry, did not enter this study, for it would require the turn to another discipline, another discourse and, most likely, a study of its own.[4]

Nor, finally, can this study measure up to the otherwise cognate field of German literature and culture. To be sure, its historical backdrop is German Judaism and its material is borrowed from the wells of German and German Jewish literature. Yet, it is not true to a particularly "German" angle, nor can it aspire to accomplish what a good *Germanist* would undoubtedly achieve: an encompassing digest of German Jewish literary reflection on the Italian experience and its fascination with Michelangelo. Indeed, what I can offer is but a truncated version of a phenomenon, which, to any student of modern German literature, was far more pervasive than these pages can possibly convey. Franz Kafka's travel diaries between 1910 and 1912, Karl Wolfskehl's letters from his Italian exile between 1933 and 1938, Rudolf Borchardt's vignettes on Italian cities, or Walter Benjamin's Italian journey of 1912 are only a few of the canonical texts the student of modern German literature could not afford to miss.[5] But this study is less concerned with canons than with exemplary patterns. It acknowledges no more than that there existed, as we shall see, a Jewish tradition of Italy travel, just as there existed a similar German tradition, reading texts only as they exemplify, epitomize, and variegate the origins and meanings of that tradition. Thus, like any synthetic book, *Dreaming of Michelangelo* is driven into the dilemma of omission, into an economy of texts, which reveals, in turn, the direction of its argument; a direction that cuts through literature, as it cuts through culture, without lingering where other disciplines must offer a fuller account. Italy may be this book's context and Michelangelo its text, but they are not its proper theme. I write as little "about" literature as I write about art.

2

What sort of study, then, is the present book? For a generation of interdisciplinary scholars, such a question may sound moot, if not indecent. As the boundaries of disciplines vanish, so does our apperception of the historical world. We speak today of borderlands, periphery, junctions, and hybridity to capture this new historical complexity.[6] *Dreaming of Michelangelo* quietly engenders these concepts, taking them for granted not because of its nervous passion for new trends, but because its subject presupposes them, and because its discipline is accustomed to functioning, as Martin Jay once put it, "at the shifting intersection of different, often contradictory discourses." Intellectual history, in

Jay's understanding, navigates a field of conflicting forces, eminent to the afterlife of past ideas as they appear in the "tangled skein of misreading and misappropriations that characterize the afterlife of any idea and cultural creation."[7] The afterlife and ever new and unpredictable constellations of ideas constitute, for Jay, the history of thought, which, "inevitably attuned to recent historical trends," also "distrusts historical approaches that feign indifference to current theoretical disputes."[8]

But it is not merely the attentiveness to "theory"—a given, surely, to most historians today—that determines the intellectual historian's craft. Ideas or, as Dominick LaCapra writes, "texts" in a broader sense do not only emerge from contexts but are able to reshape them, to rethink, even "disorient" them.[9] A text, LaCapra argues, encompasses a "transhistorical dimension" that both derives from and deconstructs historical "immanence." It offers, as philosophy and art, a dimension of "transcendence," which relates, because it endures, historical experience to the "problematic constellation or more or less changing configuration of subject positions" we call "identity."[10] Originating, then, in the lived life of the "intellectual," intellectual history accepts the simultaneous, "unhistorical," presence of ideas and their essential impurity, yet also their need for distinction and resistance to temporal abstraction and universality. Unlike history in the proper sense of the trade, intellectual history, in LaCapra's understanding, is less reconstructive than it is dialogical, a "conversation with the past" that becomes "performative" and, in Bakhtin's sense, "heteroglossic," for it must engage, or "dialogize," multiple voices at once.[11] Bakhtin himself speaks of a theme's "dispersion into the rivulets and droplets of social heteroglossia," which resists purely monologic documentation demanding, instead, a constant vigilance of voices and an act of response.[12] Because ideas themselves are never uttered in indicative speech but always in a subjunctive responding to reality and putting into question, the intellectual historian cannot reconstruct them as past events but only through their continuous "interillumination" (Bakhtin). Thus ideas cannot have an "afterlife" in the strict sense; nor can they be explained from the context of the intellectual alone. Rather, they are, as dialogues and contestations, always recreated and renewed. But this renewal also means that intellectual history is a discipline whose method is always reshaped by its own subject. Thought, ideas, texts, participate in their historical reiteration, and intellectual history is, in this respect, thought self-aware of its own genealogy.

Who are the "intellectuals" in intellectual history? In a canonical essay on the "Jewish intellectual," Paul Mendes-Flohr argued that intellectuals in general, and the Jewish intellectual in particular, constitute cognitive insiders articulating, by virtue of being simultaneous outsiders, axionormative dissent.[13] The intellectual, in other words, is defined by a cognitive and, as it were, "existential" in-between, or ambivalence and loneliness, as Zygmunt Bauman put it, which enables, but also demands, a process of constant reorientation.[14] Indeed, Erich Auerbach, writing from his Istanbul exile, identified the modern human condition as the "problem of man's self-orientation" and "task to create for himself a place to be at home without fixed points of existence," a task the intellectual, perhaps even already in ancient times, relives at any moment of thought dissenting from the fixities of life.[15] Intellectuals are "dissenters," not because they think against mainstream or common sense, but because they inhabit a space of simultaneous boundlessness and demarcation, a place historically epitomized, though, of course, not solely occupied, by the Jewish intellectual. "I assume," writes Mendes-Flohr, "the fundamental or ultimate boundary of the Jewish intellectual to be that demarcating of space—the cognitive, cultural, and social space—in which his or her primordial identity as a Jew appertains, and the realm in which another more universal (or at least what is construed to be universal) identity prevails."[16] Thus dissent becomes a function of a certain liminal position, of a spiritual borderland, defined by both its demarcation and permeability; and thus dissent directs itself both inward and outward, toward the "inside" and "outside" of the demarcated, in which the protest against one is the affirmation of the other.

We find, among countless examples, this particular ambivalence expressed in the Zionist thinker Walter Goldstein, who, writing of such intellectuals as Hermann Cohen and Martin Buber in 1942, noted what seemed self-evident to his contemporaries: that "in their minds everything resonated, everything that came from an alien source, whether Goethe or Mozart, Bach or Schiller, Lessing and, of course, time and again, Immanuel Kant."[17] For Goldstein, whose Jewish universe rested upon three contradictory pillars, Buber, Cohen, and Herzl, the meaning of exile, *Golah*, was indeed to "absorb the alien and learn from it—but to learn from it *for us*, for our own purpose."[18] What Goldstein gleaned from the retrospective vantage point of a failed—or never existent—German Jewish "symbiosis" and, as he wrote, "unhappy love of Europe," was a theory neither of assimilation nor of mere "borrowing" or spiritual appropriation. The distinction between *in eigener Sache*, "for us," and "alien sources" (*das Fremde*), which, nonetheless, are "for us" and thus not entirely foreign, should be read, rather, as

the trace of an invisible line of limitation, a boundary drawn with the ethereal finger of the mind on the virtual, endlessly circuitous, map of thought, a map precariously suspended between the horizon of ideas and what Mendes-Flohr called "primordial identity." Within and despite the Jewish intellectual's mental and cultural universality, across and against the boundlessness of the ideal world of ideas, beyond and because of the dynamics of cultural love, there remained a faintly affirmed "for us"—the ability and necessity to articulate something resembling selfhood: the awareness of things "alien," yet the simultaneous embracing of precisely these "alien" sources, an attitude we might describe as xenophilia, an eroticism of the "foreign" not for its exoticism but *as familiar*. The process of acculturation, then, which naturally defined the Jewish encounter with modernity, must be viewed, as Steven Aschheim wrote of the "German-Jewish Parnassus," as a drama between the "possibility and limits of assimilation and cultural activity in general," a drama of ever shifting, yet never vanishing, boundaries, which produced, as Aschheim continues, a variety of "discourses of 'essences,' of visible and hidden external and internal characteristics of such Jewishness, the inward and outward manifestations of an elusive but powerful Jewish being and 'spirit,' which assimilation in the last analysis could neither repress nor dissolve."[19] To delineate this interminable space of selfhood, to trace this residue, the dissent of being, may be the disciplinary justification of intellectual history as a form of history. It may justify the focus on "intellectuals"—not, to be sure, as particularly trustworthy, much less superior, representatives of an historical period, but as interspersed instances of a period's self-reflection and imaginative horizons.

Intellectual history, more perhaps, than history itself, is always a history of the present, *Gegenwartsgeschichte*, for it knows no historical events but the life of the mind as being simultaneously engaged with and disengaged from the life of history. It synchronizes, even anachronizes, what history must keep in order. This does not render it, to use a favorite term of recent theory, "radical." To the contrary, intellectual history, to this author at least, listens more than it narrates. It retreats before strong methods and lives in great insecurity. At once permeating and contaminated by time, its events are "ideas." But these ideas lack the authority of origin and authenticity, for they become events only by being in dialogue with, or by confronting, the historical world through restless mutual constitution. In these dialogues and confrontations, in the in-betweens of demarcation and dissent, lies the field of intellectual history as it is employed in our study. *Dreaming of Michelangelo* is a meditation on the spaces of Jewish selfhood. But its fundamental argument assumes that these spaces can be outside the cultural and social demarcations and boundaries the self had drawn for itself,

that the self can find itself in distant mirrors, that, in other words, the spaces of selfhood are demarcated by its own as well as by its *alternate* spaces: By the powers of “being” and “dreaming.”

4

Many studies treating Michelangelo and the Jewish imagination begin—and frequently end—with Sigmund Freud, whose ever puzzling essay *The Moses of Michelangelo* has become the pinnacle of the modern Jewish fascination with both the figure of Moses and the work of Michelangelo. I have placed this essay at the middle of this book and built around it the broader theme of what I consider modern Jewish statue love. But I have not placed it at the center. For Freud, as I intend to show, stood in a longer tradition of Jewish pilgrimages to the *Moses*, to the Sistine Chapel, or to the Florentine Sagrestia Nuova, the home, most famously, of Michelangelo’s *Night*. We will, in the following pages, see Michelangelo through the eyes of Heinrich Heine, Hermann Cohen, Georg Simmel, Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, and others from this period, along with Jewish writers much less known to the canon or even outside of it, such as the Italian Jewish poets of the revolutionary period, Giuseppe Revere and David Levi. We will meet Jewish travelers to Italy, Jewish lovers of the Mediterranean, and Jewish dreamers of the Eternal City turned Promised Land. We will meet them without particular order, without ambition for completeness, and without necessary tags identifying the degrees of their Jewish commitments. But we will meet them as writers, thinkers, and rabbis, to whom, in one way or another, Michelangelo mattered.

Jewish statue love occupies the middle of this book. But constitutes no more than a middle. From Jewish statue love the book moves backward to love itself, to cultural eroticism as a form of encounter questioning the model of reception, before moving forward to love again: to love as an aesthetic category vouchsafing the dignity of man. Michelangelo will be the interlocutor in all three of this book’s parts: Michelangelo the unrequited lover, Michelangelo the sculptor of living form, Michelangelo the painter of humanity’s original image. But in each part, Michelangelo will also be a metaphor, or as I prefer to say, a mirror to Jewish modernity: Michelangelo and Jewish Italophilia, Michelangelo and Jewish Pygmaleanism, Michelangelo and Jewish thought as art. Each of these “ands” reflects an encounter that is at once a response and a calling forth, reflecting, epitomizing even, the response and calling forth to modernity. Jewish statue love, in this respect, embodies the Jewish call to a world withholding response, the Jewish love for Italy emerges as an accusation of the absence of

feeling in a world weighed down by Nordic constraints, and in Jewish thought as art, we recognize the desire for an aesthetics postulating, in its last analysis, the human image as one of dignity and inclusion. Each encounter, then, with Michelangelo's work and historical persona, is the beginning of a meditation on the Jewish condition inside the human condition. But each encounter is also a confrontation.

5

Dreaming of Michelangelo, as this book argues, is no half-conscious passion but a work of wakefulness. It is *Traumarbeit*, dream work, in a sense that takes Freud to where Lyotard inserted figuration, and to where this book will encounter self-formation.[20] The theme that connects and entangles, triadically, the chapters to follow is the theme of unromantic love, of love as judgment and imperative. I take seriously Gershom Scholem's famous, though far from original, image of German Jews as "unhappy lovers," not because I think of German Judaism as a romance, but because I recognize "love," in the Jewish experience and self-reflection, as an act of self-creation and emancipation. Modern Jewish thought, which shall be the vehicle of our meditations, has been cognizant of this unromantic love, viewing, on more than one occasion, itself as love's demanding speech. "Only the lover," writes Franz Rosenzweig, "and he alone, can truly speak and say: Love me."[21] Modern Jewish thinkers, in this regard, were lovers trying to free the concept of love from its Christian monopoly, not only because it belonged to their own tradition as well, but also because it challenged the assumptions of the modern world. Thus, "love," as it shall permeate this book, is both a commentary on modern Jewish self-perception and a hermeneutical category. It denotes a particular being towards the world, not by "loving" it unconditionally, but by accusing it, as the unrequited lover will, of its statuesque muteness.

Dreaming of Michelangelo, then, is first and foremost an instant of Jewish cultural love, yet one that is perhaps particularly self-aware of being the embodiment of this love itself. Its Jewishness, of course, is all but elusive and lacking in precision. Indeed, what will emerge as modern Jewish variations will also emerge as variations of modern Jewishness. The voices of this book will not speak in unison and not with equal "Jewish" accents. I have paid no particular attention to this disharmony and to the disparate variety of Jewish experiences. For it seems to me that these experiences, no matter how distant and disparate, intersect where dreams disrupt the dreamers' ordinary existence to reawaken something that proves to be, even against their will, interminable.

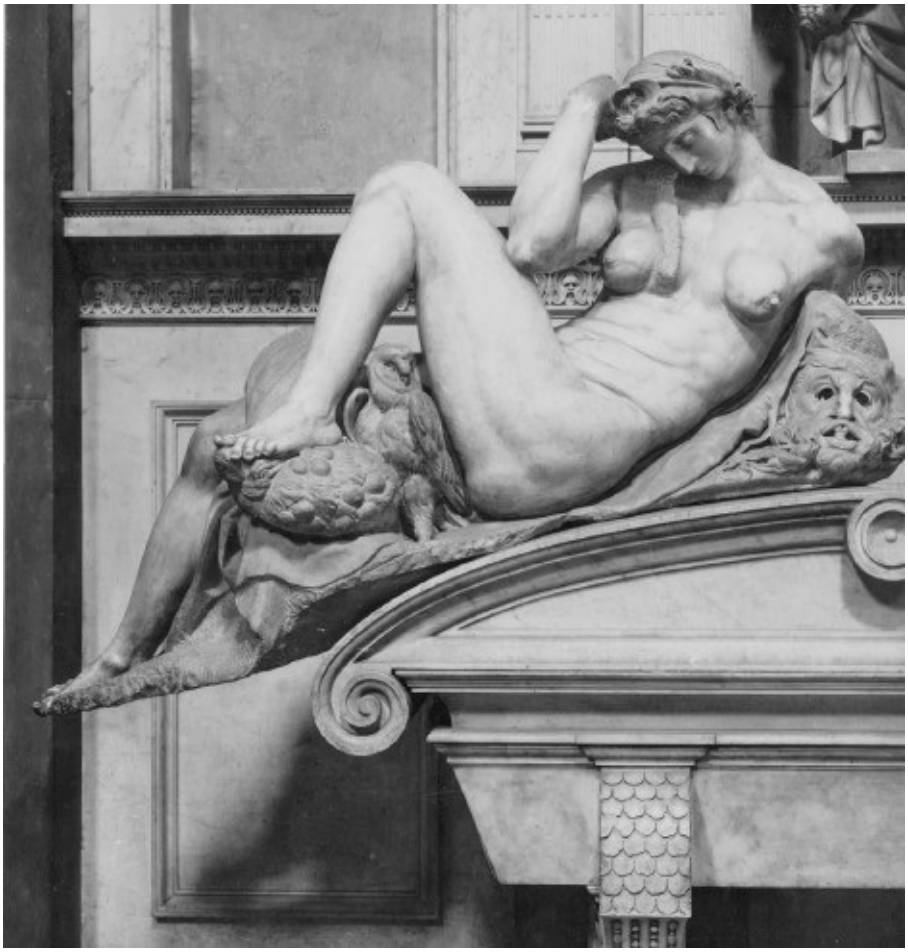

Figure 1. Michelangelo, *Night*, Medici Chapel, Florence. Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

1

The Unrequited Eros

MICHELANGELO AND THE JEWISH LOVE FOR ITALY

S'io t'amo, e non ti costa,
Perdona a me, come io a tanta noia,
Che fuor di chi m'uccide vuol ch'i'muoia.

[I love, to you it is no burden,
Forgive me, as I do this misery
That wills I die outside who murders me.]
—Michelangelo, *Rime*, no. 122[1]

Ist die Liebe selber eine Reise, in gänzlich neues Leben,
so wird der Wert der Fremde, der gemeinsam erfahrenen,
durch sie verdoppelt.

[If love is itself a voyage into entirely new life,
then it doubles the value of strange lands experienced together]
—Ernst Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* [2]

Preamble

The story these pages tell is, for lack of a better word, a story of love. "Love," of course, is not a term of scientific or historical precision; it speaks, as the *Courtier* says, "with broken speech and sudden silence."[3] Yet, in this particular story, "love" means something beyond the sentimental. It describes a particular disposition, a declaration of cultural affinity, a sense of elective and, therefore, defiant act of kinship.[4] "Unhappy lovers," Gershom Scholem famously called the German Jewish bourgeoisie, whose affair with German culture, with culture as such, never ended in a felicitous marriage.[5] And Hannah Arendt, in what remains perhaps her most personal book, wrote of Rahel Varnhagen's unfulfilled though self-fashioning desire to be loved and to be accepted unconditionally—a metaphor, in some sense, of the entire German Jewish experience.[6]

The German Jewish experience shall be our immediate, though not exhaustive, context. There is good reason to object that in this context the language of "love" oversentimentalizes, even trivializes, an encounter that had, in fact, little romantic inclination and remained, as Scholem put it, all but "idealist self-deception." But both Scholem and Arendt were most unsentimental writers, who wrote of "love" because it seemed to capture, as no other word, the peculiar passion with which German Jewry loved and sought to be loved,

pursuing, for lack of better lovers, the muses of literature and art, where love, as Georg Simmel once wrote, was at its most transcendent and invulnerable.[7] "Their true home," writes Amos Elon more recently about these unrequited lovers, "was not 'Germany' but German culture and language. Their true religion was the bourgeois, Goethean ideal of *Bildung*."[8] This ideal, as many scholars have previously observed, was not one of mere consumption but one that connoted self-formation and creativity. Yet, even then, the picture of acculturated German Jews as solely defined by their pursuit of loftiness remains problematic, for it neglects not only the obvious lives of "uncultured" German Jews and cultured German Germans, but also the similar intellectual pursuits that existed among Jews living in other national cultures. "Culture" as an alternate home is a universal motif of modern Jewish history and, to some extent, of modernity itself. *Bildung*, though essential to German Jewish history, was not only a German ideal, and German Jews did not pursue only German culture: Their love, while "ardent and endless," as Scholem wrote, extended the boundaries of "home," language, and nationality, uprooting its lovers and offering them, even if entirely ethereal, a spiritual refuge of some sort. Indeed, whether or not answered and requited, and whether or not fantasy and self-deception, this cultural love still remained what love tends to be: a fragile fact more than an indestructible feeling, a reality despite reality. Thus, to Scholem, the German Jewish love for *Kultur* was no feeling at all but a collective attitude, a way of looking at the world and of being toward it that was inseparable from a certain cultural eroticism and a certain Jewish dream.

Cultural eroticism as a form of affinity and looking at the world is the background of this study. Walter Benjamin's reflections on Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* (*Elective Affinities*) make clear to us that affinity, when elective, is an index not only of difficult, perhaps unfulfillable, human love, but also of love's rebellion and defiance; that it is not only about passions and dreams but also about awareness, somnambulant cognition, and unexpected agency.[9] The mystery of *elective affinity* is its gravity and weightlessness, its passion and autonomy. Indeed, as Jonathan Hess reminds us, the Jewish claims to modernity were filled not with silent admiration and attraction, but with polemical initiative and self-assertion.[10] Elective affinities are, in some sense, always heretical, selective and discontented, indicating a state of heightened cultural consciousness. Their passions are not dreamlike and intoxicated but works of wakefulness and confrontation.

If I write about cultural love then it is with this heretical wakefulness in mind. I write about this love not to lament its disappointment, whose tragedy is no

secret to us, but because I shall take seriously, for the purpose of this essay, Scholem's well-worn, yet still strangely uninvestigated, idiom of the unloved lover to reflect upon what it means not to be unloved but to be a "lover." I shall write, then, about love not because it is a sentimental thing and not because I trust its power to unite humanity, but because it elects, self-fashions, and defies.

Two simultaneous cultural loves, two dreams, are subject of this meditation: the Jewish dream of Michelangelo and, forming no more than its encompassing horizon, a Jewish love for Italy. None of these loves were, of course, exclusive and particularly "Jewish." Kant, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Nietzsche, Beethoven, Rembrandt, even Richard Wagner, to name only a few, were among the cultic fixtures animating the German Jewish imagination and its salient fantasy of redemption through cultural formation. Michelangelo, far from being of merely Jewish interest, had become subject of a broader discourse since his late eighteenth-century "rehabilitation" in Victorian and German literature.[11] Already in 1772, lamenting the decline of art, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the first president of the Royal Academy, expressed his hope for art's modern "revival" through a new appreciation of Michelangelo. By 1790, Reynolds asked from his students to "turn your attention to this exalted Founder and Father of modern Art, of which he was not only the inventor, but which, by the divine energy of his mind, he carried at once to its highest point of possible perfection."[12] Similar was Goethe's first praise of the master's works, and one can trace a literary development from Friedrich Hebbel, whose two-act *Michel Angelo* premiered in Vienna in 1861, to Longfellow's dramatic fragment of the same title, written in 1872 and left in his desk drawer until 1883, to Nietzsche and the infamous count of Gobineau, to the works of Rainer Maria Rilke and C. F. Meyer, producing a cultivated image of Michelangelo as "defiant exile" and "slave of passion," as a "titanic" outcast, strong and vulnerable, an image that was as popular as it was poetic and, in its own imagination, countercultural.[13] There is no shortage of modern accounts of the artist's life, such as the seminal works of Herman Grimm (1865), Aurelio Gotti (1876), John Addington Symonds (1893), Carl Justi (1900), Henry Thode (1901), Karl Frey (1907), or Romain Rolland's *Vie de Michel-Ange* of 1913; there emerged a new public interest in Michelangelo after the grand four hundred year celebrations of his birthday in 1875;[14] and there is no reason to believe that this fascination should disappear in our time.[15]

Likewise, Italy, the supposedly sensuous South, has existed in the minds and longings of northern dreamers for many centuries, among whom were Jewish dreamers too, travelers to the great Italian cities and admirers of its artworks. We normally associate such dreams and fantasies with "colonial" habits in one sense

or another. “Wealthy Puritans searching among the brunettes from afar what the world ordered under their own command has cut off from them,” Theodor Adorno once called the northern seekers of the South.[16] Their “love,” he continues, commences only as their “soul” is absent, losing itself to the “soulless as a cipher of the soulful.” This, to Adorno, is the “cycle of bourgeois desire for the naïve,” and Italy, to many travelers, represented just that naïveté.

Yet, the Romantic notion of *Fernliebe* (love of the faraway),[17] though certainly a factor, cannot do justice to the possibility of cultural Eros as a creative work, and it does not suffice to explain how this Eros functioned in Jewish imagination. Nor can we easily subsume the Jewish love for Michelangelo under its German counterpart, explaining it as merely following the spirit of the time, a German love, then, in Jewish disguise. If there remains something peculiar in the Jewish reception of Michelangelo, a special elective affinity that crossed and blurred the boundaries of both Jewish and German cultures, then it could not have been the attention itself to Michelangelo, but only the form and meaning of the encounter with his life and work. We must, then, look further to understand how love, the most elusive and universal human theme, can be a Jewish variation.

Love

The Jewish love for Michelangelo is “love.” We begin with the simple proposition that there is such a thing as love, love in the lower case, that is, not immortal and exclusive, much less saintly and selfless, but fluid, fleeting, erotic, and capricious, just as one would “love” the Florentine hills, as Simmel wrote in a fragment on this subject, without the desire to live there permanently, nor however, to merely admire them from a distance.[18] Being in love with such love is no methodical act; but neither is it a purely irrational passion. It is, as Simmel put it, a “creative formation of the basic relationship between soul and world,” whereby “soul” meant no more to Simmel, and no less, than “enduring creativity”; or it is, as Hermann Cohen wrote in the *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*, a “desire for communion (*Mitteilung*)” expressing, at the same time, a “flight from the isolation of the self,” the flight of man from himself.[19]

What gives meaning and reason to a concept of cultural love is that love, whether requited or left unanswered, does not tolerate subjectivity but is always *constitutive* of lover and beloved.[20] Just as the loving I becomes another to itself, as Simmel writes, so the beloved one becomes, by virtue of the act of love, “another being, emerging from another a priori than the one we knew, feared, revered, or met with indifference.”[21] Love constitutes as it participates; it

changes its object as it establishes it from a ground that was not there before; it is, as Hannah Arendt wrote, "world-creating," or as the sociologist Niklas Luhmann expresses this idea: "It cannot put itself at distance. It participates in its object; and its 'object' does not stand still but absorbs the act and changes itself through it."[22] Thus, Simmel, following Kierkegaard, viewed love as "one of the great forming categories of Being," a category not merely of the mind, but one that genuinely creates its object and itself anew—a reworking of the other that is met by the simultaneous desire to be reworked by the other. "See to it I do not return to me"—*fate c'a me stesso più non torni*—is the conclusion of one of Michelangelo's best-known madrigals to his late love, and it captures Simmel's dialectic of Eros as the constitution of that which is radically other, alien, and even contrary to itself, and the simultaneous desire to encompass, and to be encompassed by, the beloved you, to be one with it (*Verschmelzenwollen*).[23] "At the height of being in love," Sigmund Freud would later write, "the boundary between ego and object threatens to melt away."[24] And still later Hannah Arendt wrote: "Love, by reason of its passion, destroys the in-between which relates us to and separates us from others."[25]

In this dialectic, in love's yearning for selfhood and, at the same time, for the "encompassing" (*umgreifende Etwas*), which Freud would have called the "oceanic feeling," and which Martin Buber understood as *das Umfassende*, lies, for Simmel, the transcendence of every erotic relationship, the necessity of every love to live by its own laws, removed from the "stream of life," freed from its vital purpose, in contradiction even to the world. Arendt, therefore, speaks of love's "total unworldliness" rendering it "perhaps the most powerful of all antipolitical human forces."[26] But this means that in every love there is, as Simmel writes, also a love of freedom, a life "beyond rootedness," a restless evolution and "becoming another," the desire to be "more-than-life." In this desire lies love's ability to resist the world, yet also its denial of life, which is, ultimately, the denial of oneself, the "tragic music" that sounds from afar at the doors of Eros.[27]

We speak of love for lack of a better term; love not as a metaphor, but as a mode of understanding the world. "We understand only through love," Wilhelm Dilthey wrote in 1888, referring to love not as mere empathy, or as universal compassion, but as a hermeneutic concept, a foundation of understanding and a constitutive principle of *paideia*.[28] Unrequited love was, thus, to Scholem (as to Arendt), more than a descriptive concept in understanding modern German Jewish history as a theater of assimilation and acculturation, but an attempt to understand German Jews, himself included, as they understood themselves—to

relive their love and to contemplate its afterlife. Zygmunt Bauman, while rejecting Scholem's image of the offended lover and his lament of "unrequited adoration," still speaks of a Jewish "romance with assimilation," stormy, tragic, and "occasionally ludicrous," but a romance nonetheless, filled with the same ambivalence characteristic of the modern individual or, for that matter, the modern lover.[29]

Whether romance, love, or folly, "assimilation" is, of course, no term that satisfies the dialectics of lover and beloved: of becoming another rather than, and in contrast to, becoming alike.[30] Cultural eroticism, as a creative work of love, desires difference. To be sure, as Simmel reminds us, the soul bound by love "no longer belongs to itself in the same way it did before"; but this "no longer" is experienced by the lover as an "expansion of the I," an act of self-fashioning rather than unqualified submission and dissolution. Indeed, "only the lover," Simmel writes, "is a truly free spirit," free because the lover alone can encounter difference without anything preceding it, without judgment and without need for sameness.[31] Only the lover can step beyond rootedness, beyond *Wurzelhaftung*, to enter, without fear, the encompassing.

There is, then, something fundamentally truthful in Scholem's memory of modern Jews as unhappy lovers, truthful not because their love was simple adoration or, as Ahad Haam, wrote in 1891, "inner enslavement,"[32] but because their love was love: because it was more than romance but less than submission. Their letters, books, and poems are diaries of unfulfilled desire, but they are also notes of protest against man's apathy and runes of hope for a better world. No better term than love—encompassing, accusing eroticism—could do justice to the blind, yet also visionary, enthusiasm for culture, high and low, for *paideia* and passion, book or image, and for the idea of a lovable humanity. No other interest lies in this affair, no motive other than the yearning and pride of all unhappy lovers: To be loved wholly by the beloved. "I love, it is no burden to you," could have been their epitaph.

Distance

Distance elevates love, and not seldom to the extent of transfiguration. But distance can also help this love to better understand itself. Hans-Georg Gadamer stressed the hermeneutic significance of temporal distance, arguing that understanding, which, to him, meant primarily "to understand oneself in the thing to be understood," occurred in a space between "strangeness" and "familiarity"; that understanding happens not despite temporal separation and historical difference but precisely because of it: "It is enough to say," writes

Gadamer, "that one understands *differently*, if one understand *at all*."[33]

As we understand differently and at all across and by virtue of the boundary of time we understand across and by virtue of the boundaries of space as well: through the hermeneutics of cultural distance. "Indeed, men transplanted from such a distance could no longer have any secrets," writes the narrator in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* of 1721, indicating that the truthfulness of the outsider would surpass the intimate, yet at the same time inhibited knowledge of the insider, reversing their hermeneutic vantage points—a reversal, to be sure, that understands *through* distance, rather than *from* it.[34] Reversed again, the "decipherment of what we are in the light of what we are no longer," as Pierre Nora will later put it,[35] speaks to the distance from oneself which remembering and lure of otherness traverse with passion and awe. Just as the stranger, to use Simmel's writings again, stands in a unique hermeneutic place between "nearness and remoteness," rendering him a disengaged observer and most intimate confidant at once, so the interrupted I of love becomes a stranger to itself, and yet one that also emerges with new familiarity and canniness.[36] "See to it I do not return to me," epitomizes what the Eros of culture, as the sum of our signs, represents: a recognition not merely of oneself, but of oneself as other, the realization that love will not let myself be mine again, for "she has stolen me from myself," but a recognition also that this estrangement will return to me a self that is inalienably mine.[37]

More than by accidental, playful, association, the poet's passion explains to us how the Eros of culture resists resemblance of lover and beloved: how it constitutes rather than absorbs. We speak today of cultural "co-constitution," "performance," and creative antagonism in order to break with the outlived conventions of a one-sided encounter and passive imitation.[38] But we should speak, perhaps, of love as a creative work. For in the world of Eros there is neither assimilation nor a clear sense of cultural boundary. There is only desire that opens up. But this desire need not be mutual and should not betray the fact that co-constitution rarely occurs as a symmetrical act. As sentimental as Scholem's image of the unrequited lover seems to be, it hauntingly preserves the possibility of a love constituting no more than the lover, while leaving the beloved unharmed. "See to it I do not return to me" is the lover's call that rebounds from the beloved's will to be the same.

Hope

Remote and near, love's self-estrangement foreshadows what we colloquially term hope. Ernst Bloch wrote of hope as a form of cognition, a "dreaming

forward" that, unlike "hoping" in the colloquial sense, meant "active anticipation" (*tätige Erwartung*), the awareness of the unfinished as "tomorrow's conscience."[39] In love's unfulfilledness, in its vigilant "daydreaming" and not-yet, as Bloch would put it, lay its possibility of being more than itself: In the romantic pains of *Fernliebe* originates, as Hermann Cohen clearly saw, the love not only for the faraway but also for the remotest one (*der Fernste*). It was, then, the love of the stranger, as Cohen wrote in 1900, that lead to the discovery of the human being.[40] Or, as he wrote fifteen years later: "It was the stranger who helped the commandment of love emerge. In the stranger man was recognized as a human being. Thus, love for the stranger is the principle [*Urmotiv*] of human love."[41] Strangeness and love found a correlation in Cohen that opens itself to a perhaps less cynical view of the distant and "exotic." And it is here that Jewish love for Michelangelo, that Jewish daydreaming, assumes greater weight: Michelangelo mattered because his art and self spoke to the Jewish condition and to the condition of humanity encompassing it. Just as Friedrich Schiller, to use but one example, came to represent for German Jews less the national poet he represented for Germans than a "spokesman of pure humanity," as Scholem put it, so was Michelangelo symbolic not only of the Italian Renaissance, much less of the Christian world, not even of the great German love for Italy, but of the human condition, of "life as a whole," as Georg Simmel once wrote, or as the Danish Jewish humanist and scholar of German literature Georg Brandes put it in 1924, of "humanity's conscience," a conscience filled with hopes, imaginary worlds, and infinite introspection.[42]

This is not to say, however, that there exists a special Jewish affinity to humanism rooted in a higher moral sensibility. Judaism is not particularly humanistic, though it can be, and humanism is not particularly Jewish, much less particularly moral. But there is, perhaps, a particularly Jewish *hope* for humanity's conscience, the hope shared by the pariah who is also a rebel, to paraphrase Hannah Arendt, German and still a Jew, the hope of the offended lover that there is something greater than love.[43] Love, for the Jewish lover of Michelangelo, was an act in full consciousness, rooted in an elective feeling of kinship and familiarity, and rooted no less in a sentiment of sober realism and alienation from the failures of emancipation, enlightenment, and, in its last analysis, German Jewish coexistence. Michelangelo, as this study will try to argue, served as a mirror of Jewish self-recognition, a distant mirror and one of many, yet one that stood out for its simultaneous meaning of strangeness and spiritual asylum, its unconsummated love and endless passion for the human as it existed only in the work of art.

Art

The work of art in its Jewish context requires a brief digression. Not that this context requires a justification of any kind. Recent scholarship has, at last, outgrown its fascination with the supposedly oxymoronic nature of "Jews and art" and "Jewish art," and it is no longer necessary to dispel the erroneous assumption that the biblical commandment against the graven image (Ex. 20:4–6 and Deut. 5:7–9), which has generally been interpreted to be a fence against idolatry, could have prevented Jews at any time from appreciating, collecting, and even producing art.[44] To the contrary, it may well be argued that it was precisely the "contested" status of the image in Judaism, as all that is presumably "forbidden," which shaped only more acutely a certain "Jewish attitude" toward art and visual representation—an "aniconic sensibility," as Barbara Mann recently wrote, which was also a heightened awareness of the image that would account for a "special relation" between Judaism and modernism.[45] But it may as well be argued that the modern Jewish *Bürgertum* was by and large oblivious to such a "Jewish attitude" and untroubled by biblical interdictions, and that their special relationship to modernism was accidental rather than aesthetic. Indeed, whether aniconically disposed or not, the modern Jewish public rarely refrained from entering museums, dedicating monuments, and bringing art to their living rooms.[46] One can only marvel at the number of prominent Jewish patrons and collectors, whom Arnold Zweig, writing in 1933, called the "backbone of painting" in Germany before the catastrophe.[47] Jewish artists were no rarity themselves since the beginnings of the nineteenth century, and one should not be surprised at the list not only of early Jewish painters but also sculptors gaining international respect in their time: Jacob Guttmann, Joseph Engel, Friedrich Beer, Rudolf Marcuse, and, of course, the Virginian Moses Jacob Ezekiel, who settled in Rome in 1874 and was occasionally compared to Michelangelo himself, stand out as formidable artists at a time when the notion of "Jewish art" was still less than evident.[48]

Even among the Orthodox, though skeptical at times about the plastic arts, the art of painting was not only tolerated but, as the examples of Jewish artists such as Moritz Daniel Oppenheim or Isidor Kaufmann illustrate, highly valued. Of Oppenheim, who spent some of his most formative years between 1821 and 1825 in Rome, Florence, and Naples, studying the masters of the Renaissance while remaining an observant Jew all his life, the modern Orthodox weekly *Der Israelit* wrote in 1884 that it was his "ardent love for our sacred religion and the deeply religious feeling expressed in all his artistic creations" which "won him the hearts of every son and daughter of our people."[49] By 1900, the same *Der*

Israelit could run a lead article for its "Torah-true" readership affirming unapologetically the existence not only of Jewish artists but of "Jewish art" in the proper sense.[50] By the same time, the upscale and secularly oriented Jewish magazine *Ost und West* announced the creation of a *Kunstverlag* in the service of reviving Jewish art, proclaiming that, in fact, "the fire of Jewish art was never extinguished—it continued to glow for centuries beneath the ashes and will rise again, like a Phoenix, to a new day and to a new beauty."[51]

Paradoxically, such unqualified and passionate affirmations of the visual as a truly regenerative force did not necessarily dispense with the conventional, if also sophisticated, myth of Jews being essentially a "people of the ear," a theme of Hebraic self-affirmation that would resonate in all Jewish aesthetics from the modern to the contemporary period. "Paganism sees its god, Judaism hears Him," was the often repeated formula of the Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, who, in 1846, likened classical Judaism to a precursor of Protestant iconoclasm. Only a committed iconoclast as Graetz could note in his travel diary of 1854 that "after a while, Venice became boring to me. Art collections, museums, armories, antiques—it all remains eternally the same."[52]

The Jewish modern encounter with art, then, which accompanied Jewish emancipation since the Enlightenment, embraced the image and, at the same time, repelled it, a dialectic that mirrored not only the modern dialectic of social and cultural assimilation and *simultaneous* intellectual or spiritual dissimilation but also the dialectic of modernist aesthetics itself. Indeed, however self-problematic it sought to be, the Jewish reclamation of art opened also a social window to partaking in modernity, to becoming part in modernity's universal message. "In art and religion," Max Lieberman once confessed, "I am a convinced pantheist."[53] It was not only Jewish art that inspired the Jewish beholder, but art as such, and in particular the *avant-garde*, for it was here that art became most certainly a medium of aesthetic liberation.[54] When Ephraim Moshe Lilien, one of the most prominent artists in the service of a fin-de-siècle "Jewish renaissance," lamented in an open letter that modern Jewish patronage had little interest in supporting Jewish art, he expressed his disregard for exactly this universal tendency: "Have you ever seen the works of a Jewish artist on the walls of a Jewish salon?"[55]

And what about the walls of a Jewish bedroom? One only need to listen to the recollections of Henry Kellermann, a German Jewish youth leader in prewar Berlin: "My parents' bedroom . . . was decorated with a large reproduction of the Sistine Chapel and of a Ruisdael with the familiar withering tree in the foreground."[56] Of Georg Simmel's private seminars at his home in the Frankfurt

Westend district Kurt Singer remembers: “We congregated in his living room, where Mrs. Simmel sat under a large Botticelli reproduction serving tea.”[57] And in Rachel Katznelson’s diary of a young Zionist pioneer in Eretz Israel we find a note on how she and her comrades spent Passover in Jerusalem shopping for art: “We came upon beautiful pictures and purchased a Michelangelo, we lay in bed and counted the pictures we had bought.”[58]

The Jewish taste for art, in other words, was no Jewish taste at all, and even if a family as respected as the Rothschilds—to provide an obvious example of nineteenth-century Jewish patronage—were among the earliest supporters of the young Moritz Oppenheim, their vast collection was, naturally, devoted to art and artifacts from Christian Italy.[59] But this was an indication less of their resolve to assimilate than of their educated taste and appreciation, and of their hope that art would always be above past and prejudice.

If we can still speak of Jewish acculturation and assimilation, and I believe we can despite its concomitant processes of constitution and self-fashioning, then it was not only a measure of self-protection, but expressed “a deep inner need,” as Stefan Zweig observed in his recollections of the *World of Yesterday*, a “desire for home, tranquility, rest, security, and un-strangeness [*Unfremdheit*].” The Jewish love for art encompassed this desire in a complete and uncontentious way: “Only with regard to art,” writes Zweig of his childhood city, which could as well have been, in this respect, any European metropolis, “did everyone in Vienna feel an equal right, for love of art was experienced in Vienna as a common duty.”[60] For Jews, this love promised not only an unalienable right to be at home but also access to an “artificial pseudoaristocracy” that both mirrored and defied an otherwise highly stratified society, modeling itself in the unrealized image of Habsburg “cultural supranationality.” Indeed, behind the Jewish love for art, as Zweig remembers in 1937, writing from his British exile, lay a “secret longing to dissolve, through flight into the spiritual, one’s mere Jewishness into the universally human.”[61] This secret longing, though it rarely advocated actual dissolution of identity, not only explains the Jewish taste for modernism but also for the aesthetic ideals of the Renaissance, which, as George Mosse remembered from his own childhood in Berlin, led to a veritable vogue among German Jewish patricians to have themselves portrayed in full Renaissance costume.[62] The same ideals and hopes, perhaps, accompanied the Jewish traveler to Italy and animated, as has often been noted, scores of Jewish scholars of the Renaissance, from Aby Warburg, to Erwin Panofsky, to Erich Auerbach, to Bernard Berenson, to mention only a few;[63] and they would, finally, impel the Jewish searcher for Michelangelo.

Desire

If there ever was a phenomenon that could be called, in good conscience and not without some subtle irony, "German-Jewish," then it may well have been the shared passion for Italian culture, whose archetypal literary font remain, of course, Goethe's Italian Journeys of 1786 and 1788. United in their projected image of Italy as a destination of desire that would free the traveler from all restricted life, that would somehow undo and break open the inner limits of their being, Germans and Jews frequently looked toward the South as a symbol of alternative existence, as the source of true self-transformation: "It is as if his entire nature changed," wrote the melancholy poet August von Platen in 1824 about the German tourist experiencing Italy.[64] And while soaking his body in a rural Italian stream, Wilhelm Heinse, the author of the licentious novel *Ardinghello*, imagines in 1783 how, in the presence of a young nymph, "heaven and earth surrounding him would pass away in tumbling bliss to be reborn."[65] A "true rebirth" and *Umgeburt*, a "second birthday," upon entering the gates of Rome, also marked Goethe's recurring references to Italy as a "great renewal" and "rebirth reworking me from within."[66] By the early nineteenth century, German travel to Italy, along with its Anglophone counterpart, had become an inveterate social and literary cliché, so common that Heinrich Heine could not but remark how "even the driest philistine" would "fall into ecstasy" and "flap his wings" at the mere sound of the word.[67]

But this should not obscure the fact that Heine, too, experienced an "expansion of the soul" crossing the Alps in 1828, and that Italy did indeed represent a sort of refuge for those longing to be different: For the German, who did not feel quite "German" and who, like the sorry von Platen, or the adventurous, mischievous Goethe himself, searched for a "feeling of a freer life, of a higher existence, lightness, and grace"; and for the German Jew, whose Jewishness and Germanness had always been to some degree in question and on trial and who would gaze at the Eternal City from a distance and perhaps compare himself, as Freud would a century later, to Moses barred from entering the Promised Land.[68] Reducing their love for Italy to a mere *fatigue du nord*, therefore, may not do justice to the particular *Anders-Streben* (the struggle to be other than oneself, or self-othering, as Hegel would have put it) that allowed Germans and Jews at the margins of their respective Germanness and Jewishness to live the practical illusion of overcoming the limitations of their marginality, whether self-imposed or forced upon them.[69] Thus, Goethe frequently viewed himself as a "Nordic refugee," playing on a theme of self-estrangement Herder had employed to characterize the Italy-intoxicated Winckelmann (who was

murdered in Trieste in 1769): “At the border of a country to which you have become a stranger [*Fremdling*] . . . you hurried to the other land to find piece and respite.”[70] Likewise, arriving in Genoa at the end of 1880, Friedrich Nietzsche, who by then was sufficiently disenchanted with his “German” period, believed to have discovered a “life that was true to our innermost desires, and *coming* true, a living without hurry, without someone else’s conscience watching us and everything we do.”[71] To Dorothea Schlegel, Moses Mendelssohn’s oldest daughter, who—by then a devout Catholic—traveled in Italy between 1818 and 1820, Rome appeared as the city “where all yearning for distance is silenced.”[72] Henriette Herz, the grande dame of Jewish salon culture, spoke of Italy as the “great word” and “golden halo” that had been before her eyes and in her dreams since childhood.[73] An “end to all dreaming” and a “beginning of self-knowledge,” wrote the German painter Anselm Feuerbach about his arrival in Rome in 1857.[74] And if we listen to yet another Jewish traveler from the German lands, the writer, revolutionary activist, and feisty advocate of women’s rights Fanny Lewald, who lived in Italy over an extended period between 1845 and 1846, we find no less enthusiastic utterances evoking a “different life and heightened existence in a fairy land” and promising glimpses into a “long-anticipated and desired world.”[75] Half-serious and half in jest, as usual, Heinrich Heine recalls the “beginning of a new spring . . . , new feelings of freedom sprouting like roses, and a secret longing,” as he imagines the land beyond the Tyrolean mountains, wishing “to grow wings” to fly toward the fragrant smell of citrus fruit. But he also wonders: “Was it the nature of an elective affinity itself that found an echo in my heart, admiring its own glitter of spring?”[76]

It would not be imprudent to speculate that it was this distance-affinity and search for freedom and difference from an unfulfilled German or, for that matter, Jewish self, more than anything about Italy’s essential qualities, that inspired such dreamers and travelers; that Italy, in other words, served as a convenient, yet also—considering the cumbersome crossing of the Alps—sufficiently inconvenient, mirror for the glitter of German and Jewish yearnings: a theatrical stage for an ideal past and, at the same time, a residue of virginal nature that more often than not unfolded at the exclusion of the Italians themselves, who existed chiefly as objects of sexual fantasies or as mere extras in the grand plot of Arcadia. The Germans in Italy, as their substantial colony of “Nazarene” artists living in Rome between 1800 and 1850 suggests,[77] preferred to be *unter sich*, among themselves, and the Jewish traveler often found among these Italianized compatriots an uncharted freedom to be one of them at last, to be German in the distant, transformed, Mediterranean sense, and to be, in the reborn

spirit of the ancient world, a truly legitimate child of humanity. The German Jew, even if baptized and fully acculturated, had to travel to Italy to become a "German-Jew," to assume a fictional citizenship in a world long passed. At her arrival in Rome, whose cityscape forces tears into her eyes and appears as nothing short of an "annunciation and fulfillment" (foreshadowing, in fact, her subsequent baptism), Lewald finds herself "happily carried by the waves" of a society of displaced Germans (*Fremdengesellschaft*), where everyone seemed "elevated above themselves, for they lived far away from their own customs, granting, and taking for themselves, the freedom to live as they pleased."[78] Liberated from the "petty accidents" of nationality, these voluntary exiles accept her into their midst without, it seems, the slightest prejudice; they are "natural and unconstrained," as the Italians themselves, speaking their minds at any moment, and for the first time, in her unmarried midlife, Lewald begins to feel not only a citizen of the world but also a woman again with youthful, intimate expectations soon to be fulfilled. "What will they think of us back in Germany?" wonders Lewald's Roman confidante, Ottilie von Goethe: "They will think of us as completely indecent and unmannerly."[79]

Amor

To be sure, the German colony of Nazarenes, who lived in Rome to recover a new Christian piety, was hardly as perfect an example of tolerance, as Lewald's experience and imagination would suggest. As committed a Jewish painter as Moritz Oppenheim, for instance, encountered a much less enthusiastic welcome, and one quick glance at Friedrich Overbeck's programmatic painting *Italia und Germania* (1811–28) leaves little doubt over the patronizing Germanic tenor of the Nazarenes and similar German communities of voluntary exiles.[80] Nor, however, was the Nazarene neopietism, which in more than one instance turned the German Protestant into a devoutly "unkempt" Catholic, as Henriette Herz noted in her Roman memories,[81] representative of what the Italian experience had really in store for the German traveler. Truth be told, the profile of the typical *Deutschrömer* of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, one might suspect, later centuries as well, was anything but that of a stiff admirer of religious piety and ancient ruins. It is no accident that Goethe's contemporary Wilhelm Heinse, having reached Messina, was struck by a sudden revelation about the natural value of polygamy, and the "greatness of character" and "life of freedom" that lies in sharing a woman, as the ancients did supposedly, "like a hearty pot roast," and that Goethe himself returns from his Italian adventures to try out the lures of an open marriage, not to mention August von Platen's

Mediterranean license to pursue handsome Italian boys.[82] Goethe, of course, animated the idea of the South (*das Süden*) to a traveling poet's object of desire, turning the city of Rome, the site, into the body of a scandalous, erotic love affair. Rome, the temple of Amor, thus became interchangeable with the ever seductive Roman mistress and "lovely maid," and the poet, leaving behind the moral codes of the gloomy North, with her enamored visitor. Without love, the poet contemplates, the world would not be the world, Rome would not be Rome, and the poet would not be himself.[83]

Indeed, the "moral sexlessness," which was to become the typical Nazarene ideal of sanitizing the aesthetic concupiscence of the Ancients, had little effect on a traveler as Goethe, and less effect even on Heinse, who insisted that the main purpose of painting and sculpture lay in their "voluptuousness," a favorite term in his vocabulary, which he applied to anything from Venetian virgins to Christian saints to the land itself.[84] Naples thus becomes a "voluptuous nest," a "naked Venus body"; the watermelon Heinse is about to open, "ripe as a Roman girl"; Rome itself a "bosom with love-arms"; and the whole country a "world that consumes everything with love."[85] Appalled by the same erotic image, a pedantic traveler such as Hippolyte Taine would later comment on the "sanguinary," "savage," and "imaginative" Italians and their "dunghill" capital: "Their heart is drowned in the universal sea of voluptuousness."[86]

Homecoming

It can be argued that the eroticization of Italy and the dream of an untrammeled paradise of passions, which Taine dismissed as simply "too Latin" and not "Germanized" enough, reflected not only common sensual fantasies but also a conscious reworking of a cultural trope described in later years by the art historian Wilhelm Worringer as dichotomy of the "abstract" North and the "empathic" Mediterranean.[87] Indeed, signs of Jewish Mediterraneanism were not uncommon, and it may have been precisely the "emphatic" nature of Mediterranean civilization that made it, as Emil Ludwig wrote in 1927, not only "debonair," "cheerful," and "lovable," but also, as he believed, immune to Nordic supremacy and anti-Semitism.[88] Sigmund Freud insisted that Jews were not a "foreign Asiatic race" but "remnants of the Mediterranean peoples and heirs of the Mediterranean civilization," and Hugo von Hofmannsthal, writing from the Sicilian shores, celebrated the confluence of Orient and Occident that made the Mediterranean a region and culture of connectivity.[89] Writing four years later, Arnold Zweig even envisioned a Jewish *Remediterranisierung* through Zionism: "The Jew," he writes in his famous essay "*The New Canaan*,"

"is . . . with certainty a *Mittelmeermensch*: a man of the brighter and sweeter Mediterranean, dispersed among the inhibited, pensive, closed and taciturn-reserved peoples of the more barren countries."[90] Even the ancient Jewish struggles with the Greek and Roman empires ought to be understood, according to Zweig, as struggles "among brothers," unlike the "creeping" wars of Nordic peoples, whose murderousness came from an entirely different "way of being." The Jewish return to the Mediterranean, then, would be homecoming in the truest sense, and the Jewish traveler, whether to Spain, Italy, or Greece, would literally feel, as Zweig observes, as if "among Jews," integrated not by law and tolerance but by the climate itself: The pathos of the Mediterranean man, the liveliness of gesture and expression, would penetrate all ambiguity turning introverted neighbors (*Nebenmenschen*) into openhearted companions (*Mitmenschen*).[91] Jewish re-Mediterraneanization, Zweig believed, would entail a fourfold act of liberation and, in fact, even "revelation": "Freedom of the body, freedom from law, freedom from state and society, and freedom from the one's own inhibitions."[92] It would thus be the return and reintegration into a life of lightness and the realization that "Eros is the power reigning throughout and within the world."[93]

Eros

Arnold Zweig's admittedly questionable cultural "anthropology" should, of course, not obscure the overwhelming feeling of genuine pride German Jews had in their Germanness. One is not surprised to read in the accounts of another Jewish traveler to the Mediterranean, the Magdeburg rabbi Georg Wilde, how he was deeply moved by Jewish pupils performing German folk songs in Constantinople, and how he and his fellow travelers burst out into the "Deutschlandlied" on their way home.[94] Yet, Zweig's sentiment still reflected a desire that there was such a thing as "Mediterranean culture" that could offer what the North had denied its Jewish subjects: unqualified, unambiguous companionship. Thus, it was precisely the "erotic," not sufficiently "Germanized" disposition of the Mediterranean that contributed to Italy's quasi-innate, albeit "naïve," humanism. And it may have been the same eroticism and the same desire for the unconstrained that found a parallel in the Jewish love for Michelangelo.

But here again, it was already Goethe—for whom Eros was nothing less than an *Urwort* of our existence—who served as a model of erotic Michelangelism: "I am, at this moment, so enamored with Michelangelo," he writes standing in the Sistine Chapel, "that after him I cannot even enjoy nature any more, for I cannot

see her with the same great eyes as did he."[95] "Born anew" (*umgeboren und erneuert*), he leaves the chapel, whereas the impressions of Raphael, whom the German artists tried to emulate, are mild and orderly and, at times, even too beautiful.[96] In modern literature, Raphael and Michelangelo have constituted, of course a pair of irreconcilable antipodes. And while scores of scholars—from Reynolds to Herman Grimm to the Teutonic ideologue Albert Brinkmann—broke a lance for the latter, the competition unfolded not only on grounds of style and taste, but, with greater force, on worldview and cultural ideals.[97] Nietzsche's own articulation of the Michelangelo-Raphaelean divide—"[Michelangelo] saw the ideals of a culture nobler than the Christo-Raphaelian," he wrote in 1884—was particularly evocative to a generation of both German and Jewish lovers of Michelangelo.[98] Dubbed a "*super uomo*" resisting the "effeminate" values of Christian Europe, Nietzsche's Michelangelo signified rebellion against establishment and search for a new society: a "law giver of new values" (*Gesetzgeber von neuen Werthen*) and "conqueror made perfect" (*Siegreich-Vollendeten*), Nietzsche wrote of Michelangelo, suggesting an uncompromising image of a rebel against conventional style, religious illusion, and social norms.[99]

But frequently this image was also one of an outsider (*Sonderling*), tolerated only at the margins of society, "constantly in love" and pining for the loved one's attention: "A powerful urge to submit himself, an insatiable longing to become one with the other, to lose himself in great togetherness of feeling, drives him as a restless searcher to all human beings and renders him, at the same time, a stranger [*Fremdling*] among them."[100] One can hardly find a more fitting expression of the modern Jewish predicament than this portrait of Michelangelo from 1901 by the German art historian Henry Thode, who had a strong penchant for the world of Richard Wagner and little sympathy for the "wrathful" world of the "Old Testament." For Thode, the "primal power of love" (*Urkraft der Liebe*) was the origin of Michelangelo's raw genius, of his "childlike naiveté," which kept him both a lover into his old age and a follower of the unenlightened, yet powerful Catholic myth;[101] but it was the origin also of his suffering and solitude, and of his deeply human feeling. "Humanity did not accept him . . . , he felt excluded from the table of this world," writes Alfred Döblin, who rediscovered his own Judaism as National Socialism was on the rise, in a powerful chapter of his *Hamlet*, a "merry debate on love" modeled undoubtedly after Castiglione's *Courtier*.[102] A "great misanthrope," Emil Ludwig wrote in 1930, having returned, as Döblin, to his Jewish roots, Michelangelo's "heart was still immersed in humanity."[103] Tirelessly, the artist's "manly hand carves with

force and mastery the human form from stone, and yet remains eternally strange to humanity itself." No wonder, Ludwig concludes, that Michelangelo saw himself most clearly in the image of the "lover, the dying one, the eternal slave."[104] This love for the slave, the universal compassion for the suffering and poor, also animated the Swiss utopian socialist Hans Mühlestein to interpret, at the eve of World War I, Michelangelo's sonnets to Vittoria Colonna as the rebirth of the primal Christian idea of love and the heralding of a "coming humankind."[105]

Michelangelo's *Liebesverlangen*, even if it echoed, as Jacob Burckhardt suspected, no more than a cultural mode of "sublimated hopeless love" typical of his age, thus became not only a theme emblematic of his erotic "strangeness," fusing his homoeroticism and apparent bisexualism with his late, "platonic," love for Vittoria Colonna, the widowed marchesa of Pescara, with his love for beauty and love itself, but also a symbol of the unloved stranger everywhere.[106] If Thomas Mann, in a late essay on Michelangelo's erotic passions, spoke of a solitary artist, a deeply and "nakedly human" poet at the margins and outside of culture, "stirred up" by unfulfilled and unfulfillable desire, an untiring lover of a beauty greater than form, who thought of himself as deformed and unworthy (particularly with regard to his legendary broken nose), then we can begin to imagine the curious Jewish sympathy for the mistreated and idiosyncratic, wretchedly human, yet also "superhuman" Italian master.[107] Conscious of his "ugliness" and driven by the "dissonances of life," wrote Georg Simmel, Michelangelo's poetry contained both his "superhumanity" and "strangeness" in ways no "loving submission" could accomplish. "His entire sensation of love, insofar as he was able to express it in poetry, was guided by a single thought: The contradiction of his personality with that of his beloved."[108] In the life and loves of Michelangelo this contradiction would remain unresolved. As all great lovers and "erotic natures," Michelangelo remained a tragic being, violently moved by his passions and by a love so powerful that it became one with fate: "This love," writes Simmel, "is no mere affect . . . but the air we breathe and cannot escape, a metaphysical fate that lies, sultry and ardent, heavy and piercing, on all humankind and human being. It seizes us like the revolution of the earth, whirling us around . . . as if it were an objective power governing the entire world."[109] One thinks, inevitably, of Dante's cosmic love, "*l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle [the love that moves the sun and the other stars]*."[110] But one thinks also of Freud's analysis of the "eternal Eros" as civilization's hope and *Unbehagen*, or discontents: "It is that we are never so defenceless against suffering as when we love, never so helplessly unhappy as when we have

lost our loved object or its love."[111] Indeed, Simmel's Michelangelo is "superhuman," not exactly as Nietzsche's fin-de-siècle readers understood the term, but as one whose unrequited Eros is sublimated in his love of beauty, who is immersed, as Simmel writes, in the "metaphysical reality of life as such," in the "lived totality of the idea of humanity," in the "metaphysical feeling for the essence of the world" which expressed his tragic desire and hope for "self-redemption": The search of a "tortured soul" for a "peace the world cannot grant."[112]

World

That Michelangelo did not seek redemption in the world to come but in life itself rendered him, to Simmel, not only a man of the Renaissance but also, and perhaps, more importantly, a man beyond religion, a searcher for the infinite "without taking refuge in the realm of otherworldly realities and ultimately dogmatic revelations."[113] Where Hermann Thode celebrated Michelangelo's "ardor of Christian faith," interpreting his art as an overcoming of ancient mythology, an overcoming even of the Renaissance's pagan splendor, and concerted expectation of the arrival of Christ,[114] Simmel sought to reinsert Michelangelo into the spirit of the Renaissance, stressing his "sensual passion," his "love of beauty," his tragic, Faustian, struggle to find the redemptive fulfillment of life nowhere but—in life.[115] "Shackled to the earth, and drawn to the stars," wrote Emil Ludwig, the unredeemed prisoner was the eternal symbol of Michelangelo's existence.[116] Both could draw, of course, on Nietzsche, who had powerfully extracted Michelangelo from the cultural context of Christianity, "penetrating all the Christian delusions and prejudices of his time" to seek a culture that was modeled upon the classical ideal.[117] "Superempirical," Simmel called this ideal in Michelangelo, rather than otherworldly [*überirdisch*]: "The religious desire awakened by Christianity and expressed in form in the Gothic period, has fallen, as if in a rotation around its own center, toward the worldly, towards the experiential though never experienced."[118] As in his love, Michelangelo's art remained worldly for Simmel, yet striving towards more than world. And as his love, his art remained unrequited by the otherworldly, finite and fragmentary, pointing toward the infinite, revealing the "absolute" while concealing it with what seems most otherworldly yet is most worldly: sensual passion.

Gods

“His soul was a pagan soul [*Heidenseele*],” writes Georg Brandes of Michelangelo.[119] And yet, or precisely because of that, he became “humanity’s conscience,” modeling God after his own image, the image of an artist never content with his work and never willing to rest. In a peculiar way, that perhaps only an interdiction—as symbolic as it may have been—against the graven image could explain, the German Jewish love for Michelangelo was a love also for a new paganism and, no less, for the sensual profusion of Catholic culture, in whose mysteries and plastic forms the exiled gods of antiquity were thought to be still alive. “A good religion for the elegant nobleman, who can afford to spend the entire day in leisure, and for the connoisseur of art,” as Hyazinth, better known as Hirsch, puts it in Heinrich Heine’s biting vignettes from an Italian journey, Catholicism, to the Jewish eye, appeared as an abundant storehouse of *Schwärmerei und Wunder*, wild romanticism and miracles, a religion of aristocratic *dolce far niente*, adorned with an elaborate aesthetic of cult, mysterious melancholy, and superstition unknown to the Protestant discipline of pure reason, sober piety, and diligence. “Between us,” muses Heine’s Hyazinth, who serves his master, the Marchese Christophoro di Gumpelino, a devout Catholic with an offensively large nose, the Protestant religion is “as pure as a glass of water: it does not hurt, it does not help.” It is a religion too rational to work wonders; it is “capable of nothing.” But what about the old religion of Judaism? “Oh, stay away from me with the old-Jewish religion,” Hyazinth replies, “I would not wish it onto my worst enemy. I tell you, it is no religion at all, but a misfortune. I avoid everything that could possibly remind me of it.”[120]

Comical as it may seem, the well-known exchange between the marchese’s servant and the German, or rather, “German,” traveler to Italy reveals more than an irreverent, free-spirited, and self-loathing Jewish voice sharpened by the ambivalence and inner contradictions of emancipation: it reveals a sense of disillusionment and profound homelessness, of disorientation and displacement; it reveals a longing for acceptance, for nobility, for a place to call one’s own. To Heine, who completed his Italian *Reisebilder* in 1829, four years after his conversion to Protestantism, the possibility to choose, to change and wear religion like a new set of clothes, which is often experienced by the emancipated Jew as a muted expectation of society rather than conviction, turns into a sad masquerade of belonging, of homecoming, of being. Like the traveling author himself, Hyazinth and the Marchese remain eternal travelers, resident aliens in the city of cities, a tragic-comical pair of parvenues modeled after Cervante’s Don Quixote, wandering the deserted lands of history, where one age ends and another has yet to begin. And while di Gumpelino’s devotion to his new religion

is heartfelt and real, while he "follows strictly the ceremonies of the sole church of salvation" and keeps his own chaplain in Rome, he remains, perhaps unknowingly, his head in a constant "cloud of incense," devoted to a secret religion beyond religion, a religion that is timeless, universal, cosmopolitan, and above all incorrigibly human: "Thus he prostrates himself every night for two hours before the Prima Donna and her baby Jesus," whispers Hyazinth about his master. "It is a beautiful work of art."[121]

The beauty of art is an ominous key to the Jewish fascination with Catholicism, especially as seen through the Italianate looking glass. Though rarely uncritical and not without irony, German Jews experienced Italian Catholicism as an essentially aesthetic "cult," whose worldly excesses appeared as logical consequences of its sensual surplus. Already Henriette Herz, traveling Rome in 1818, observed that Catholicism was far more conducive to the "sense of art and imagination" than Protestantism.[122] Writing in 1835, Abraham Geiger, the great Jewish reformer and proponent of the historically oriented Science of Judaism, attributed the success of Catholicism precisely to the "brilliant luster" and "heaven-striving fantasy" which the "artistic genius," rising under "Italy's fortunate skies," had provided to the church.[123] Likewise, Fanny Lewald, in her Italian *Bilderbuch* of 1847, commented on the "fantasy-inspiring cult" and the "mystery-world" of Catholicism, which was known to cast its spell over the non-Catholic visitor, in particular the artist.[124]

It could be argued, of course, that the peculiar Jewish affinity to Catholicism was no more than an ironic reiteration of what Schelling already described as Catholicism's aesthetic "gaiety" (*Heiterkeit*).[125] Indeed, striking a strong Protestant note that resonated both with her German Jewish and political convictions, Lewald bluntly compares Catholicism to superstition (*Aberglaube*), polytheism (*Vielgötterei*), a building of lies (*Truggebäude*), complete idolatry (*vollständiges Götzentum*), and most fulfilled paganism (*vollendetstes Heidentum*).[126] Yet, while her modern conscience is undoubtedly offended by the cultic elements of a religion, whose saints are borrowed from the Olympian mountain, her human heart, if such an unscientific metaphor is permitted to us, also feels a certain attraction to the worldly joys (*Erdenfreuden*), the inner poetry, and the sheer abundance of physical beauty that penetrates all Catholic ritual. When visiting the great Milan cathedral, her eyes, trained by Protestant simplicity, are at first blinded by the splendor, then alienated by the tumultuous action of worship, but at last fixed upon the "beautiful priest," who enters the pulpit with an expression of "satisfied happiness" to deliver a passionate sermon about the *tempesta del cuore*, about the errant paths of love, which ends in an all

but musical refrain, “sweet and affectionate like the love song of a Primo Tenore,” like an aria of unhappy farewell: “*Ritorna! Ritorna da me! [Come back, come back to me!].*”[127] And even if Fanny Lewald is not compelled to return, she cannot but notice the vitality, the sensual flavor of the sanctuary, where the women steal glances at the handsome and elegant abbot and the men chat loudly about the women they conquered the night before, and where, tucked between the worshipers feet, a dog snoozes peacefully, all in stark contrast to the life of self-abnegation in the “North” and to a Protestant culture that now appears to her as “cold, rigid, and dogmatic.”[128] Perhaps, Lewald muses, the “cheerful treason” at the “sublime idea of Christianity,” of which all of Italy has become guilty, is innocent compared to the somber Protestants who, “out of their zeal for reformation, have declared the body, the world of senses, and all enjoyment sin.”[129]

The reader of Lewald’s Italian journals will be struck by the simultaneous attraction to and repulsion from Catholic culture, by her admiration for Protestant reason and her disdain for its passionless lack of power, and finally, by her harsh words for the “rigid Mosaic system of exclusion”—which does not diminish, however, her warm feelings for the young Jewish proselyte who is publicly inducted into the Catholic church on the eave of Easter.[130] Deep and unresolved ambivalence may be one way to describe the encounter of the liberal, Germanized, Jewish traveler with what appears to be a hopelessly pagan, antirational, eternally childlike, yet also eternally beautiful way of life; a sudden, unexpected confusion of feelings may be another; a feeling of uneven love, Eros in chains, another still.

One would be too quick to reduce this peculiar emotional upheaval, as scholars, however well intentioned, have tried to do in the past, to a predominantly feminine rebellion against the social and sexual norms north of the Alps. To be sure, women’s journeys to Italy have created a literary genre of its own kind that is filled with complex emotional responses to the seemingly lascivious morals of Italian society, its physical splendor and unencumbered, “healthy fullness of life,” as Lewald writes. But the realization that Italy represented to the feminine imagination a “place of transgression, voluptuousness, and sensuality,” as one scholar puts it,[131] that it awakened forbidden sexual desires and the dream of an “alternative life,” ignores the perception of Italy as a place not only of transgression but of emotional *normalization*; and it ignores the deeper longing for a second naiveté, for a childlike innocence, with which Italians were routinely identified by their enlightened visitors. “We lived like children,” remembers Lewald in her Roman

diaries, referring not only to her late love with (naturally) a displaced German Protestant, but also to the beautifully infantile society of *Südländer* that allowed them to do so.[132] Unperturbed by German traditions and by the Enlightenment's own acts of discrimination, Italy, precisely on account of its supposed unenlightenedness, emblematized a bifurcated hope for art and Eros as forces of a social and cultural liberation, or simply, *Menschlichkeit*. "The beauty of art," muses Lewald, "is that it leads to a kind of free masonry."[133] And the beauty of Italy, to her, is that life, with its insatiable erotic pulse, becomes itself a "work of art."[134]

Dreams

"To Rome I must . . . in Rome, I will make my masterpiece. He spoke and traveled forth in ecstasy through a world imagined in his hopes."[135] Rilke's Young Sculptor shares a common dream of the artist in search of a land governed by beauty, imagination, and intimate knowledge of art and desire. This dream, as we have now gathered from our perambulating meditation, was one invoking not only aesthetic liberation but also freedom from Nordic constraints. To the German traveler, Italy promised self-creation, freer feelings, and erotic elevation; to the Jewish traveler it promised all that and perhaps also a hope to come home, no longer a pariah, to the Mediterranean cradle: "If I have a spiritual homeland" (*moledet ruchanit*), wrote Vladimir Jabotinksy about his three youthful years in Rome between 1898 and 1901, "then it is Italy. . . . There I learned to love the arts of architecture, sculpture and painting, and Latin song."[136] "The homeland of my soul," Georg Simmel wrote about Florence, "insofar as one of our kind can have a homeland at all."[137]

Considering the long history of Jewish dreams of Italy and its capital city, one cannot but find Sigmund Freud's initial hesitations to enter Rome as a place of impenetrable foreignness astonishingly misplaced. "Rome," writes Marthe Robert about Freud's forbidden longings, "symbolized in his eyes what was best and most precious in the 'other side.' For this reason it was an object of love and desire, something he coveted and to which he was irresistibly drawn, but to which he had no legitimate title."[138] Bluma Goldstein describes Freud's Rome as "a territory hostile to the Jew that needs to be conquered."[139] Carl Schorske speaks of a "forbidden wish: a longing for an assimilation to the gentile world that [Freud's] strong waking conscience—even his dream censor—would deny him."[140] Freud himself considered his persistent longings for the eternal city as "deeply neurotic."[141] In his *Interpretation of Dreams*, of 1900, he records at least

five multilayered dreams generated by the unfulfilled "desire to travel to Rome," including a veiled reference to the biblical Moses barred from entering the Promised Land: "Someone," Freud remembers a recurring dream, "leads me upon a hill to show me Rome, which appears half-veiled by a foggy haze and still so far away that I am astonished by how clearly I can see it."[142]

If Freud's Roman ambivalence seemed curiously unwarranted and anachronistic for a fin-de-siècle man beyond Judaism it also harkened back, subconsciously perhaps, to a Jewish tradition identifying Rome as the city at whose gates the Messiah was waiting among the poor. Freud's dreams belonged, in this respect, to a literary genre that connected Talmudic and modern literature with popular imagination.[143] Rome—the ominous city known to the early rabbis as *Edom*, Esau's city, or the "guilty kingdom," in which marble statues are given blankets in the winter while the children of the poor must freeze to death, as a Jewish traveler of ancient times observed—emerges as both apocalyptic and messianic, a place of Jewish hope and profound otherness, a yearning for redemption and a vision of destruction and death.[144]

Indeed, in their last analysis, Freud's Roman dreams were, as Marthe Robert concludes, "dreams of death." Like Moses, Freud fears his end having seen, however dimly, the land beyond the mountains; but unlike Moses, he meets neither physical death nor the prospect of obliterating the "Canaanite" home of "idolatrous, uncouth tribes infected with superstition," but a death of a different kind: the obliteration of his own Jewish traces—the wish "to efface his own particularities and to resemble the Philistines of the foreign city."[145] A verse from Heine's poem "*To Edom!*" from the *Rabbi of Bacherach* comes immediately to mind:

> Now our Friendship is growing stronger
> It increases daily too
> For I myself am raging longer,
> I have become almost like you.[146]

In the drama of Freud's Roman dreams, argues Robert, becoming like Edom, is the theme looming large, so large that Rome represents everything Freud is not, and his journey becomes the reenactment of the Jewish journey toward all but complete assimilation. The journey into Rome and Italy thus becomes a repetition and working through of Freud's own Jewish memories, effecting, as most readers of Freud agree, a late resuscitation of his Jewish conscience. Paradoxically, yet as many travelers before him, Freud became "Jewish" as one can become only in Catholic Italy, a traveler into his own past. The journey makes his initial hesitations vanish, for it helps him affirm his Judaism beyond and without ambivalence. Indeed, in a later edition of *Interpretation of Dreams*,

Freud adds a small gloss to his Roman dreams, commenting that although "it took some audacity to fulfill such seemingly eternal desires," he now had become a "devoted pilgrim to Rome" (*eifriger Rompilger*).[147]

Freud was certainly not the only devoted Jewish pilgrim to the Italian city of cities. Nor, as his Viennese *Landsmann* Ernst Gombrich reminds us, was his initial "reluctance" to enter Rome, a particularly Jewish neurosis. In fact, if there is any theme that binds together the tradition of German Rome neuroses it is the theme of Rome neurosis: a burning childhood dream, a purgatorial crossing of the Alps, and a reluctance to enter what is frequently imagined as an otherworldly sacred space. "My life now completely resembles a childhood dream," writes Goethe during his second trip to Rome, while the first was still accompanied by hesitation, secrecy, and almost savage desire (*Begierde*): "I hardly dared tell myself where I was headed."[148] Speaking from a far more prosaic angle, Gombrich notes that to most Viennese art lovers—and Freud, despite his questionable taste in art, was certainly one of them—"Rome seemed very far away compared to Venice or even Florence. Journeys on the crowded Italian trains were no pleasure, and if you did not yet know the *Uffizi* well, the Vatican could wait."[149] If Freud seemed reluctant, Gombrich speculates, then it was reluctance out of "awe" for a city so central to German *Bildung* and out of worry to appear as "utterly barbaric" if his stay was no more than a few days.

Far, then, from being off-limits to Jewish sensibility, the city of Rome with its ancient sites and innumerable churches represented a thoroughly legitimate and, no less, demystified travel destination for the German Jewish *Bildungbürgertum*. Already in 1885, the neo-Orthodox German Jewish monthly *Jeschurun* ran a travelogue, originally published in the Viennese daily *Neue Freie Presse*, on the "New Rome and the Jewish Ghetto," in which the author described undeniable signs of change that would pacify many a prejudice that the German Jewish reader might have held: "The old, dirty city of the popes has vanished; the chaos of buildings in the Tiber valley has been replaced by new boulevards and sunny quarters; the historic river is being regulated and cleaned up—yes, believe it or not, cleaned up!"[150] There is a new sense of historic preservation, the author assures his readers, and a new thrust toward the secular, combating "religion," "superstition," "injustice," and "ignorance," and tearing down the walls of convents and monasteries: "The new Rome is a child of freedom, [. . . it] is the most beautiful achievement of the nineteenth century; every free spirit has part in it and must be joyful in light of the triumph that the new ideas will without doubt bring over the dark medieval reign of terror."[151] That in this process of nineteenth-century gentrification and urban renewal, or as the official term was,

risanamento, the narrow alleys of the former Jewish Ghetto would have to give way to "hoe and crowbar" did not particularly trouble the author, as long as its kosher restaurant, *Vater Abraham*—at which Moses Jacob Ezekiel appears to have been a regular—stayed in business to refresh the thirsty Jewish traveler.[152]

Life

Beginning in 1901, Freud became one such traveler himself, returning to Rome every subsequent year, for reasons which seemed, at first, far removed from purpose. "I am living here all by myself," he writes to Carl Gustav Jung in September 1907, "lonely, and immersed in fantasies."[153] A few days later, between visits to the Villa Borghese, the Roman Forum, and the Vatican Museum, he laments to his family—who clearly was not invited to join—that one is always "inundated with new tasks" in this city and never "has time for anything."[154] In September 1912, Freud describes to his wife a "delicious, somewhat melancholy loneliness" while walking among the ruins across the Palatine, a gardenia in his lapel and "pretending to be the rich dandy who lives his passions."[155]

Living his passions, Freud, like generations of travelers before him, finally experienced Rome as a city of homecoming, as a place of respite where identity seemed at once confirmed and irrelevant. Rome ceased to be the "other" city, ceased to be Edom, and ceased to threaten the obliteration of Jewish traces. To the contrary, if the dynamics of assimilation and loss of identity could be adequately expressed in a language akin to the act of forgetting, then it was the image of Rome itself that formed the most powerful counterpoint to this forgetting, a symbolic site of endurance and continuity, a metaphoric alternative to assimilation. "Rome is the Eternal City," Hermann Vogelstein would later write from his American exile in 1940, "[and] the most genuine representatives of its eternity are the Jews of Rome. All else in Rome has been transformed time and again, sometimes quite entirely. Time and again might be said, 'Gone is the old; all is new.' But the Jews remained."[156] Hence, Freud, in a remarkable passage of *Civilization and Its Discontents*, in 1929, viewed the Eternal City as a macrocosmic symbol of mental life, a place where forgetting did not mean the "destruction of a memory-trace," much less its "annihilation," but to the contrary, the layering of layers, the build-up of ruins and traces, the formation of great jumbled metropolis of the mind, where "nothing which has once been formed can perish."[157] The past, in Rome, has been preserved—and has preserved *itself*—to be recovered and brought to light at any unexpected moment, and it takes only a small "flight of imagination" for Freud to think of

the city as a map in our consciousness, "in which nothing that has come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one."[158] A peculiar fantasy animates the city to a site of simultaneous events, buildings, people, and streets, to a single Now, where everything and everyone has a place without displacing the other. Rome, in Freud's fantasy, becomes the site and symbol of eternal, imperishable coexistence as it exists, of course, only in the mind.

Or perhaps not only in the mind. Three decades before Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Georg Simmel, himself a devout Jewish pilgrim to Italy, insisted that this coexistence was not only imaginary or symbolic, but that it was a reality present in the aesthetic appearance of the city and realized through the city's own aesthetic *agency*. Rome, to Simmel's eyes, emerged as nothing short of a total artwork—an "artwork of the highest order." "What makes the impression of Rome so unique," he writes in 1898, "is that the temporal distance, the distance of styles, personalities, and lives, whose traces remain everywhere, are as divergent as nowhere else, yet also forming a unity, balance, and organic belonging-together as in no other place in this world."[159] If knowledge, morality, and aesthetics consist in the formation of a unified and enduring worldview out of "antagonistic interests," then Rome, for Simmel, is the living body of this worldview, the idea of cognition, *Sittlichkeit*, and aesthetics cast into such "gigantic vitality" that no part, however ancient, alien, and useless, can shirk from this unity: "Even the most opposing element is pulled into this current."[160] A fusion of times, a coexistence and entwinement of tenses, Rome appears to us as "dreamlike presence," as Georg Simmel wrote after his Italian journey, where everything is experienced as if it were one single past, a timelessness without before and after, a "fusion of difference to unity."[161] But this dreamlike presence was not imaginary for Simmel; to the contrary, it was a sign of its "actual effect" (*wirkliche Wirksamkeit*). It was precisely the *Lebendigkeit*, the vitality of Rome's plastic presence that helped peacefully assimilate the most distant and most alien elements, "*das Fernste und das Fremdeste*," into a common aesthetic vision of humanity. "Thus Rome," writes Simmel, "shows us our true place, whereas the one we usually occupy is not ours at all, but the place of our class, our one-sided destinies, our prejudices, and our selfish illusions."[162] The Roman traveler enters a state in which "all temporal is cast off," in which all origin (*Ursprung*) continues to originate, in a simultaneous process of "assimilation, mutuality, and joining together," toward a common destiny (*Schicksal*).[163] In the Jewish imagination, then—and as such, Simmel's thought, I believe, can qualify—the myth of the Eternal City at the Tiber was assimilated into the story of a Promised

Land, whose redemptive power lay in the aesthetic autonomy and self-action of the city and its timeless inhabitants. “I want to see Rome as it endures,” writes Goethe in his diaries, “not as it passes with every decade.”[164]

Rome does not pass, cannot wither away, for it is here, and here alone, that history does not approach us from the outside but is “read from within,” created anew before the reader’s eyes: “Everything is layered around us and originates from us again,” writes Goethe.[165] It is in Rome that history takes on a second life, another youth, a life lived solely by the calendars of Eros and art. Aesthetic education in Rome seemed to occur by plastic osmosis, by an aesthetic encompassing and being encompassed that mirrored, and surpassed, the encompassing of mortal love. In our love of Rome, there cannot be, for Simmel, the same terror of alienation that so often divides lovers over the course of time, there can be no falling out of love, because there is no course of time, no falling away in the Eternal City: because the totality of Rome is imprinted in our memories “inerasably,” a cosmic painting of traces and streets in our minds that does not allow us to forget the first moment of falling in love, as it were, the first call of our “soul” to be transformed, the first words from the lover’s mouth: see, I do not return to me. Nowhere else, Simmel believes, must the human soul return to its deepest element, to its creative energy, to the forming and being formed that vouchsafes not only its “higher consciousness” but also its freedom and sovereignty. Rome is the site of eternal love, which for Simmel, himself an exemplar perhaps of the Jewish traveler, of the trammeled, unrequited lover, meant a love free from the tragic music sounding at the doors of Eros, a love that would burn not to annihilate but to live and make anew: the awakening of the human animal to the human being.[166]

Transition

With love we began, with desire we move into the next chapter of this story. The imaginary unity of love and Rome, Eros and art, which has sustained so many literati in the German and Jewish traditions, in the German Jewish tradition, comes to life in the encounter with the city, with the city as mistress, with Goethe’s *Römerin*, who rekindles in her lovers the fires doused by the gloomy North. To the Jewish imagination, the sensual naiveté of Italy, with Rome as its timeless navel, was more than a refuge from German inhibitions: It was a defense of “porosity,” the “baroque into-each-other” of “that which has no boundaries and is yet bound together,” as Ernst Bloch wrote in 1925, “the sliding into each other of near and far.”[167] It was an expedition into the hope for a place to be. “The spell of the spiritual ghetto is eternally broken,” wrote Paul Rieger in

1895: “From the fragments of a cruel monument of human confusion has emerged victoriously the spirit of humanity and freedom. Only now has Rome become what it has always been proud to be; only now has Rome become the home for *all*.”[168] Still in 1927, with Mussolini in power, Ermanno Loevinson, a German Jew who had settled in Rome in 1895 where he lived until the fateful deportations of October 16, 1943, wrote of his favorite city as a “renewed Jerusalem.”[169]

It was, then, the city itself, the chaos of its streets and monuments, the fusion of its pasts and present moments—the fusion of its horizons, as Gadamer would say—that presented the visitor no longer with an object of desire, but with a loving subject, with desire itself, endless and encompassing in its own inalienable right. A great love otherwise unrequited seemed now requited by a living stone, by Rome’s *Steinlebendigkeit*, as Rose Ausländer put it in 1957;[170] and its master was none other than Michelangelo, the great lover of love. Indeed, the Jewish dream, the dream of the unhappy lover, resembled an erotic fantasy bound so deeply to the city as a giant plastic image that it echoed and relived Goethe’s own fantastic feelings, turning Rome into Pygmalion’s Elise, greeting him, as she would her master, with the memorable words: “*Ich bin’s*”—it’s me.[171]

Figure 2. Michelangelo, *Moses*, San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome. From Hugo Bergman, ed., *Worte Mosis* (Minden: Bruns Verlag, 1913).

2

The Dream of the Moving Moses

MICHELANGELO AND JEWISH STATUE-LOVE

Io crederrei, se tu fussi di sasso,
Amarti con tal fede, ch' i' potrei
Farti meco venir più che di passo.

[I believe, if you were made of stone
I could love you so faithfully
That I could make you hurry away with me.]
—Michelangelo, *Rime*, no. 54[1]

Das Werk erwacht zum Leben in der Liebe des Menschen selber.

[The work of art comes to life through the very love of man.]
—Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung* [2]

Sleep

Heinrich Heine's *Florentinische Nächte*, written in fragments between 1825 and 1836, begins with an arresting image: Maximilian, the German traveler and a thinly veiled Heine himself, enters the chamber of the dying Signora Maria to find her asleep on a dark green ottoman, a white robe revealing the contours of her figure. As he contemplates her beauty, a memory flashes into Maximilian's mind, an image from his childhood, a white image on a green ground that . . . But at this moment, the signora awakens as if from the deep of a dream, her long curls trembling like "frightened snakes of gold." What is it? she asks, and Maximilian recalls how, as a child, he once ventured into an abandoned park, an enchanted garden lined with broken statues, statues without heads, and heads without noses, and how at night he would return to embrace the only statue still unbroken: "Here, in the green grass lay the beautiful goddess, . . . her limbs shackled not by a stony death, but merely by a deep sleep, and when I approached her I feared that the slightest sound could awaken her from her slumber." Since then, continues Maximilian, "a wonderful passion for marble statues developed in my soul," an unconsummated love for the sculpted image, an endless desire fueled anew by the sites of Italy, by the "dreamland of marble." Indeed, it was no place other than the Sagrestia Nuova and no other sculpture than Michelangelo's *Night* that should rekindle this strange erotic power. Finding himself, by sheer happenstance, before the reclining statue, Maximilian is

paralyzed by an “absorbing force”: “I stood there for an entire hour, immersed in a gaze at the marble image. . . . Oh, how I wished I could sleep the eternal sleep in the arms of this night.”[3]

Expectation

Heine’s predilection for the marble image is well known and abundant in his work.[4] Wandering the Italian streets in the late summer of 1828, even the British tourists appear to him as miserable “statues whose noses have been broken off.”[5] Of course, it would not be Heine if this passion were not accompanied by irony, jest, and self-reflection. But it invites us, nonetheless, to ponder on the modern Jewish encounter with the plastic image, especially with the plastic art of Michelangelo, which seems to have inspired the Jewish imagination with curious propensity.

Indeed, few other sculptures have become as prominent in Jewish literature as Michelangelo’s famously horned *Moses* in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli. “No image work has had a stronger effect on me,” wrote Sigmund Freud about this *Moses*, whom he first met in the original in 1901 and who would become a source of fixation for the rest of his life: “This man . . . haunts me tirelessly.”[6] But Freud’s initial reaction to the *Moses*, whose discovery by surprise and “error” curiously mirrored Heine’s “accidental” encounter with *Night*, was not itself expressively “Jewish.” It reminds us, rather, of what already Goethe reported about the sculpture: “I suppose that Michelangelo’s superpowerful [*überkräftige*] statue . . . has taken such control over my imagination that I no longer can free myself from its grip.”[7] Unlike Goethe, however, whose appreciation for Michelangelo was still out of the ordinary in his century, Freud lived in a time both saturated with popular Michelangelism and marked by a renewed interest in the biblical Moses, which could build upon Schiller’s famous essay *Die Sendung Moses* (1790) and on Herder’s reflections on Hebrew poetry, and which had already left behind a considerable legacy of dramatization, including Gioacchino Rossini’s opera *Mosè* (1800), or Sigismund Wiese’s all but forgotten play *Moses* (1844).[8]

Writing of this phenomenon and the broad tendency of modern Jewish self-identification with the rediscovered prophet, Arnold Band recently coined the term “Moses complex,” which he unravels historically from Naftali Herz Wessely, the great German Jewish enlightener, to the Hasidic mystic Nahman of Bratslav, to the Zionist thinker Ahad Haam, to Sigmund Freud, and to which one could add, among many others, the founder of political Zionism, Theodor Herzl, dubbed occasionally the “Moses of the fin-de-siècle.”[9] Bluma Goldstein, in her

formidable study on this subject, thus speaks of Moses as a "cultural metaphor" for German and Austrian Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, allowing them to express their own predicaments of isolation, unassimilability, and diaspora existence, while identifying Moses also with hopes for leadership and liberation.[10] Not unlike the "Jewish" Michelangelo, the "Jewish" Moses emerged as an unrequited lover of humanity, a man of contradictions, unanswered passions, and yearning for freedom. A "man of extremes," Ahad Haam called him; "unhappy and lonely in his innermost heart," wrote Adolf Gelber in 1905.[11] And to both it was obvious that the figure of Moses was an outward projection of the Jewish people's inner soul: "In the figure of Moses," writes Ahad Haam, "the spirit of our people has but expressed itself, at its highest."[12]

But neither the "Moses complex" nor the notion of a cultural metaphor can fully capture the extent to which the figure of Moses served as an object not only of self-recognition but also self-*formation*. There existed, I shall argue, in addition to the Moses complex, a phenomenon that could be called—to borrow from Victor Stoichita's work on Pygmalion—the "Moses effect": the phenomenon of Moses—not just any Moses, but Michelangelo's *Moses* in particular—assuming life beyond the metaphor, leaving the pale of representation to become an image projecting itself outward, a simulacrum, even if confined to letters, stepping into the world. What follows, then, is not, as one should normally expect, an investigation into the Moses metaphor, nor another contribution to Freud's so richly analyzed musings on the *Moses* of Michelangelo (though we will duly linger on them as well), but an exploration into a cultural trope intimately tied to, yet also extending beyond this *Moses*, into what we may call, unapologetically, a modern tradition of Jewish litophilia—incidents of Jewish statue love.

Silence

Jewish flirtation with sculpted images is, of course, a literary theme as ancient as the Hebrew bible, where it earned tireless prophetic rebuke and mockery. Isaiah calls the makers of statues "men of emptiness" who should be "ashamed" of themselves, as ashamed as their admirers who "see not, nor know" (Isa. 44:9–12). The neo-Kantian Jewish philosopher Hermann Cohen, writing in 1917, interpreted this shame as one that extended from the maker and beholder to the image work itself: "The images must be ashamed, for they are but illusions."[13] To the great medieval sage Maimonides it was, therefore, the very matter of graven images and idolatry that summed up the entire purpose of the Torah:

“Whoever adopts idolatry denies all the Torah and all the prophets and all that the prophets had taught from the days of Adam to the end of the world . . . , and all who deny idolatry acknowledge the whole Torah, the prophets and what has been revealed to them since Adam to the end of the world.”[14] Accordingly, Maimonides, and the sages before him, suggested that sculptures ought to be annulled, preferably by breaking their noses and heads, as in Heine’s enchanted garden, before the Jewish beholder could safely enjoy them.

At the same time, however, it was precisely the biblical and rabbinic engagement with statues and idols, oscillating as it did between abhorrence and fascination, that helped animate the very image declared to be lifeless: Not hearing, not seeing, or to be mute and ashamed are, of course, negations that presuppose lifelike behavior, and one is struck by how the rabbis did indeed imagine the idols to be alive: “When Rabbi Yochanan died the icons bent over—they said it was because no icon was as beautiful as he.”[15] There is no greater irony than idols imitating their worshipers. But there is also no greater fantasy than idols bending over in awe at the beauty of a man.

Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, in their magisterial study on this subject, have analyzed this very erotic subtext of idolatry and its concomitant metaphors of adultery, permissiveness, seduction, and betrayal, which profoundly informed the early notion of “foreign worship” (*avodah zarah*). More than conceptual error, they argue, and more than mere naïveté, it was “rebelliousness” and “erotic temptation” that characterized idolatry in the Bible as an individual act and a style of life.[16] But the same rebelliousness, eroticism, and infidelity to tradition that dominated the biblical and rabbinic literature rendered idolatry all the more attractive to the modern Jewish canon. Heine’s—or Maximilian’s—passion for statues and pagan gods could thus be read, with good reason, as a recovery, rehabilitation, and ironic rewriting of the classical trope of idolatry precisely on account of its inherent rebelliousness and counterculturalism. There is, in Heine, more than a hint of nostalgia for the days of “flesh and paganism,” as he writes in the *Romanzero*, fearing that Protestant norms had turned him into a “spiritual skeleton.”[17] Unadulterated by Jewish “law” and Christian “love,” the ancient gods are invested, by Heine, with the hope for redemption from both. And if he must part, ultimately, with the *Heidengötter* of his youth, he does so “in love and friendship,” and not before visiting the *Venus of Milo*, at whose pedestal he “weeps so bitterly that even a stone would show sympathy.” But this Venus, of course, unlike Michelangelo’s *Night*, can no longer take him into her arms.[18]

Transvaluating idolatry, without being embraced by it, Heine anticipated the

writers of Hebrew modernism, or *Techiya* (renaissance), who, particularly in their "angry," rebellious phase, resorted to a retrieval of Greek and pagan motifs to stir their Jewish audiences and to give voice to their own struggles with tradition and identity. Confronting a statue thus became a modern Jewish genre, and it could be argued that Freud's 1914 essay "*The Moses of Michelangelo*," though largely oblivious to modern Hebrew literature, should be seen, not least, as a genre piece of a certain kind.

André Neher once called this genre "aesthetic idolatry," invoking idolatry not as a neopagan practice but as an art form to subvert Jewish norms and accepted values while attacking iconoclast pretensions.[19] Shaul Tchernichovski's classic Hebrew poem to a statue of Apollo is commonly understood to reflect such aesthetic idolatry and has become, at the same time, representative of a phenomenon Barbara Mann provocatively characterized as Jewish "imagism":

> I have come to you, long forgotten god,
> God of ancient moons and days bygone . . .
> A youthful god, bright, passionate and beautiful,
> Master of the sun and hidden mysteries of life . . .
> I have come toward you to fall before your sculpted image,
> For your image is a sign of unparalleled splendor . . .
> I have come unto you—do you know me?
> I am the Jew, I am here: We have an eternal quarrel.[20]

Written in 1899 between Odessa and Heidelberg, where Tchernichovski began his career as a physician, "*Before a Statue of Apollo"* inspired a new "paganism" filling the lines of young Jewish literati such as Micha Josef Berdichevski, David Frischmann, or, in a later generation, Yonathan Ratosh, a paganism, however, which Martin Buber still considered the deepest expression of Jewish religiosity.[21] But the poem is also indicative of a "special" Jewish relationship to statues, idols, and other fetishized objects explicitly rejected—and thus particularly scrutinized—by biblical and rabbinic traditions. André Neher, therefore, speaks of a "climax of profanation" in Hebrew literature: "The poet stands before nature not with the purpose of admiring its creator or of glorifying its harmony . . . but in order to attain an immediate, intuitive, magical relationship with it."[22] Yet, this relationship, as Barbara Mann has argued, writing about the same poem, was far from being mere submission to the magic of animated images, and far from being merely gratuitous and flippant; rather, it was replete with irony and conscious of cultural boundaries. Despite its apparent litophilia, a residue of iconophobia still resonates in Tchernichovski's verses, "some remnant of an awareness of the 'Mosaic negative,'" as Mann writes, "a lingering sensibility regarding the proper role of the 'Word' coupled with a pervasive, implicit discomfort with 'graven images.'"[23] Tchernichovski,

addressing the Greek god not in Homer's classical vernacular but in the sacred language of the Hebrew prophets, came not to serve the idol but to confront it, to challenge it to speak, and if not to speak, then at least to listen and to see: "Do you know me? I am the Jew, I am here." Before accepting the divinity of the image, the poet asks the statue what statues cannot do: to acknowledge his presence, to "recognize" him, as the Hebrew literally reads, to meet its opponent of old and prove itself as a "master of the hidden mysteries of life." The statue, the idol, the lifeless object of *avodah zarah*, must, in a word, awaken to life to see the Jewish idolater, to acknowledge him, and to continue the ancient quarrel; it must become a living god, a moving statue, as Winckelmann fantasized in his "*Apollon im Belvedere"* of 1774: "My image seems to move and come to life, as did Pygmalion's beauty."[24] But there are no signs of such metamorphoses in Tchernichovski. Instead, it is the poet himself who resembles, as he speaks, a statue coming to life, transformed by the sight, by the gaze, of the sculpted Apollo:

> Passions choked by strengthlessness
> Rise from the prison of a hundred generations
> To sudden life again . . .
> Every joint calls out . . . every limb, and every vein
> Thirst for the light and life of gods.[25]

Apollo, in his cold existence as forbidden image, a *pesel* of stone, assumes the role of a sculpted mirror to the poet's petrified desires, and it is only with the statue recognizing him, as a mirror recognizes its own image, that the veins of the poet will pulsate again with living passions: "The light of god, the light of god is mine!" The poet now is made truly in the image, *be-tselem*, a work of art himself, a kind of narcissism inherent in all statue love, and if the god of art could really awaken, if he could really see, really hear and speak, all mortal sin of worshiping dead matter would be erased and nullified, sublated by the living idol.

And yet, the quarrel still remains. "No ocean waters . . . could fill the dark abyss that gapes between us." The poet dreams of life, yearns to be seen, to be there, but cannot bridge the "open rift" separating him from Apollo's children. "We have an eternal quarrel," he says, and no one familiar with Apollo's quarrels would fail to remember the fate of his competitors. Even if Tchernichovski's Apollo represents a sort of "Hellenic antithesis to the God of Judaism . . . , a human god, bestowing goodness onto human beings," as Yaakov Shavit writes, the contradiction between life and stone cannot be resolved.[26] To the contrary, what appears at first blush as the poetic dream of a living chiseled god, as a Pygmalean encounter of statue and admirer, is disrupted, at the moment of each

other's recognition, by irreconcilable strangeness and estrangement, ambivalence and fear. To be seen by Apollo could also mean to be punctured by "gentle" arrows or to be skinned alive. The statue, as life itself, remains agonistic and mysterious: It is a source of light as well as darkness, a symbol of beauty as well as death, it is silent stone as well as witness, asleep as well as awake. We never learn of the poet's fate or of the statue's response. We never learn whether Apollo ever saw the Jew. But we do learn that the dark abyss between them cannot simply disappear and that their quarrel is in truth a question, a calling into question of the animated image that defies the idol and puts it to shame restoring dignity to its beholder. The poet now no longer worships, no longer adores dead stone, but claims his place as the statue's other.

Awakening

Being the statue's other at once confirms and negates the animated image. In being a statue's other, the gaze of the beholder confirms deadness and yet evokes, calls forth, and judges, unleashing from its depths the very forces of Apollo's own mastery: agon and agony.[27] Tchernichovski's Jew both worships and accuses; his presence before the statue is both encounter and solitude; his dream of life, finally, is also a fear of dying. "The name of the bow is life," Heraclitus already wrote about Apollo, "but his deeds are called death."[28]

Returning, then, to Heine's opening fantasy, to Maximilian's strange passion for statues of marble, we uncover a similar dialectic, an *agon*, not merely of sleep and waking but also of statuesque consummation: The dream of moving marble is, at the same time, the dream and nightmare of being a statue oneself, like the sorry Pippo del Fabbro, Jacopo Sansovino's live model whose descent into madness and statuelike behavior is chronicled in Vasari's *Lives*.[29] Even God, seeing Michelangelo at work in Rilke's legends, cannot escape this fear: "The heavens were all but stone, and He was imprisoned in its midst . . . and He felt fearful and confined," wishing to be freed by the hands of the same sculptor—none other than Michelangelo—threatening to imprison him.[30] The encounter with the sculpted image, the mere thought of it, thus repeats the same quarrel of petrifying and animating forces already at work in Ovid's original myth of Pygmalion, which, as Stoichita reminds us, comes as a "hope of resurrection" following the preceding episodes of Orpheus's gaze (leaving him stunned and petrified "like a man turned to stone") and of Venus's punishment for the impudent maidens of a certain Cyprean town:

> They hardened, even their blood was hard, they could not
> Blush any more; it was no transition, really,

From what they were to actual rock and stone.[31]

As the maidens harden and are unable to blush, Pygmalion's ivory companion, of course, softens under his caressing hand and blushes and opens her eyes: "It is a living body! The veins throb under the thumb." The lover stands amazed, as in a daze, testing the warm flesh with his fingers. She is surely awake. But it is an awakening, as Kenneth Gross, who has inspired the title of this chapter, has so beautifully shown, that must be understood as an awakening *of* art as much as an awakening *from* art. "The dream of a statue's awakening," writes Gross, "can be an awakening into delusion and nightmare, a rebirth into what is not life, a kind of death-in-life. . . . The animated statue thus becomes as much a form of ruin as of resurrection; rather than being a source of new life, the statue becomes murderous. Pygmalion may be immolated on as well as enchanted by his statue."[32] Indeed, the later biography of the Pygmalion myth is filled with many unhappy variations of the ancient romance, stories of vengeance, violence, and cruel death. The statue turned to life assumes inescapable ambiguity, and the desire, perhaps even love, that fills its maker and admirer turns into growing alienation and anxiety: Something of the beholder has been lost to the statue, and something of the statue has encroached upon the beholder. "She felt death creep into her own heart while, at the same time, the statue in her arms began to move and to come alive," writes Hugo von Hofmannsthal of the heroine embracing the sculpture of her beloved in "*Woman Without a Shadow*."[33]

In Rousseau's classic "*Scène lyrique*" this ambiguity of loss expresses itself in the statue's doubled I, which strangely absorbs and threatens Pygmalion's self: "*Moi*," speaks Galathée pointing to herself as she awakes, "*Ah! Encore moi*," she says as she feels her master. "Yes," replies Pygmalion, "it is you, you alone: I have given you my entire self; I no longer live but through you."[34] In a peculiar way, Rousseau's artist must sacrifice what renders him a man and not a statue, he must cease to be the statue's other to become its same; he must, as it were, assimilate to its own lifelessness denying, thus, the same love that empowered the statue to live. There is nothing the artist can give the statue but a "lifeless life," writes Emmanuel Levinas about the Eros that moved Pygmalion and every sculptor since, "a derisory life which is not master of itself," and which in the end must turn us, like Pygmalion, into prisoners of stone.[35] "They become like images," the Psalms (115:7) mock the idol worshippers, countering the fantasy of the moving image with a fantasy of petrification, yet affirming, at the same time, the possibility of a mutual overflow between image and life, an infectiousness of the enduring yet powerless instant.

In this overflow and contamination, in this act of substitution, lies the

uncanniness of Pygmalean love, the deepest narcissism of the self as artwork, to which Anton Francesco Doni playfully alluded in his *Marmi*: "*Io son marmo ed ella è carne* [I am marble and she is flesh]," says the *Peregrino* about Michelangelo's *Dawn*: "If this divine figure, made by the hands of Michelangelo, does not speak, then I will have been always of stone."[36] The statue, in this instant, is more alive than the beholder and, as every beloved, comes to own the lover's self, who can only wonder, as Michelangelo did in so many of his poems: "*Come può esser ch' io non sia più mio?*"—How can it be that I am no longer mine?[37]

Perhaps, then, Heine's Florentine fantasy should be read not only as a relic of and commentary on the eighteenth-century fascination with Pygmalion known from French, German, and Spanish literature,[38] though it was that undoubtedly as well, but as a sort of personal midrash on his Jewish Hellenism, a rewriting of statue love into assimilation and substitution, a translation of sleep into losing oneself irrevocably to stone. I am no longer mine. This is the anxiety of love falling in love, as it must, with complete otherness; this is the ambivalence of Eros as it is expressed in the ambivalence of the plastic image itself.

Kisses

Ambivalence of the plastic image is, of course, the theme in the anecdotal exchange between Michelangelo and the poet Giovan Battista Strozzi, which formed Heine's imagination of *Night*. "As she sleeps she possesses life," writes Strozzi about Michelangelo's *Night*: "Wake her, if you do not believe, and she will speak to you." . . . To which *La Notte* famously responds: "*Però non me destar; deh! Parla basso!*"—Wake me not, speak softly![39] A formidable example of Michelangelo's humor, the statue's rejoinder reveals a playful switch on the Pygmalean impulse that drives the skeptic to wake the image.[40] "Dear to me is my sleep," speaks the Night, "and dearer still my being of stone." But she must, of course, awake to reclaim her sleep, must come to life to return to stone, and must speak to remain silent. She must, in a word, overcome her sculptedness to claim nothing less for herself than her inalienable right to be and remain a statue. The irony in Michelangelo's reply to Strozzi's fantasy is not that it questions the fantasy itself but, to the contrary, that it validates its claim, inverting the order of metamorphosis: While for Strozzi *Night* is not yet alive, she is, for Michelangelo, not yet of stone. Her voice speaks, as in Michelangelo's famous words, from the "living mold" (*viva figura*) inside the stone that the sculptor's chisel dreams of setting free.[41] But the statue dreams of becoming finished form, of growing cold and immanent. This struggle between what

Walter Pater celebrated as the "relief or recovery," even "resurrection" of the imprisoned soul and the concomitant act of de-animation, of de-surrection, the struggle, in a word, between Pygmalean and Medusean forces in the artwork as a struggle between two autonomous souls, runs, as Paul Barolsky has most clearly shown, through Michelangelo's work and the entire Ovidian sensibility of the Renaissance itself.[42]

A similar struggle emerges from Heine's opening image, where, paradoxically, the awakening of the sleeping signora arouses also her Medusean hair (frightened snakes), turning Maximilian's desire into a desire that dreams, in Pygmalean-Medusean manner, of petrification. His fantasy is not the awakened marble but the kiss that will infect the lover with marbleness, which is the kiss of eternal sleep but also the kiss of eternal otherness. "She kissed me paralyzed, she kissed me ill, she kissed blind my eyes," we read in Heine's "*Lazarus*," "My body is now a corpse."[43] "What a horrific thing!" exclaims the tubercular Signora Maria from the "depth of her soul," overcoming, while she speaks, her own statuesque sleepiness. "You know that a kiss from your mouth . . ." Thus, Maximilian, resembling ever more the aging Michelangelo at the deathbed of his desired Vittoria Colonna, must content himself with kissing a white hand and will regret always not to have been allowed to press his lips against hers. But as he resembles the late Renaissance master he comes to resemble also the master's work: an exiled soul yearning to be imprisoned by the "marble shackles" of beauty. His soul is filled by the "blissful coldness" of the beloved image, and we cannot but suspect that behind his "wonderful passion for marble statues" lies, in truth, a longing for death, perhaps the same sweet death Kant and the Enlightenment had envisioned for Judaism. "Physical freshness, the fleshly flowering and rosy colors," Maximilan must confess, "made an unpleasant impression to me, who loves the death-and marblelike."[44]

Michel Serres, in his second book of foundations, *Statues* (a sequel, tellingly, to his essay on *Rome: The Book of Foundations*), alerts us to the inherent ability of the statue to at once represent and vivify the lifeless corpse: "The statue is a black box: open it and you will see the face of death."[45] "He tore at the stone as at a grave," writes Rilke about Michelangelo.[46] Our same attraction to sculpted life is fear of, and yet also reconciliation with, the inevitability of the statue's eternal kiss, which is the kiss of eternal sleep. To sleep in *Night's* arms, then, is like bleeding life into her statuesque presence and to encompass her with the desire to be lifeless. "*Ah! Que Pygmalion meure, pour vivre dans Galathée* [Ah! That Pygmalion dies, to live in Galatea]," cries Rousseau's protagonist, and in Longfellow's poem, which is filled with Pygmalean allusions from its first

verses to its last, the dying Michelangelo is slowly transformed to stone, having failed to give life to his beloved.[47] In a peculiar way, Maximilian's dream and Pygmalion's desire for self-dissolution in the desired object mirror what we have seen in Georg Simmel's dialectic of the erotic as a yearning for the "encompassing" and, at the same time, the radically different, which made all love transcendent and, in its last analysis, life-denying.[48] "Unhappy lovers" Scholem called the Jews of modern Europe, allowing us to think about their experience not through the dynamics of assimilation but as unrequited cultural eroticism: the desire for response and the simultaneous anxiety to be devoured by it. Thus, Heine's passion for the marble image at once affirms the beautiful deadness of sculpture and fears its ability to take life, to administer the kiss of death, as is most violently illustrated in the cruel image of the Sphinx in Heine's "*Buch der Lieder"* of 1827:

> Alive became the marble image
> The stone began to groan . . .
> Embracing me and tearing into pieces
> My poor body with her lion's claws.[49]

Enigmatic, violent, but also endlessly seductive is the beauty of the plastic image, which, like Hellas and its children, remains beautiful so long as it is not disturbed in its peaceful sleep. A deep and irreconcilable ambivalence and uncanniness runs through Heine's Pygmalean fantasies, which, as in the myth of Pygmalion itself, express fears no less than dreams, for they take seriously, as did Michelangelo, the lives of statues and the cruelty of passion. If there is any Greek god embodying the ambiguity of what Freud called the uncanny, its oscillation between the "familiar, comfortable" and the "mysterious, kept-in-secret," then it would be Apollo, the same elusive master of beauty and measure, who found favor—uncanny favor—in Tchernichovski's poems and, with greater complexity still, in Heine's *Romanzero*. To both, Heine and Tchernichovski (who later translated Heine into Hebrew), Apollo remained a source of self-identification, as well as of limitation and displacement, an infection with homesickness for irreconcilable places, a farce, finally, and an unmasking, whose violence was not simply iconoclastic but was turned inward to disillusionment, *Enttäuschung*, in the truest sense. Their passion for Apollo may have been idolatrous and foreign worship; yet, confronting the idol, they were no blind idolaters, no followers, but defiant skeptics or, as Michel Serres would say, *idolâtres clairvoyants*.[50] Tchernichovski's supplications are in truth demands, and Heine's succulent Apollo, surrounded by "nine marble-pretty maidens," is revealed in the end to be no more, and no less, than an itinerant, exiled Jew, Rabbi Faibisch, "which means Apollo in high German—but my idol he is not."[51]

De-idolized and disenchanted, the image of Apollo is drawn by Jewish imagism into the realm of the familiar and yet farther removed from it. The closer the encounter the wider, it seems, the gap between the Greek god and the Jewish poet, the deeper the silence, and the darker the uncanny. Uncanny, *unheimlich*, the statue awakens in us "uncertainty," as Freud wrote in his famous essay on E. T. A. Hoffmann's Pygmalean fiction, for it exists between life and lifelessness, like a doubled I that changes from vouchsafing eternal life to being a "harbinger of death."[52] Hoffmann's beautiful automaton Olympia, whose stolen eyes are still drenched in human blood, forebodes not only madness, profound confusion, and love betrayed but also the young hero's tragic end. In Heine's love of the marble image, too, confusion reigns, satirical and sad, the confusion of the poet, who, as a poet and therefore Jew (according to Heine), is nowhere at home and everywhere unseen, even by the god of the arts himself. Apollo, to the poet, remains silent and beautiful, a statue preceding language and anticipating tombs. Portraying himself as Marsyas, Apollo's tortured victim, in the "*Buch der Lieder*," Heine perhaps unwittingly expressed kinship to the Marsyas of the Sistine Chapel, to the sculptor whose hollow skin is suspended like a piece of cloth, as if in eternal accusation of a statue's body.[53]

Exposure

But what if the confronted statue is no Greek god at all, no symbol of forbidden otherness, but a fellow Jew, and the founder of Judaism, at that? Heine's travels never took him to Rome, and Tchernichovski's love for Greek and pagan gods formed primarily around the Hellenic and Mesopotamian imagination. Neither, then, confronted Michelangelo's *Moses* in San Pietro in Vincoli. That encounter, it seems, was left to Sigmund Freud, a storyteller of a different sort. Standing before the *Moses*, Freud, as Marthe Robert writes, exposed himself not merely before a work of art but before the "eternally offended Jewish father" to make, in fact, "the most incredible of confessions" about his Judaism and about himself.[54] Already Ernest Jones, one of Freud's earliest biographers, noted the dual function of Michelangelo's *Moses* as a father-image and object of self-identification, which meant far more to Freud than a mere work of art.[55] A long and more often than not disparate chain of scholarly commentary has since evolved placing Freud's encounter with the *Moses* at the heart of his conflicted Jewishness and at the center of a journey of self-discovery culminating in his "historical novel" *Moses and Monotheism*.[56] Thus, Moshe Gresser situates Freud's essay on Michelangelo's *Moses* in a middle, "incubating" period of his Jewish journey, reflecting his intimate "desire to keep his deepest, most private

Jewish identification—that is, his identification with Moses—hidden from the public," while attributing *Moses and Monotheism* to the "late," all but "Zionist" period of Freud's life, where he openly declares his Jewish allegiances.[57] Likewise, Emanuel Rice views Freud's writings on Moses—the artwork and the man—as "a continuation, and ultimately the culmination, of his quest for personal identity," whereas David Bakan, molding the Jewish Freud in Gershom Scholem's language, uncovers in the *Moses* "the symbol of orthodoxy, the author of the Law, the figure responsible for imposing its heavy yoke," against which Freud, "in the Sabbatian tradition" and "echoing the message of Jacob Frank," would oppose himself.[58] Daniel Boyarin, on the other hand, frames Freud's attachment to Moses (and to the *Moses*) as a personal search for new Jewish virility and "total conversion of Judaism" into "masculine *Geistigkeit*," a late concession to German values, which Leo Strauss, writing some forty years earlier, condemned as a "supreme act of assimilation" at a moment when assimilation of German Jews had irrevocably collapsed.[59] There are too many interpretations to cover in full; to all interpreters, however, it seems obvious what Ilse Grubrich-Simitis surmised: that his all but obsessive-compulsive treatment of the Moses subject was, "not least the result of Freud's self-analysis."[60] Even as sober a reader as Yosef Yerushalmi, while reluctant to embark on such scholarly clichés as "identity," attributes Freud's Moses-fascination to an "attempt to answer the hitherto unanswerable question of what makes him a Jew."[61]

Transformations

The power of a late Renaissance sculpture seated in a room with Catholic saints to elicit feelings of heightened identity in the Jewish beholder and to answer hitherto unanswerable questions about their Judaism is itself not unremarkable. But just as the modern Jewish encounter with the plastic arts and their great urban repository—the city of Rome—was neither uncommon nor particularly controversial so the transformative role of Michelangelo's *Moses* on the Jewish visitor should come as no surprise. Already Vasari reported this phenomenon in his famous anecdote of the Jews of Rome flocking, every Saturday, like a "swarm of starlings"—or, as Paul Barolsky pointed out in allusion to Dante's *Purgatorio*, sinners—toward the church in order to "visit and adore" the seated giant as a "thing not of human but of divine hand."[62] Whether true or invented for effect, the story, which has always been a fixture in Italian Jewish history and which was well known also to Freud, derived its dramatic echo precisely from Vasari's playful allusions to Jewish idolatry, pilgrimage, and—if the *Moses*

represented indeed, as he speculates, another Saint Paul—ultimate conversion and overcoming of old "idols."[63] In fact, referring to Vasari's anecdote, the great Italian Jewish historian Attilio Milano would later write: "The Jews—overcoming their reluctance against the representation of human form—flocked to admire the Moses in Rome. In him, they recognized, for the first time, the figure of their lawgiver, rendered in all the superhuman features of physical strength and moral imperiousness, which their constant reading of the biblical books had sculpted in their minds."[64] A meeting of mental sculpture and real sculpture, as Milano intimates in a tongue-in-cheek way, the Sabbath ritual of adoring the *Moses* was an unmistakable sign not only of Jewish acculturation but of coming of age: an "overcoming" of old aniconism, a replacement of the mental idol by the work of art.

Similarly, Ermanno Loevinson, recalling the same episode, attributed to Michelangelo's *Moses* powers of religious transformation and even penitence: "Not seldom is it the case that the image [of the *Moses*] forces tears of repentance into the eyes of many a renegade, who is contemplating complete severance from Judaism, and now regrets such a thoughtless step! For he sees the power and might of the old faith, the invincible thrust of a hearty race embodied in the Lawgiver before him. . . . The people he thought he despised and from whose veins he sought to separate himself—how ennobled this people appears at the hand of the genius who did not hesitate, and did not consider it below his dignity, to give the utmost of his skill in order to represent the founder of Judaism in a dignified manner."[65] No wonder, Loevinson concludes, that Jewish pilgrims of all times would treat the tomb of pope Julius II as if it was the tomb of their own great leader, the "*duce e capitano degli Hebrei* [the leader and captain of the Jews]," as Asciano Condivi, Michelangelo's second biographer, wrote in 1553.[66] They did so for they found in the statue not only an image of themselves but also a symbol of the "eternal, inseparable fraternity of two gifted Mediterranean races who have lived and created together for over two thousand years."[67]

There is, then, little doubt that by the time Freud made his first advances to the seated giant, the effigy of Michelangelo's *Moses* had already become a cultural commonplace in the Jewish world. "It would be a mistake," writes Ernst Gombrich about Freud's fascination with the sculpture, "to underrate the force of tradition in his choice of Michelangelo's *Moses*. If there is any work of art that the cultured Jews of central Europe adopted, it is this vision of the Hebrew leader."[68] Indeed, "to many Orthodox Israelites around the world," Loevinson wrote further about this phenomenon, "the *Moses*, in one or another

reproduction, some better than others, gave the first impulse to interpret more liberally the biblical prohibition against the human form . . . and to overcome their aversion against images. Thus, the artwork of the great Italian master became for countless Israelite families in Eastern Europe, even Asia, the first object of home décor, stimulating a sense of art in the maturing youth and nurturing their love for beautiful Italy."[69]

Images

It should seem, then, that the portrait of Michelangelo's *Moses*, despite its unsettling and, as some have argued, downright anti-Semitic features,[70] was hardly controversial in Jewish popular imagination, particularly at the fin-de-siècle. Thus, the upscale illustrated monthly for modern Judaism, *Ost und West*, featured Michelangelo's *Moses* in every possible conjunction with the Hebrew prophet, including a full-page illustration for the essay "Moses" by the American economist Henry George in its first volume. George, whose original lecture was delivered in 1884 to a Christian audience in Glasgow, understood the biblical Moses, in good Protestant fashion, as a "heroic worker of the future," a "philosopher and statesman," a social reformer and freedom fighter for "spiritual and ethical perfection," whose single most important message was encapsulated, not without irony, in the commandment, "You shall not make yourself a graven image!"[71] Peculiarly, the same Moses image resurged in an article of 1902 by the philosopher and Moses Hess scholar Theodor Zlocisti to illuminate nothing other than the "foundations of young Jewish Art."[72] In the same year, the Jewish Hebbel scholar Bernhard Münz, a regular contributor to Theodor Herzl's journal *Die Welt*, published a short piece, "Moses in Light of the Jewish *Volksseele*," which borrowed from the poetry of Marie Eugenie delle Grazie, the "Viennese Sappho," as Münz put it, to express what this Moses really meant to the Jewish soul:

> [Do you hear] the outcry of the beast, the roar of rage?
> His jaws grind, his angry hand digs into the
> Mane of his beard,
> The blood-filled vein transforms into a taut tendon
> And his body turns to stone, hardened by anger and pain![73]

Unapologetically, the *Moses* of Michelangelo looked from the cover of the handsome 1905 anthology *Moses*, which widely popularized the new interest in the biblical leader featuring selections once more from Henry George, Johann Gottfried Herder, Ahad Haam, and Adolf Gelber (the editor himself), while the statue appeared no less unapologetically on yet another anthology, *Worte Mosis*, edited in 1913 by the Prague Jewish philosopher and expert on Kant, Hugo

Bergmann, for the popular series *Weisheit der Völker*.[74] In 1909, *Ost und West* ran a series of essays on "Moses in the Visual Arts" by the Berlin-based philosopher and art historian G. Kutna, which culminated in celebrating the colossal statue as the "most powerful expression of Renaissance hero-worship" and "great ideal type" of all later art: "A glowing surge emanates from this figure, shattering the boundaries of individuality and reaching into unknown periphery."[75] His gaze "blazes forward like flames," writes Kutna, his "angry eyes" meet the idol worshipers, and yet, as he looks upon them he is transformed: "He is touched by their humanity, and there occurs a metamorphosis elevating him higher toward the divine and toward infinity. Thus he becomes a symbol of the infinite, while we remain like a chaff in the winds, like smoke billowing through an iron trellis."[76]

If we ignore, which is difficult to do, the foreshadowing of an image destined to become reality too soon, we can follow with astonishment the veritable apotheosis the *Moses* of Michelangelo appears to have undergone in the eyes of the Jewish commentator, including in religious circles. One is no longer surprised to hear the rabbi of Dusseldorf Max Eschelbacher argue that the "great Michelangelo" had "most deeply captured" the biblical Moses in his statue, a sentiment echoed by the principal of the Orthodox Talmud-Torah school in Hamburg and later *Oberrabbiner* Josef Carlebach, who, reporting from Rome for the monthly *Menorah*, marveled at how Michelangelo, filled with the "spirit of the Old Testament," had so perfectly expressed the "immense physical strength" and "tamed passion" of the prophet: "Moses, who brings the tablets of the Law, brings also freedom and breaks the dehumanizing yoke of slavery."[77] Likewise, Hermann Vogelstein and Paul Rieger, the former a liberal rabbi in Königsberg and great Jewish Italophile, the latter an expert on the Mishnaic period and preacher in Hamburg, praised Michelangelo for having "grasped nothing as deeply as the figures of the Old Testament," in their 1895 edition *Geschichte der Juden in Rom*. Reissued in an abbreviated English version in 1940, which was commissioned by the former chancellor of Jewish Theological Seminary, Salomon Schechter, the volume's frontispiece was adorned, needless to say, with the seated *Moses* of Michelangelo.[78] As late as 1936, the Berlin literary critic, Ibsen scholar, and latter-day Zionist Kurt Goldschmidt dedicated a small poem to the *Moses* in San Pietro in Vincoli, which appeared in the religiously conservative Jewish periodical *Der Morgen*:

> Turned toward God and by God elected
> A half-god yourself who snorts in holy rage
> Have you been reborn here from a pure spirit
> Which like a god has lifted you from the nothingness of stone.

Is it the glimmer of the divine flames
A burning bush growing from your forehead?
For both merge together to the beholding eye:
Moses' and Buonarroti's image of creation.[79]

Countenance

Ernst Gombrich, in a word, was not incorrect about the tradition of assimilating Michelangelo's *Moses* into the Jewish imagination, turning him into nothing less than a pictorial family member of German Judaism—into "one of us"—inspiring the French philanthropist and patron of the arts Daniel Osiris to have a life-size bronze copy of the statue installed at his family tomb.[80] But Gombrich may have underestimated the extent to which this cultural icon still differed from other icons of Jewish interest and meaning, how it was this *Moses* and none other who evoked both intimate familiarity and insurmountable distance, demanding even from the most secular Jewish beholder unexpected acts of introspection and self-justification. In this sense, Michelangelo's *Moses* was more "real" than other works of stone, more real than *Night* had been to Strozzi or Heine, and more reminiscent, by implication, of Judaism's cultural and moral antithesis: the idol. Not the idol in the material and ritual sense, but the idol as a cultural code emerging from the supposed "Hebraism-Hellenism" dichotomy, so fashionable in the nineteenth century, and from the Protestant Enlightenment, especially in Kant, whom modern Jewish thinkers embraced with unqualified esteem.[81]

Indeed, there was no obvious reason for the otherwise unabashedly "godless" Freud to view himself as one of the despised crowd, of the *Gesindel* (rabble) "that is unable to hold fast to any conviction, impatient and unwilling to trust, cheering only when it has regained the illusion of the idol-image"; there was no reason to view himself through the "scornful-angry" eyes of the biblical Moses and to "creep up toward him through the gloomy light of the church," other than a culturally instilled sense of hesitation to engage with graven stone—a sense of forbidden, and thus heightened, love.[82] Just as Rome functioned, at first, as the "other" city encompassing Freud with desire and threatening him, supposedly, with loss of self, so the *Moses* had to first be conquered as an "idol-image" (*Götzenbild*) by the same Freud, who avidly and unapologetically collected ritual figurines from cultures around the world, including a plaster copy of Michelangelo's *Dying Slave*.[83] But this the *Moses* was precisely not, not even in the form of the miniature cast Freud—as Goethe before him[84]—kept in his study: an image among others. Perhaps the idol to be conquered was no image at all: but a countenance, a *Gegenüber* for Freud's Jewish imagination. Perhaps this Moses, to the Jewish visitor, appeared precisely as what statues ought not to be:

more than stone.

Movements

Being more than stone is not only the fundamental imagination of Pygmalean fantasy but also a theme integral to late medieval and Renaissance imagination and aesthetics, beginning with Dante's scene of the "speaking" relief wall in the *Purgatorio*.[85] We recall Vasari's description of the Michelangelo's early *Pietà* as an all but living body, intimating, as Strozzi wrote in another Pygmalean stanza, impending resurrection ("*che anzi tempo risveglisi da morte* [which prematurely may awaken from death]"); to which we should add his memorable characterization of Michelangelo's *Moses* as so beautifully carved that God himself could have "prepared the body, by the hands of Michelangelo, for its resurrection."[86] A popular legend, which also appeared on a famous postcard that Freud sent in 1913 to Sandor Ferenczi, relates the story how Michelangelo himself struck, in a moment of confusion and despair, the right knee of his completed *Moses* to force the statue to speak: "*Parla!*"[87] Doni, in his *Marmi*, dreams of Michelangelo's *Dawn* as alive and delivering a monologue about herself and her sleeping sister, that surpasses Strozzi's fantasy of *La Notte*.[88] Likewise, Michelangelo, in a small fragment, imagines *Day* and *Night* ponder their fates as statues as they recline on their shared sarcophagus, while, in another poem, he casts himself as Pygmalean lover:

> I believe, if you were made of stone
> I could love you so faithfully
> That I could make you hurry away with me.[89]

The image of the statue eloping with its lover is, of course, the climactic moment both in a Pygmaleon fantasy and in the aesthetic conception of a statue's motion, of its palpable "livingness," or, as Stoichita pointed out, of its decisive step beyond the plinth.[90] At the moment of its awakening, every statue becomes, in some sense, *Gradiva*, a striding one, trespassing the boundaries between art and world. Freud's peculiar passion for Wilhelm Jensen's otherwise unspectacular novella *Gradiva* was thus not accidental: For in Jensen's story of a young archeologist's strange obsession with an ancient marble relief from Pompeii featuring a delicate female dancer, the boundaries between marble image and real life are as porous as the boundaries between memory and present moment. Hanold, the novella's fragile protagonist, falls in love with the Roman dancer, who seems to be fleeing her marble frame, only to reappear miraculously in the streets of present-day Pompeii, the city of ruins at the foot of Vesuvius, where Hanold meets her like a "real ghost." He addresses her in classical Greek, the

vernacular of statues, then in Latin, before she finally replies in his native German pretending to be indeed the ghost of the ancient image: “Oh, if you were only still alive!” the archeologist exclaims, but Gradiva assures him, “I have been accustomed for many years to being dead.”[91]

Dreams and nightmares haunt Hanold as he imagines the real Gradiva crossing the streets of ancient Pompeii and falling at the steps of Apollo’s temple, buried by the ashes of the Volcano, “her face losing color, as if transformed into white marble, until it completely resembles a work of stone.”[92] Where Hanold, the archeologist, once saw “marble and bronze . . . as the only things really alive,” he now perceives them as threats to take away from him the mysterious mistress.[93] His dreams and delusions come to an end only as the supposed phantom reveals herself to be a repressed love from Hanold’s youth, whose unmastered memory he had transferred to the ancient, animated Gradiva. Cured of his obsessions, the archeologist now learns to love a living body rather than dead stone, engaging himself finally to his childhood companion. But the story, and Freud’s reading of it, loses little of its haunting quality after its resolution: It remains uncanny by virtue of its confused limits between fiction and reality, which, as Peter Rudnytsky rightly noted, is a confusion also between life and death.[94] Indeed, Hanold experiences Gradiva as “dead and alive at the same time,” like the city of Pompeii itself, which appears to him as a tomb of old stones coming to live with “soundless speech” as if the dead awoke under the rays of the midday sun.[95] The city, the beloved image, resembles a phoenix rising from its own ashes by day to be immolated again and to be turned into frozen stone and hollow forms at night. Resurrection and burial (*Verschüttung*) enter a dialectic that mirrors and repeats the Ovidian sense of animation being the twin of petrification, its simultaneous trace and foreshadowing. Gradiva, the striding ancient statue, leaves traces of stone, as it were, threatening to turn the universe, as Rilke’s God feared, into marble.

Renunciation

If Freud’s reading of Jensen’s *Gradiva* did indeed, as Rudnytzky suggests, “reenact” the young archeologist’s Pygmalean predicament; if it did, as Derrida noted in his famous essay “*Archive Fever*,” haunt Freud as much as it haunted young Hanold; and if it obscured, as Sara Kofman argued, Freud’s own perception of the fictional and real, his confusion of fantasy and history, then we ought, perhaps, to revisit his encounter with Michelangelo’s *Moses* as one not only of repressed and rekindled Jewish allegiances but also of distinct and conspicuous Pygmalean sensibilities.[96]

Freud's analyses of the *Moses* are sufficiently known and need not be rehearsed in great detail. What he believed he had found was a new pregnant moment in the artwork, a new *kairos*, signaled by the exact position of the statue's right hand (playing with the prophet's beard) and the subtle slipping away of the tablets of the Law tucked under it.[97] Most commentators had interpreted the frozen movement as the moment of Moses' scornful and incensed rising to his feet to shatter—overpowered by a fit of terrible rage—the tablets of the covenant. Thus, Jacob Burckhardt writes in his *Cicerone*: "*Moses* seems to be depicted in the moment when he first realizes the worshiping of the golden calf and is about to jump to his feet. His figure is filled with the readiness for a violent leap that—given the physical power with which his is endowed—we can anticipate only with great trembling."[98] Similarly, Herman Grimm, who celebrates the *Moses* as the "crown of modern sculpture," writes that "he is sitting there as if he wanted to leap forward," not unlike a "violent *Volksführer*" waiting for his enemies to attack.[99] Henry Thode, upon whom Freud most heavily relied, viewed the Moses as a "choleric *vir activus*," whose left, Gradiva-like foot expressed "immediate readiness for action."[100] And C. F. Meyer in a poem wrote of the statue: "You grab your beard with a nervous hand / But you do not, Moses, rise to your feet."[101]

Reinterpreting the poised foot as seeking to return to its plinth, Freud, by contrast, delayed the aesthetic *kairos* to the moment *after* the initial shock about the worshiped golden calf, to the "quiet after the storm": "This Moses must not leap to his feet, he must be able to remain still in dignified repose."[102] Rather than rising, he argued, this Moses was about to sink back into his seat, and rather than smashing the divinely inscribed tablets of stone, this Moses reached out to prevent them from falling onto the ground. In contradiction, then, to the prevailing and, by his time, particularly Nietzschean preference for the shattered tablets, an ideal motif for young Jewish rebels of the fin-de-siècle, Freud chose what one might call, for all intents and purposes, a "conservative" approach, which may have mirrored his own conservative taste in art.[103] It was this approach, as Emanuel Rice has argued, that testified to Freud's subliminal desire to keep his Jewish self intact, or put differently, to keep it from breaking to pieces.[104] Affirming, in an act of heroic self-control, Judaism's future constitution, Freud's Moses chooses to hold on to tradition, to save the Commandments from slipping away. Yet, as Ernst Simon wrote in an early essay, he saved the Commandments only by a reversal of the order of revelation: "He indeed 'kept' the tablets of the divine commandments to the extent that they represented moral imperatives, but he did not keep them *as* divine

commandments. He did not receive them from above to below, in their revealed direction, turning them instead and with his own hands around their axis, similar to Marx turning Hegel's dialectics from its head to its feet."[105] Just as Marx corrected Hegel, in Simon's account, so the *Moses* of Michelangelo corrected the Moses of the Bible. For Freud, too, Michelangelo's *Moses* represented a series of reversals: from motion to rest, from anger to contemplation, from destruction to conservation. In its last analysis, Freud offered a conclusion that seemed itself revolutionary and most akin to a Nietzschean "transvaluation": Michelangelo's *Moses* not merely captures but, in fact, *surpasses* the historical Moses. "Michelangelo has placed a different Moses at the tomb of the pope," writes Freud, "one that is superior to the historical and traditional Moses."[106]

What is remarkable in Freud's conclusion is not that he postulates an improved Moses surpassing his ideal type and biblical *Urbild*, but that he credits Michelangelo's hands with the work that should have been accomplished by Jewish lore and commentary. Rather than the Talmud sage and rabbi, it was the Renaissance artist who, as if a new lawgiver himself, had finally "reworked" (*umgearbeited*) the motif of the broken tablets and, no less, of the short-tempered prophet himself, creating a "transformed [*umgewandelten*] Moses," a Moses of virtue and self-control who would symbolize his desire to "elevate himself above his own nature." In this manner, Freud insists, Michelangelo put "something new, something superhuman [*Übermenschliches*], into the figure of Moses; the colossal mass and vigorous muscular system of his body so becomes the physical expression of the highest psychical achievement possible to man—the suppression of one's own passion for the sake of the task and destiny to which one has dedicated oneself."[107] It was, then, precisely Michelangelo's "infidelity" (*Untreue*) to tradition and text, his strangeness and view from the outside, that enabled him to understand differently and to create a "truer" Moses than the historical one.[108] Transferring his own *Untreue* onto Michelangelo, Freud, as it were, empowered the image to perform, on his behalf, a transvaluation of the historical Moses, to act upon and repair the Jewish past.

This *Umwandlung*, however, which was a *leitmotif* already for Carl Justi,[109] was less radical than it seemed, for it restored, in fact, some of the statue's intended ambiguity. Seated between the figures of Leah and Rachel, who, particularly in Aquinas and Dante, represented *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, respectively, the *Moses* had long been a symbol not only of emotional bifurcation and balance but also of reconciled Christianity (Rachel) and antiquity (Leah).[110] Condivi described the otherwise fear-inspiring *duce e capitano* as "seated in an attitude of thought and wisdom," his face "full of life

and thought," not unlike, in fact, a Stoic master.[111] Vasari alluded to the emotional duality by calling the Moses at once a "*vero santo*" and "*terribilissimo principe*," whose saintly features and "*bellezza della faccia*" should require him to be "veiled" just as the divine countenance itself.[112] Hippolyte Taine, while describing the Moses as a tragic "*exterminateur*," a "*dompteur d' hommes*," whose "*muscles héroiques*" and "*barbe virile*" render him, in essence, a "*barbare primitif*," still found in him the countenance of a true "*ascète*."[113] The German philologist Karl Borinski, who tried to most closely relate Michelangelo's work to Dante, saw the *Moses* as "contemplating his laws rather than shattering them."[114] And Romain Rolland, with whom Freud shared a long friendship, found in the *Moses* the "highest moral expression," a monument of "majestic balance" between "violent passion and iron will," amplified again by the figures of Leah and Rachel: "The Moses," he writes, "is a supernatural and savage apparition, half beast, half god. Pagan? Christian? No one knows."[115]

Freud, then, adopted the traditional ambiguity of the statue to complicate its emotional life, denying neither its all but barbaric virility nor its notorious terribleness. To the contrary, he affirmed them even as signatures of a new Jewish body, which echoed what Henry Thode had achieved for the new "German" body when he characterized Michelangelo's *Moses* as a "giant [*Hünengestalt*], trembling with uncontrollable willpower, his gigantic limbs swollen with superhuman physical strength, just as we would imagine an undefeatable, world-conquering Germanic commander-in-chief."[116] Michelangelo, for Thode, deliberately placed the violent willpower of this giant, aesthetically immortalized in his animal-like, diabolic features, above all contemplation, creating an image not of true history (*Historienbild*), but the "primal image [*Urbild*] of insurmountable energy."[117] Using similar language and, as Thode, substituting an ideal image for historical faithfulness, Freud accepted what Thode called the "classically barbaric," "satyrlike," and even "alienating" (*befremdende*) physiognomy to establish a restored Jewish dignity which expressed, surely unbeknownst to him, what Wilhelm Heinse wrote about the *Moses* in 1783: "He has a truly Jewish body [*ächte jüdische Gestalt*] . . . , he strikes us as a higher kind of man, even though we are accustomed to despising everything that is Jewish."[118]

This notwithstanding, Freud's affirmation of barbaric masculinity and muscle strength, though serving to restore pride and dignity, functioned in truth as plastic exteriorization of inner restraint and self-denial. Michelangelo's *Moses*, like the city of Rome itself, became a symbol, to Freud, of mental life, an image of what this *Moses* heroically renounced, the image of a struggle, which, in its

last analysis, was a struggle against the image. The *Moses*, in short, whom Freud visits faithfully every day like a worshiper of idols, is the Moses of morality, the iconoclast, the *Übermensch* to himself, who shatters not only the idol of rage but also the idol of art. And it is Michelangelo who thus becomes, for Freud, the quintessential iconoclast, the rebel against scripture, against the church, against his own age, who challenges, who questions, artwork and artist alike, "driving his creations toward the ultimate boundary of what art can represent."[119]

Freud's understanding of Michelangelo—and such an understanding of the artist's "intention" (*Absicht*) was indeed the declared purpose of his essay—could thus be read as a particularly "Jewish" rewriting of art history identifying the image of the angry lawgiver with the very *overcoming* of the image the Law itself demands. In *Moses and Monotheism*, which became his final commentary on the subject, Freud would indeed reiterate that well-known prohibition against the "graven image" as an affirmation of the "abstract idea" and "spiritual" in Judaism: "The prohibition," he writes, ". . . was a triumph of spirituality [*Geistigkeit*] over the senses [*Sinnlichkeit*]; more precisely, an instinctual renunciation [*Triebverzicht*] accompanied by its psychologically necessary consequences."[120] Freed from the "bondage of the senses," the people thus developed a feeling of moral superiority, yet also of moral mission—"to build a dike against brutality [*Rohheit*] and the inclination to violence [*Gewalttat*] which are usually found where athletic strength [*Muskelkraft*] becomes the ideal of the people."[121] Having restored the Jewish body, Freud then inverts its muscular fabric to reclaim—not despite the image but precisely *in* the image of Michelangelo's *Moses*—a commitment to what might appear as uniquely Jewish "aniconism."[122] To the Jewish beholder, it seems, the colossus was meant to deny his visual self, just as the "new," "reworked" Moses was able to deny his passions: The necessary consequence of instinctual renunciation, therefore, was visual renunciation.

But this visual renunciation, which had to be grounded in the plastic image itself, was more to Freud than a mere nod to Enlightenment iconoclasm, and it had little in common with modernism's self-problematization of the visual image.[123] Freud, even if epitomizing modernity, was not himself a modernist; he had a classical temperament. Renouncing the image, therefore, was a sign neither of abstraction nor aniconism but, rather, a response to the concrete image, to what it represented and to what was manifest in its plastic form. It was not Freud's rejection of the image that determined his response, but his *resistance* to it: The resistance to the Pygmalean impulse, the taming of a classical fantasy, which was an affirmation, yet also arrestation of the moving

sculpture. If the *Moses* was indeed intended and cannot be thought other than as the "first patron of the arts," as Peter Armour has most definitively argued,[124] if he was, in fact, not only a patron but an artist in the image of Vasari's talented God, who made man the "first form of sculpture," then it was Freud's own interpretation—an interpretation brought to life by Michelangelo—that returned the arts to their designated space: to the frame and to the plinth. Like Michelangelo, Freud took statues seriously. And he took seriously the idea that this *Moses* was, in truth, the portrait of the sculptor, whose art not only exceeded but denied itself: a sculptor of "human obelisks," as Heine wrote in his well-known "*Confessions*," or, as Thomas Mann would later write, a "stonecutter" in the image of his idol-making father, whose work would become a living people and "prototype" to all humanity, a monument against its own monumental form, which would endure and outlast "all plastic images cast from ore."[125]

At the conclusion of Freud's *Moses* essay, the statue's "angry-scornful" eyes are no longer trained upon the Jewish worshiper of art, but turned inward, as it were, against the idol itself, against its own illusion to be more than a carved block of stone. Freud's initial expectations, or maybe dreams, that the statue would "jump to its feet" are "disappointed," or shall we say corrected, disenchanted, demystified: "The stone became harder and harder," he writes, "exuding an almost oppressive holy stillness, and I could not but feel that what was represented here had to stay unchanged, that this Moses had to stay seated . . . forever as he was."[126] It was Freud himself, then, who had to resist, to renounce his fantastic desire to view the *Moses* through the eyes of a modern-day Pygmalion and to continue viewing himself, as tempting as it was, as a Moses of his time. It was Freud who had to admonish himself that the Moses of his imagination was but a giant on "legs of clay," as he wrote to Arnold Zweig in 1934, a modern Golem animated by a fiction truer than history, but a Golem nonetheless, a homunculus, who could collapse at any moment burying his master underneath.[127] In the end, Michelangelo's *Moses*, whom Freud had encountered so intimately, whose (Jewish) other he had been for so long, was not allowed to cross the boundary from stone to real life, to follow in the footsteps of Gradiva, to become another Commodore as in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Freud's favorite opera; Moses had to be forced back onto his pedestal, muted and tamed, disenchanted, to become the monument to a better, self-restrained humanity: a humanity sculpted to guard the abyss between life and lifelessness and able, therefore, to endure.

Response

Freud's "obsession" with the *Moses*, we have argued, was no isolated incident. It belonged, rather, to a veritable genre of Jewish litophilia and, as it were, *Moses* pilgrimages. In 1879, long before Freud's first visit to the *Moses*, the Triestine Jewish poet and great ideologue of the Risorgimento, Giuseppe Revere, published a collection of poems entitled *Osiride*, after the Egyptian god of afterlife and rebirth. Revere had already established himself as a poet, essayist, and author of historical scenes of some distinction when he joined forces with Mazzini's Young Italy to become, along with the playwright David Levi, one of its most prolific revolutionary writers.[128] In 1839, then living in Milan, Revere gained notoriety with the historical drama *Lorenzino de' Medici*; in 1845, he published his first cycle of poems, *Sdegno ed Affetto* (Scorn and Affection), which established him as a passionate, albeit heavy-handed, minstrel of national pride; in 1849, he was elected to the National Assembly and became editor of Mazzini's *L'Italia del Popolo*. Revere's muse was Italy itself, its language, its heroes—especially Dante—and its cities, Rome above all. But Rome was not yet liberated; to the contrary, it had been the darkest center of reaction, and Revere, writing in 1862 from his exile in Genoa, laments the Eternal City's siege by "priestly furor" and papal wilderness:

> God is not where the flame of free thought
> Is incarcerated.
> God is not where love of freedom
> Is a crime . . .
> God, the mysterious master of love, manifests himself
> Only in the joyful unity of a risen people
> That is free to flourish and adore.[129]

Besieged and oppressed, Rome—whose symbolic power, whose ancient, endlessly layered past, encompassed the idea not only of a free Italy but of humanity itself—had to be liberated by the lovers of humanity, by the religion of Eros: "*Beatrice ebbi in cor, l'Italia in mente*."[130] With Beatrice in his heart and Italy on his mind, Revere, whose immortal and, naturally, unrequited love and inspiration was a Catholic girl back in Trieste, turned, more than once, to the great unhappy lover and *libero ingegnio*—Michelangelo, in whose "superhuman embrace" Italy could find new hope:

> And under the sigh of love which creates
> The chisel, the colors, the speech,
> All agree that art cannot more deeply
> Strike forward a new path.[131]

Indeed, in a world blushing with shame for its mad affairs, as Revere writes in an homage to Michelangelo of 1851, in a world where the "death of thought" has swept clear every street, it is "only images [*simulacri*] that still have life."[132] In

this world, Revere writes in another poem, it is the angry word of the prophets, "prophets of the past and of the future," that can lift the barrenness and falsehood from Italy's wounded face. Spartacus, Dante, Macchiavelli, and even *il Cristo* appear in Revere's register to proclaim a united Italy under the banner of pure humanity, religion removed—"*fratelli in Adamo* [brothers in Adam]."

In *Osiride*, however, which announces, as Dante and the great *rinascimento,* a veritable *nuova vita*, the poet returns to a language that speaks of Jewish distinctiveness, of a civic space for Judaism in the political architecture of emancipated Rome. A virtual exodus leads Revere from ancient Egypt to a liberated Italy, the Promised Land whose heroes are Mazzini and Garibaldi. But Egypt has not vanished. Its gods still weigh heavily on Revere's mind: Osiris, whom the Greeks took for Apollo, fits "like a glove" on the poet's hand, and I, writes Revere, "who have had some quarrels with Apollo, must hold him in greatest reverence. . . . My sonnets should be regarded as if the gods of Egypt, gone for many centuries, had returned to make anew their lives in beautiful Italy."[133] As Heine, who had called home the exiled gods, Revere yearns for the traces of a pagan past and finds them, written in stone, throughout the city of Rome but, above all, in an inconspicuous basilica, whose *prosa marmorea* speaks, like Dante's walls, of the Renaissance love for ancient worlds and of the return to a *paganesimo cattolico*: the church of San Pietro in Vincoli. Revere, the Jewish poet from Trieste, is strangely drawn to this Catholic sanctuary, whose fiery pulpit was led by none other than Pio Mortara, the now grown up Edgardo Mortara, who, in 1858, had been abducted from his Jewish home by the pope's guards and raised to be a priest.[134] At first reluctant to enter as a Jew, Revere soon describes himself, as Freud would later do, as a devout Jewish pilgrim to the church, especially to its main attraction: "A God, inimical to all false trifle," writes Revere, "pulled me to San Pietro . . . and I lost myself to Michelangelo."[135]

Already in the preface to his poetic cycle *Persone ed ombre,* of 1862, Revere wrote of his admiration for the biblical Moses, whom Michelangelo, "who knew everything," had portrayed with unrivaled force: as a lawgiver, whose statutes were "sculpted" with utmost clarity for all mankind.[136] Now, in the introduction to *Osiride*, he returns to Michelangelo's *Moses* to search for the "authentic Moses," the "true Moses of the Bible," not the wordsmith, but the "*condottiero d'Israello*" and "*capitano del popolo*." And Revere finds this Moses not in the Torah, not in the synagogue, but in Michelangelo's monument of the violent reformer ("*guerrioro riformatore*"), whose face is "divinely diabolic" and whose body reminiscent of ancient, pagan warriors. The poet, no longer young, sits

down on a marble bench before the monument tiredly contemplating the prophet's image and mumbling a few words to himself, which, he imagines, the "real" Moses would have understood. But behold, the *Moses* of Michelangelo responds! He responds not in his divine vernacular, not in Hebrew, but in beautiful Italian, even with a certain southern Tuscan accent: "The soul of the terrible sculptor," Revere writes, "spoke through all members of the prophetic body *con accento purissimo*—with a pure accent, which my ears could not hear, but which resounded clearly in my mind."[137] *Panzanate!*—Yarn!, Revere's readers respond to such fantasies. Can statues really talk? But the poet insists on the ekphrastic reality of this event. For if books and things can speak to us, why could it not be that this *Moses*, for the love of his people, should speak to me? Did not Michelangelo "open his soul," did not his chisel make the *Moses* speak, was he not "*una statua più viva della vita stessa"*—a statue more alive than life itself? Indeed, the *Moses* calls out to him in a "rabbinical and fatherly" tone asking him, the poet, who in his state of shock resembles a petrified statue, to speak: *Parla, parla!* "Speak up! Don't be as timid as the Goyim; there is no one who can hear us."[138] Having revealed himself as an insider, Michelangelo's *Moses* goes on to listen to the supplicant's questions and doubts about Jewish identity in a secular Rome and to lecture about the virtues and limits of assimilation and *disebreizzazione*, or de-judaization, in a reborn Italy.

What the aging Revere thus experiences is a revelation of divine proportions, Moses speaking to him in the voice of Michelangelo—or is it Michelangelo speaking to him in the sculpted body of Moses? What ensues is a detailed exchange revealing a pragmatic, politically oriented, even idiosyncratic prophet, who exceeds Michelangelo's own dreams. Finally, it is Moses/Michelangelo who admonishes the poet, as only the real, terrible Moses can do, to guard Europe, where the "mosaic faith"—"*fede mosaica, diceva io . . . per non ripetere la parola ebreo"*—has tempered itself and accommodated to modern times, without, however, forgetting its origins; to guard the philosophers, "*nobili intelletti*," to pursue human wisdom; and to be sympathetic even to Christianity, to "that *Gesù* who came from our stock . . . and forced shut forever the eyes of Jove, disarmed Neptune, and unmasked the beauty of Venus." He admonishes him, in short, to guard Mazzini's values as those of a new humanity and to recognize mosaic law not as a tribal constitution but as a "sign that speaks in fierce and irrevocable ways against the enormities of idolatrous nations."[139] But he also admonishes him not to confuse one religion with another, not to mistake the new covenant for the old, whose tablets are still firmly placed in the hands of the "*padre della legge,*" the master of law. The new Rome, this

Moses/Michelangelo finally insists, is not destined to be a new heavenly Jerusalem, but merely a "*Gerusalemme politica*," a civic, secular Jerusalem, where Catholic and Jew can live happily together, united by the "bonds of love," as citizens of equal rights.[140]

Revere's fascinating fantasy is one that again plays on the Pygmalean theme, adding to it a Jewish improvisation that seems far less inhibited by Protestant concerns than the work of German Jewish commentators. Indeed, Revere is not the least troubled by the graven image but visits it as one would visit one's local rabbi, receiving instructions—from a statue!—how to live a good Jewish life and to resist idolatry. The humor in Revere's story is, of course, that he does *not* visit his local rabbi but the *padre della legge* himself, the master of law, who is sculpted by the master of sculpture. But Revere's humor takes on even Michelangelesque dimensions when the voices of the masters are reversed and it is Michelangelo who teaches Torah, while Moses lends him but his sculpted body. We are, in fact, no longer certain whose words emerge from the marble colossus, whether Moses and Michelangelo have finally become one and whether this matters at all. Yet, as in Heine and Freud, the Pygmalean fantasy turns out to be also anti-Pygmalean: *Moses* remains but a mute marble figure, for it is merely *through* his limbs, through his image and by virtue of the Jewish encounter with it, that Michelangelo speaks, lending his voice not only to the statue but also to its ideal and, if we return to the theme of Revere's collection, *Egyptian* origin: to the pre-Jewish Moses. The statue itself is only the origin, not the object, of love. What emerges, then, in Revere's story, is a Moses yet again "truer" than the historical image, a "mosaic" Moses rather than a Hebrew leader, a *condottiero* not only of Israel but of future Italy, a *capitano del popolo* and universal man as only Michelangelo could have created.

Shattering

Some two decades before Revere's dramatic session with Michelangelo's statue, another Jewish visitor stood before the *Moses* enthralled by his commanding presence. This time, it was not a revolutionary poet, nor a godless Jew, but the German Jewish liberal theologian and successful physician Salomon Ludwig Steinheim, best known for his monumental opus magnum, *Revelation According to the Jewish Doctrine* (1835), which earned him the titles of a modern Philo and "Jewish Tertullian."[141] A respected figure in his time, Steinheim moved freely in Jewish and Christian circles, briefly contemplating baptism for himself and maintaining a salon at his home in Altona, which included, among other dignitaries, the German nationalist writer Karl Gutzkow, whose novel *The*

Magician of Rome (1858) viewed itself as a reconciliation of the "Germanic and Latin worlds,"[142] the Jewish revolutionary writer Gabriel Riesser, and the Danish sculptor and fellow Italophile Bertel Thorwaldsen. In 1845 Steinheim took his first of many journeys to Rome, where in 1849 he settled permanently with his wife. As many other German Jewish travelers, Steinheim considered Italy his "Promised Land" (*gelobtes Land*) and lived under the impression of unqualified acceptance: "The traveler is the real human being, the man of nature," he writes in a letter of 1848. "In foreign lands, as in the heavens, one does not need badges but should exclaim: *Vive l' égalité!*"[143] With equal enthusiasm, Steinheim's wife Johanna wrote two years later: "After five years in Italy, I have grown to love this country, where one can so easily live as a stranger, with such ardor that I gladly call it my second fatherland."[144] At the same time, Steinheim, as most *Deutschrömer* of his generation, remained largely aloof from Italians themselves, moving instead in the circles of what appeared to him as a "German village": "Here in Rome, there is no need whatsoever to speak a single word of Italian, for one is tempted at any rate to speak too little Italian and too much German," he writes in a letter of 1857.[145] Indeed, after twelve years of living in Rome, Steinheim admits to not having mastered the language of the land, which did not prevent him, however, from writing extensively on his Italian experience, including a detailed account and legal commentary on the Edgardo Mortara affair and a translation of Giambattista Casti's *Animali parlanti*.[146] A renaissance man of his age, Steinheim also tried himself as a poet, novelist, and painter, and wrote the oratory *The Fall of Jerusalem*, set to music by Ferdinand Hiller and performed in Leipzig in 1840.[147] Virtually forgotten after his death, Steinheim's theological writings, which critically developed Kant's philosophical system, were remembered only in the 1930s when German Jewish scholars, in an effort of intellectual resistance, took stock of their own history.[148]

But in 1902, the Berlin-based *Yearbook for Jewish History and Literature* posthumously printed a small portion from an unpublished manuscript, "Excursions through Rome and its Campagna," which Steinheim had written, as a sort of Jewish *cicerone*, between 1857 and 1859.[149] Entitled "Moses and Michelangelo" and conceived as a dramatic scene, the published excerpt remained the only part in Steinheim's convoluted and, ultimately, unsuccessful manuscript to ever appear in print. Its main characters were borrowed from yet another literary failure, the eight-hundred-page autobiographical novel *Herr Elias Windler and His Nephews*, which Steinheim, against all odds, managed to sell for two Friedrichsdor to a publisher in Hamburg, who however went

bankrupt immediately thereafter.[150] We can suspect, then, that it was neither the irresistible literary value nor the historical significance of the excerpt that inspired its editor, Leopold Lucas, to prepare it for publication, but, rather, its curious contribution to the Jewish "Moses effect" of his time. Indeed, Lucas—Steinheim's grandnephew, incidentally, and a respected rabbi himself—clearly recognized that Steinheim's dramatic scene was unusual even by the imagination of the fin-de-siècle.

Steinheim's text begins with the narrator dozing off on the same bench between the final columns of the nave in San Pietro in Vinvoli as, presumably, Freud would half a century later. A group of visitors assembles before the *Moses* to admire the statue and debate with great passion the origins of its unseemly horns. One of them, the blonde Katharina, expresses particular indignation: "If I became pope today, I would knock off these horns already tomorrow!" Even at the risk of disfiguring a work of art? objects Doktor Gad, their learned guide and another Steinheim in disguise. "Yes, even at that risk," Katharina replies: "What is the value of art . . . compared to the simple truth, to the justice of plain religion?"[151] It is a question Steinheim put to himself in the second volume of his *Offenbarung*, completed in Rome in 1852. If sculpture and *Bildnerei* are indeed the symbolic forms of paganism, if the plastic arts are always mimesis (*Nachahmung*) rather than creation (*Schöpfung*), if, as he puts it, the "cult of making images is a testimony to the fact that a nation has not yet awoken to freedom," then how can religion tolerate art? "Where the sensual is sanctified," writes Steinheim, "the transcendent is desecrated; where cult worships the body, the spiritual is denied and denigrated."[152] The plastic arts, Steinheim continues, must therefore be "excluded" from correct religious practice, and it is only natural for Herr Elias, another member of the group, to admire Katharina's prophetic, albeit "childlike" passion: "This is a true and holy passion, worth more than the smooth power of all seductive and deceptive art." Offended by the depiction of a Jewish satyr or faun, which reminds him of the "yellow cockade" of medieval times, Herr Elias recoils from Michelangelo's *Moses*, for he sees in him no more than the caricature of "a Jew."[153]

But neither Doktor Gad nor the narrator himself share this unqualified disdain. To the contrary, the uniqueness of the prophet required, according to Doktor Gad, a unique representation, one of total difference, otherworldliness, and "terrifying manner." It was the sculptor's "superhuman imagination" that created an image "transcending the border of aesthetic and ethical beauty," just as Steinheim would later write in the third volume of his *Offenbarung* that "the piety of images increases with the ugliness of their form."[154] Michelangelo's

Moses, Doktor Gad continues to lecture, was thus an approximation to a "spiritual worldview," an attempt to connect the plastic arts to their absolute opposite—to revelation. But however he tried, Michelangelo failed. His *Moses* remained entrapped in a "crude mass of flesh," unresolved and indicative of the master's struggle with matter, whose purest spiritual form emerged only from Michelangelo's unfinished works. "What drives [the art of the chisel] to always try itself at expressing the spiritual of pure nature?" wonders Doktor Gad. "The stone one cannot lift should be left alone."[155]

With these words the visitors retreat, and the narrator, still sitting on his bench, returns to a state between "waking and sleep." A mother and her two daughters enter the sanctuary to bid the priest for a letter of indulgence. Then the church falls silent again, and Steinheim contemplates once more the "powerful figure" of the *Moses*: "Moses, Moses, how small your spirit seems beneath your colossal body! What irony that you have been erected at this holy site in the shape of a satyr, as if in defiance of your own commandment: You shall not make a graven image! Was it mockery against the law of your two tablets . . . ? You, the sworn enemy to all image work in holy places, you are forced to sit here as a laughing stock of your own image!"[156] Gradually, as the light changes, the statue's head seems to "protrude," its nose to "breath," its eyes to "widen" while "turning towards the door . . . in anticipation," and its left foot seems to ready itself for a "giant leap." The statue, Steinheim writes, "took hold of me, would not let go, drew nearer and nearer."[157] The longer his sleepy eyes rest upon the marble, the livelier the figure that seems to emerge from it: "It seemed to me as if I saw the master work, as if I heard his hammer and the falling pieces of marble."

Yet the *Moses* remains still. Instead, two shadows enter the "twilight" of the church: Michelangelo himself, hammer and chisel in hand, and—his features hidden behind a veil and clad in biblical cloak—the Hebrew lawgiver in person. "Come here, Moses!" begins the artist, leading his partner before the statue: "Look at this face! Tell me, have I chiseled it in the spirit you wanted to be portrayed?" Moses, however, anything but pleased, challenges the artist for his unbecoming, satyrlike and brutish portrait. Thus unfolds a dialogue revealing the "real" Moses as a great connoisseur of art, a Michelangelo scholar in his own right, pressing Michelangelo to confess that this *Moses* was, in truth, the finished version of an unfinished reclining Hercules: "I am your finished Hercules! But why did you turn me into a pagan hero and call me 'Moses'?" "And what evil demon, what buffoon," Moses continues his tirade, "gave you the idea of these horns?"[158] Michelangelo defends himself, explaining the horns as mere symbols

of strength. But such explanation—which anticipated later scholarship—does not satisfy Steinheim's Moses, for his is the strength of an idea, not the "strength of bulls and rams."[159] Put to shame by such insight, the aging sculptor regrets his youthful error: "Oh, how I wished your forehead was as smooth as mine." "Well then," says Moses, "get to work!" In the next moment, "splinters of marble" fly left and right as the artist frantically drives his chisel into the sculpture, knocking off its horns, a scene invoking or, perhaps, repeating and reworking Michelangelo's first blow against the statue's knee; but a scene reminiscent also of the aging Michelangelo's attack against his *Florentine Pietà*, which featured the *Nicodemus*, a sculpture in his own resemblance. But here the prophet stops his elevated arm—an image familiar from Brunelleschi's *Akedah* (binding of Isaac)—while uncovering his face: "You shall not make a graven image," he shouts in a thundering voice, "and yet you have sculpted one of me!" And as Michelangelo, as one should expect from an "upright Catholic," falls onto his knees in terror, Moses soars to the vaulted ceiling, sending a flash of lightning through the church that makes the image burst at once: "And the colossal marble," Steinheim writes not without some theological satisfaction, "was overturned and shattered into pieces."[160]

Atonement

Both Steinheim and Revere offer remarkable reworkings not only of Michelangelo's *Moses* but of the plastic imagination itself. In both, Pygmalean and anti-Pygmalean themes coincide to make a statue "speak" without making it fully alive. In both, Heine's enigmatic violence of the sculpted image is tamed by the most violent and terrible of images, the portrait of the Hebrew iconoclast. Playing on the theme of mutual *terribilità*, Steinheim's reverie at once disenchants and animates the *Moses*, making him move and crumble as if to give evidence of his ultimate statueness. And yet, the graven *Moses* anticipates his fall, as only living statues can, while the "real" Moses, with the help of the "real" Michelangelo, begins to rework, to redeem, his image. It is Michelangelo, the master of sculpture, who becomes, Moses' apprentice in iconoclasm; it is the artist, who is chosen, as if another Moses, to see the "light" behind the veil and to become, in a striking reversal of Vasari's anecdote, a *baal teshuva*, a penitent and returner to the graven prophet who is neither Paul nor Christ but, as he identifies himself, "a poor man from the Ghetto."[161]

Rainer Maria Rilke would later revisit the motif of the repenting Michelangelo, turning the sculptor himself into an unformed design, a living *bozzetto*, violently shaped by a city coming to life, by dark facades "stretching

their arms after him," and by the walls of his own home pressing against his body to mold him back into his former shape: "And he submitted. He went to his knees and let himself be formed from within."[162] But in Steinheim's story, it is not only the artist who is forced to his knees but the image itself that calls for its own alteration and annulment; it is the image that repents and is ashamed, as Hermann Cohen wrote of the idols in Isaiah, of itself. As Michelangelo turns to iconoclasm, so the image turns, as it were, autoclastic, as if in a heroic moment of introspection. Indeed, standing before Michelangelo's *Moses*, Hermann Cohen reads "deep shame and melancholy" from his eyes, a carved reminder of humanity's enslavement, but a man ashamed also of his own plastic form.[163]

More than any artist, then, Michelangelo, in Steinheim's imagination, truly represented *il divino*, the divine artist, whose quest for truth, whose revelation, leads him to disfigure form for expression, and to sacrifice expression for the infinity of the idea. And more than any artwork, it is the *Moses* who seems conscious of his own deceptive sculptedness, of being a satire of himself, a "masterpiece of lies" (*Meisterstück der Lüge*), as Steinheim writes. Contrary to Doktor Gad's judgment, then, Michelangelo did not fail but, in fact, *succeeded* in creating an image that reveals its own antithesis.

One cannot, therefore, reduce Steinheim's naughty fantasy to a mere variation of Jewish aniconism and iconoclasm. "Kant was an iconoclast," writes Steinheim in the *Offenbarung*, "and we join him in spirit, following the meaning of Moses' commandment against the idol altars. . . . We do in spirit what he commanded us to do in real life."[164] Paganism (*Heidenthum*), for Steinheim, was not false worship or primitive religion, but a "spiritual circumstance," an attitude of the mind required, in fact, to appreciate beauty. Rejecting the "crude barbarism of hatred against art," Steinheim reclaims the arts as a "supreme means of the education of humanity," reclaiming also Michelangelo's *Moses* as an aesthetic educator.[165] Shattering the Moses, then, for Steinheim is a spiritual exercise, an iconoclasm of the mind following, as it were, from the statue's own conscience. What humanity should learn from this unsettling satyr-prophet was its *inner* resistance to the image-work: Not its negativity but its *dialectic*. If the *Moses* had generally been recognized—like the *Laokoon* group in Lessing—as suspended between motion and rest, a moment of "frozen music," then it appeared suspended also between image and anti-image, between representation and ideal *simulacrum*. Not only *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* seemed forced together in this powerful body, but also ethics and aesthetics, the two realms that revelation, in Steinheim's system, had radically torn apart.[166] Paradoxically, then, to Steinheim as to Revere, and to Freud later on, the *Moses* appeared not

only as another statue but as *another revelation*, an aesthetic substitution for the historical Moses, truer, more real, and, at the same time, foreshadowing the end of art as inherent in the work of art.

Transition

Nothing, then, could have been farther from the Jewish identification with Michelangelo's *Moses* and, in many instances, Michelangelo himself, than the moralizing renunciation of the graven work of art. To the contrary, whether in Freud's liberation from the bondage of the senses or in Steinheim's spiritual iconoclasm, or in Revere's private lesson with the master of Judaism, the source of imagination was none other than the plastic image itself. Not the static image, not the statue as a stoppage of time, but the image set in motion, reworked, and ultimately transfigured by Jewish dreams. Through his *Moses*, and in him, Michelangelo became an aesthetic educator to the Jewish beholder, a teacher of revelation and of Judaism's place in humankind.

We now may understand why Sigmund Freud, the most famous of all Jewish pilgrims to San Pietro in Vincoli, was convinced that Michelangelo had not only "reworked" but indeed surpassed the historical Moses, placing a "transformed" Moses at the pope's tomb. And we can better understand the supreme importance of Michelangelo in Hermann Cohen's *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*, of 1912, to which we shall turn in our next reflection. It is well known that the late Cohen's *Religion of Reason* (1918) insists on a "necessary" separation of religion and the plastic arts. But his *Aesthetics* chastises the Hebrew prophets for having failed to grasp that the plastic arts could have helped their cause, that they could have helped "elevate the human spirit above the cult of idols and to free it from polytheism"—that art could have been prophetic in its own right.[167] For Cohen, it was precisely Michelangelo who recovered the prophetic element in art, ultimately rendering aesthetics superior to ethics, offering nothing less than a *Neugestaltung*, a "making over" or reworking of morality. Thus, the *David* became Michelangelo's political testament of heroic action combined with breathing passion, introspection, and complete with poetic melancholy; and thus the *Moses*, writes Cohen, appears to us not as an idol but "as man only, and furthermore, as the founder of the moral polity through the law of the Decalogue. . . . It had to be the intention of Michelangelo, the politician, to create a monument to the founder of a moral law for a State of order."[168] This *Moses*, Cohen continues, from whose eyes radiates the spirit of Dante, and who is sculpted as both the "manly man of a surplus of human power" and a "hero of human suffering," is the "man of the modern ideal."[169] He is not the portrait of

the Hebrew lawgiver, but his aesthetic origin: his *Urbild* and ideal image. An *Urbild* of humanity, this plastic image was more human to Cohen than its living shadow; the statue more alive than the human body.

What weaves together, however tenuously, our Jewish protagonists, whether Heine, Freud, Tchernichovski, Revere, Steinheim, or, for that matter, Hermann Cohen, and what connects them to Michelangelo, is their sympathy for a statue's self, their acknowledgment of its being in difference. It may be fear, desire, disappointment, or mere fantasy; it may be an attempt to arrest its motion, to tame the image. But it remains a passion for what is trapped in the never finished stone, a listening, *Belauschen*; a form of encounter. Where a statue truly awakens, it awakens not as image but as an other. Thus, standing, like Heine, before *Night*, Cohen imagines a new Venus emerging from the "sea of night," her left foot "raised as if to remind us of her body's power when she rises," her giant undressed limbs a symbol of human love and, therefore, art: "This Beatrice," even Cohen cannot but admit, "is alive."[170]

Figure 3. Michelangelo, *The Creation of Sun and Moon* (detail), Sistine Chapel. Alinari/Art Resource.

3

Fragments of Desire

MICHELANGELO AND THE AESTHETICS OF JEWISH THOUGHT

> *Nessun volto fra noi è che pareggi*
> *L'immagine del cor.*
>
> [There is no face among us that can equal the image of the heart.]
> —Michelangelo, *Rime*, no. 49[1]
>
> *Dieses erst vollendet das Werk, welches es zum Stückwerk zerschlägt,*
> *zum Fragmente der wahren Welt, zum Torso eines Symbols.*
>
> [Only that completes a work which shatters it to pieces,
> making it a fragment of the true world, the torso of a symbol.]
> —Walter Benjamin, "*Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften*" [2]

Beginnings

"The world is not," writes Martin Buber in an essay on the Jewish poet Alfred Mombert, "it is *done*."[3] It is done eternally and is itself eternal "doing," an ever-new beginning of worldliness, whose createdness and creativity have fallen into oblivion in the modern age. "Primal man," Buber muses about Mombert's mythical trilogy *Aeon* (1901–7), "experiences the world as creation, not by reflecting on it . . . but by experiencing his own creatorship."[4] The experience of a created world, this obscure "image-dream" that ties myth to modernity, is not the same as the dogmatic image of the creator-God. There is "preworldly" creation, for Buber, creation before and outside of history and humankind, and there is "eternal" creation, repetitions of the primal beginning requiring the fellowship of man. In the eternal act of creation, in the idea of a world to be done, lies the meaning of art; and no one, for Buber, understood this meaning more profoundly than the artist of the Sistine Chapel: "From the self-experience of eternal creation emerges the movement of the creator-God on the Sistine ceiling."[5]

We begin our last meditation with beginnings. Man, *der Mensch*, is a "necessary beginner," Hannah Arendt wrote in the *Human Condition*, whose making of beginnings comes "like a second birth" responding to the first. To act means to begin. "Because they are *initium*," writes Arendt, because they are "newcomers and beginners by virtue of birth, men take initiative, are prompted into action."[6] But their beginnings are not the same as the beginning of the

world: they are beginnings of beginners reflecting and actualizing the condition of natality, which is the human correlate to the idea of creation: “With the creation of man, the principle of the beginning came into the world itself, which, of course, is no other way of saying that the principle of freedom was created when man was created but not before.”[7] In every beginning there is an origin, a new creation tracing the first, a new beginning that is at once affirmation and revision of the beginning that began before. Work, Maurice Blanchot would later write, is “pure beginning”; but as it becomes art, it is also “the first and last moment when being presents itself,” a moment that is in truth anterior to the beginning, announcing it, yet never leading us beyond the world it creates out of essential solitude and idleness (*désoeuvrement*).[8] Un-worked, the work of art “indicates the menacing proximity of a vague and vacant outside,” Blanchot continues, a “neutral existence” pointing into “sordid absence” and ceaselessly perpetuating itself as “nothingness.”[9] It becomes the starting point for our beginnings; but it does not allow us to begin. “It says ‘the beginning’ when it says ‘art,’ which is its origin and whose essence has become its task. But where has art led us? To a time before the world, before the beginning. It has cast us out of our power to begin and to end . . . We appeal to art’s sovereignty: it ruins the kingdom.”[10] One never ascends, Blanchot writes, from “the world” to art, not even by refusing it, for art belongs to “that other time,” for it stands, as Heidegger put it, in itself, or as Franz Rosenzweig wrote, “in an uncanny liveliness, full of life, yet also alienated from it.”[11] But one can, “with a leap” escape the “implacable insistence of something having neither beginning nor end,” one can “pronounce the work *beginning*,” even if risking its utter ruin. This, to Blanchot, must be the question of art of our time: Whether art, in essence, can create without Creation, whether it can withstand the “double absence of the gods who are no longer *and* who are not yet,” whether it can occupy and guard the space of this “and”—the “pure word in which the void of the past and the void of the future become true presence,” living, as Michelangelo’s *Dawn*, in the “‘now’ of dawn.”[12] To Blanchot, as to Heidegger, as to Rosenzweig, it is the poem that ultimately fills “the answer’s absence” with its own beginnings. It is the poem’s solitude and poverty, grasping, powerlessly, in “prophetic isolation,” toward the future and announcing, “before time,” the beginning that makes man necessary. But for us, it will be again the Jewish encounter with Michelangelo: Michelangelo, the poet of solitude, the sculptor of the unfinished, the painter of beginnings.

Renewal

Michelangelo, to Buber, shattered the myth of the primal beginning as a beginning once and for all, the myth of art as enduring figuration, the myth of cosmic creation as a completed fiat, to put a new ideal in its place: creation as an "eternal act," a perpetual re-beginning of the beginning, as it were, recalling traces of the unbegun and anticipating, by the same token, the unfinished and incomplete. Buber, in this regard, experienced the Sistine Chapel as a painted revelation against the "abruptness of beginnings" and against the ideal past known from the pagan, plastic world which, in Franz Rosenzweig's aesthetic system, was conceived as mute and everlasting. The Sistine Ceiling, thus, represented no lasting image at all to Buber but a text of creative renewal at every instant; and it represented, therefore, the counterimage to pagan imagism, whose essential error, as Rosenzweig wrote in 1928, was the "solidification [*Verfestigung*] of all real and momentary revelation into an image resisting the ever-new divine desire to reveal itself."[13] Indeed, its utmost anthropomorphism stood in the service not of divine attributes but of divine actions: the Sistine God makes a beginning. And this means that his own corporeal concreteness exists only to be in relation with the corporeal world. "Biblical anthropomorphisms," writes Rosenzweig, "never amount to being an image [*Abbild*] or description but always relate, according to their own concrete-moment character, to the created Other and his momentary moment."[14] In the form of art, the act of creation becomes a moment of meeting.

Both Buber and Rosenzweig followed on this point their intellectual progenitor Hermann Cohen, who relegated the meaning of creation to the meaning of ethics, to beginning as being prompted into action. "Creation itself has meaning only for morality."[15] To Cohen, the meaning of creation was not the enchantment of the mythic origin, not the beginning itself, but the *idealization* of the beginning as that which, in every instant, is begun and begins anew.[16] "The Creator now becomes the Renewer," writes Cohen, and all that is manifest is, in truth, a "new beginning" and beginning again, which establishes, ever anew, concrete relation: a recreation that not only repeats or continues creation's own beginning but, in fact, *replaces* it. The "eternal act of creation," thus, becomes creation's substitute (*Stellvertretung*), its reworking and, indeed, its moral revision.[17]

Hermann Cohen's late philosophy, then, supported Buber's understanding of the Sistine Chapel, coinciding also with Vasari's own remark that Michelangelo was not only a creator of artworks but an artist who had "surpassed" and "conquered" creation itself.[18] But one must not underrate the extent to which Cohen's late philosophy stood in a peculiar relation to his actual aesthetic theory.

Despite his formal condemnation of the visual arts in *Religion of Reason*, which represented, arguably, the capstone of his thought, Cohen, as Franz Rosenzweig already noted, was a devout lover of the arts and, in fact, a devout lover of Italy as well. In his introduction to Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften* of 1923, Rosenzweig alerts us to Cohen's own "biographical turning" at the time of his engagement with art and his Italian journey, which Rosenzweig interpreted as a turning away from religion as a system toward the "aesthetic humanization of religion" inspired especially by the art of Michelangelo.[19] It is true that the young Cohen professed a "merely intellectual and moral interest in beauty;"[20] but this seems to have curiously changed in later years. By 1885, Cohen wrote in a letter to his confidante and muse Mathilde Burg (neé Herzfeld), that he had matured and become "more intimate with the beautiful," whose *Urquell* lay for him still in poetry and in the "most embodied" lyrical—"But no lyricism of thought, please!"[21] Art and music must be experienced in their immediacy, through our nervous system, Cohen writes in another letter to Mathilde, confiding in her that in his tender years, while studying the Talmud, he had already experienced the "powerful effects of image works on eye and soul," living the greatest passion for Don Juan, and reciting most of Shakespeare's works by heart.[22] "I believe," Cohen concludes, "that [to understand] the visual arts requires a more intimate degree of relationship, and perhaps I shall go for some time to Italy in order to experience, without reflection, the effects of art and to be fully moved by it."[23] Cohen did indeed journey to Italy in October 1906 (the same year as Franz Rosenzweig's *Italienreise* and Martin Buber's extended sojourn in Florence), traveling to Florence and Rome, and returning to Naples in March 1907.[24] "Splendid museums" and "enchanted surroundings" filled his daily routine, and there is no evidence that Cohen hesitated to spend time also in Christian sanctuaries, studying the frescoes of old masters. At the same time, however, he seems to have connected regularly with the native Jewish communities, seeking a *Stiebel* (prayer room) in places where there was no official synagogue.[25] Cohen's attitude toward art, then, was more nuanced than we find in his *Religion of Reason*, insisting that "ethical monotheism, by necessity, had to be contrary and in opposition to art."[26] Indeed, while Cohen, not unlike the Kantian Salomon Ludwig Steinheim, never doubted the "pagan" origin of art—relegating it, as Franz Rosenzweig later on, to the classical and Christian experiences—he still recognized the aesthetic as integral to human existence as thought, ethics, and religion. In fact, neither Steinheim, nor Cohen, nor Rosenzweig expelled the arts from their systems of revelation; none of them could imagine revelation without aesthetics.[27]

Writing about the Sistine Chapel, Buber could draw upon what Cohen had experienced first hand and poured, with astonishing emotional candor, into his *Aesthetics*.[28] To both, the artist represented the human beginner par excellence, who becomes, in the act of creation, most fully the Creator's correlate; to both, art—especially the art of Michelangelo, whom Cohen singled out from among a few—was *Neuschöpfung* (recreation); and both conceived of art as neither imitating nor confirming religious dogma, but as being always a "making over" (*Neugestaltung*) of religion, a liberation from the "rigid imprisonment" of myth. "True" art always surpassed its age. "Suffice it to say," writes Cohen, "that art, in its last analysis, is concerned not with the dogmatic form of religious imagination, but rather with its moral kernel alone, which is hidden beneath a mythic husk whose shattering is art's independent contribution."[29] Art, in this respect, is no longer foreign to the works of the prophets. It disenchants and shatters the idols of myth and mythic religion, even if its works are mistaken by the naïve beholder for idols themselves. Yet this shattering is no crude war against the image, nor a necessary plea for fragmentation and abstraction. The prophets themselves, writes Cohen, while wary of the "covenant that art . . . enters with idolatry," did not reject the arts entirely but only the "one-sidedness of aesthetic sensibility, which remains oblivious to all moral needs of culture."[30] It is, therefore, the "delusion" (*Verblendung*) of a one-sided aesthetic sense that the prophets accuse, not the aesthetic sense itself. It is not art they reject, nor nature, but *Schwärmerei*. Thus, Ezekiel can praise, like a true connoisseur (*voll von Kunstverstand*), the beauty of Tyre and even of Egypt, while speaking the language of art and writing with "innermost aesthetic sentiment" to reject beauty as that which must, as all human works, and as all human beings, perish at the end. Only with this end in mind can art become a beginning. What it must achieve, it has achieved through all its ages by being creation—the act of beginning—in the truest sense: The disenchantment of mimesis, the end of representation, the fundamental distrust in beauty. "You have made yourself beautiful in untruthfulness," says Isaiah, and it is the artist, Cohen writes, "who, being the moral instructor of society, must wrest free this bitter consequence . . . from his artistic genius."[31] Where art remembers its original mandate, the artist's style becomes prophetic, shaped by the powers of a "socialist disposition" (*sozialisitische Grundstimmung*) that characterizes, for Cohen, the prophetic mind.[32] It becomes prophetic precisely because it disenchants the beautiful and because it becomes art at its most autonomous: Art seeking ideas, *Urbilder*, from which aesthetic love originates, and ideals, *Musterbilder*, toward which it strives. "Pure" art, for Cohen, does not imitate, not even represent, but *emulates*. The

idea of creation, the making of an *Urbild*, is its organon, and "sole criterion," the emulation (*Nacheifern*) of the moral ideal is its purpose.[33]

Art, in this sense, reforms by creating anew, by being its own autonomous beginner. "Not the abolition of the gods," Cohen writes in another place, ". . . not the breaking free from morality, can ever be the goal and way of true art; rather, the new gods, the new form, and the making new of morality [*Neugestaltung der Sittlichkeit*] must be, methodically, the task of the arts in all their manifestations, music and architecture no less than the plastic arts, painting, and poetry."[34] In concert, the arts accomplish what the prophets who, for Cohen, were artists in their own right and of their own style, accomplished with the sacrifices of old: a gradual reforming and reshaping (*Umgestaltung*) that consciously alternated between the forces of transformation (*Verwandlung*) and annihilation (*Vernichtung*) while preserving and setting free the moral meaning of sacrificial cult: "In their struggle against mythology the prophets created a new kind of religion."[35] Monotheism was their work of art, creation their style. But their struggle was, in essence, the struggle of art, the struggle for the new, whose necessary violence or, as Vasari would say, *forza terribile*, inheres in all reform, creation, and new beginning.

Cosmopolitanism

To extract, like the prophets, the beginning from the "darkness of myth" and to erect a "bridge between the ending and unending"[36] by force of ever-renewed creation was, for Cohen, as for Buber, Michelangelo's reworking, his moral *Neugestaltung* of the Genesis story, of *Bereshit*. In the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo, whom Cohen considered the "greatest and most tragic artist of the Renaissance, unsurpassed by any time before and after," became himself a beginner, a maker of origins, a creator and renewer in the most uncompromising and most intimately prophetic sense. "He has furnished the ceiling," Cohen writes in an essay of 1901, "which he spread out like a firmament in the Sistine Chapel, with the spirit of the prophets."[37] In fact, he furnished it with what Cohen calls "prophetic cosmopolitanism" (*Weltbürgertum des Prophetismus*).

The notion of the cosmopolitan in art emerged already in Cohen's 1889 *Foundation of Aesthetics in Kant*, which has frequently been treated as radically different from his later *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*.[38] Yet, despite their differences and more than two decades separating them, there are essential continuities between Cohen's first and second aesthetics, and art's postulate of cosmopolitanism was certainly one of them. Indeed, the "purity of feeling" permeating Cohen's aesthetics of 1912, is prefigured already in the first

aesthetics' discussion of Plato, whose fusion of Eros and desire (*Wunsch*) allowed Cohen to arrive at love as a regulative idea: "Love," he writes in 1889, "even if it eludes our definition, still remains the precise origin of beauty, the root of art. The vitality of love, the purity of the heavenly desire for the deepest unity of human souls—this love has always been and will always be the origin of all art."[39] To the extent that art represents "humanity's self-awareness," it must, for Cohen, originate in the "universal self-awareness of feeling," in the possibility of feeling as a universal and thus unifying principle.[40] The artist, like the prophet, has unique access to that which unites humanity: the aesthetic idea as an idea, whose foundation is, paradoxically, the sensual feeling of Eros. "This aesthetic idea," writes Cohen, "represents the communal sensibility [*Gemeinsinn*], which expands and elevates the private sensibility to the sensibility and understanding—to the feeling of humanity."[41] Thus, if love is feeling at its "purest," the artist must be a primordial and ultimate lover, and it is telling that Cohen, also in his first, still fully Kantian, aesthetics, discovers the model of the artist as lover in none other than the master of the Sistine Chapel: "Michelangelo made the deepest and most encompassing human feeling, love itself, the root of his art."[42] The "confluence of the individual's feeling to the feeling of humanity" thus becomes in Cohen's aesthetics of 1889 not only an "aesthetic necessity" but also an aesthetic hope, if not indeed promise for redemption: "The promise [*Verheissung*] of aesthetic humankind unified in the most intimate expression of its humanity is the highest goal toward which the infinite task of the aesthetic idea points and leads us."[43] If art can educate, then it must educate toward the artwork as a "symbol" of the unity of humankind at the "peak of its awareness, of its feeling," in short, toward its "cosmopolitanism."[44]

In this cosmopolitanism, Cohen argues in his *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*, lay the answer also to Michelangelo's life-long rejection of the individual portrait, which distinguished him from Raphael and Leonardo, and from all art that was, in its last analysis, resemblance rather than origin. To Michelangelo, the human face could not be that of a particular individual, never someone's portrait, but only the human countenance as such, the idea of humanity's infinite presence, its irreducible *Gegenüber*. The face, as Georg Simmel wrote in 1901, is the "heir of the body," the last remnant of nakedness, the unconcealed, in whose most fully realized, yet also transcended, individuality is concealed the image of humanity itself.[45] This image, Cohen writes, remains as concrete as it remains unambiguous. It does "not allow for any exceptions from humanity in human form or human countenance."[46] The face, Emmanuel Levinas will later insist, taking his inspiration from the final pages of Rosenzweig's *Star*, is "definitely

not a plastic form, like a portrait"; it is, rather, "pure expression," the countenance of human mortality "underlying" all particular character. It does not represent but commands.[47] Thus, even the portraits of the Sistine prophets are no portraits, to Cohen, but ideal traits and "boundaries," ideal limits of what he calls the "portrait of humanity" (*Portraitbild des Menschengeschlechts*), a colorful declaration of love for the "nature of man" where love is not a feeling but a commandment.

Covenants

Michelangelo, argues Cohen, had to begin from ancient sculpture to declare his love of nature. He had to reclaim, as Heine or Tchernichovski, the old gods and to create—though not without quarrel—a covenant between Athens and Jerusalem: "Among the Prophets are seated the Sibyls—Greek wisdom merged with the biblical wisdom of the old covenant."[48] The prophets assist Plato, and Plato's gods mingle with the prophets. "Plato was the invisible saint," writes Emil Ludwig of Michelangelo's formative years, ". . . and even if one pretended to be Christian and tried to harmonize, with or without logic, these two worlds, the spirit of his home remained, in truth, Greek."[49] And Georg Brandes: "Michelangelo removes the Christian element. . . . His best works emerge at the intersection, at the cross road, where his sense of Hellas crosses Palestine."[50] Erwin Panofsky, writing in 1939, still asserted that Michelangelo's late identification with Christian themes and attempt to solve the dualism of the classical and Christian worlds was, in its last analysis, an act of "surrender" rather than conviction.[51]

Indeed, the "artistic wisdom" of Cohen's Michelangelo created a Greek and Hebrew covenant, a new "old covenant," wisely barring the "new covenant" from the ceiling's narrative, for any such fusion of Judaism and Christianity, "as the world has shown, would yield only dogmatic confusion, increasing prejudice and obstructing aesthetic clarity."[52] Jacob Burckhardt, in his *Cicerone*, already noticed Michelangelo's refusal to distinguish between holy and profane: "Since he had long broken with the churchly type, which should be called religious sentiment, and because he always portrayed the human being—no matter who it may be—with heightened physical might, whose essential expression is nudity, he could maintain no difference whatsoever between the saint, the blessed, and the damned."[53] Cohen expands this notion to elicit from the conflation of redeemed and unredeemed a new, unorthodox universalism. "Striving for freedom and independence," Michelangelo freed himself from the "shackles of the dogmatic tradition of churchly faith," returning to the old foundations and

producing, ultimately, a “mythological universality of his art” that anticipated and gave form to the universality of the prophets.[54]

Poverty

The Sistine Ceiling, then, represented, to Cohen, not the atrium of Christian splendor, but a prophetically pagan “portrait of the human family.”[55] Its true meaning lay, for Cohen, in the human poverty of the lunettes, in the virtues of family life, which Carl Justi had already identified as symbols of Jewish continuity: “Next to the Law and the hatred of the nations,” Justi writes, “the virtues of family life have kept the Jewish people over time.”[56] Jacob Burckhardt spoke of “simple family scenes,” without history, whose existence was defined solely by “waiting.”[57] Following Burckhardt, Charles de Tolnay will later call the lunettes portrayals of “domestic humanity” confined to the “mud-flats of existence”: “We have before us a world of eternal ‘becoming,’ fugitive, without memories, without a history, without an aim, without hope.”[58] Cohen, whose aesthetics culminated in the “human right of the worker,”[59] reads the lunettes not as bleakly but still as universal proletarian scenes, concatenations of slavery and poverty: “The most intimate creations of the holy family, the most beautiful Madonna-like images, the loveliest children are put together with the sorrowful faces of the worker, the man and the woman of the house, who is shackled by sorrow and care, even as she embraces the child with love.”[60] Here, Cohen argues, Michelangelo’s brush came truest to the prophetic style. The poor represent a “screaming contrast to the equality of all men,” and it is the prophets who tirelessly parade the poor before our eyes, not, however, to find beauty in their poverty, nor to idealize it, nor to appeal to our sentimental compassion, but to relentlessly demand their rights and to send their anger against the oppressors, the kings and the priests, and against all those who “beautify” untruthfulness in culture. Thus Cohen explains the Sabbath, the great prophetic “work of reform,” as the day of social justice and the culmination of moral autonomy: “Humanity is no longer divided into workers and free ones.”[61] To the contrary, all become workers on the history of humankind and all become free in their election to morality: All are *berufen*, called upon, by the prophetic voice. “Socialism,” Cohen writes in a letter of 1886, “rests upon the idea that man constitutes not merely a means for external purposes but a person, a moral subject, whose purpose lies in himself.”[62] The Hebrew prophets join, as cornerstones of human wisdom, a firmament of “slaves and poor” in Michelangelo’s Sistina to complement the proletarian world. They are witnesses to human history

reminding us of salvation not completed but delayed.

In contrast to the prevailing view of his time, including Thode, who interpreted everything in the Sistine Ceiling "with respect to Christ, to salvation!"[63] Cohen defers the salutary theme and refuses to read the spandrels and lunettes as images of Christ's ancestors, viewing them instead simply as "Jews in exile": scenes of proletarian households filled with humble love and prophetic simplicity, symbols more powerful to the world's history than triumphal arcs.[64] The story on the ceiling culminated, for Cohen, not in redemption but in beginnings. Sacred history is not what grew under Michelangelo's brush but *Menschengeschichte*, the history of universal man, such as only a tireless lover of humanity could paint: "The heart of man in all its depths and all its folds must be an open book to him; the heart of man that is also in the heart of nations, in the history of nations, in the history of humankind, in all its forms and variations of moral concepts and relations."[65] Looking at the Sistine Ceiling, then, Hermann Cohen found not only an artist who had surpassed religion and most "intimately" understood the "spirit of the prophets," but also an artwork that was prophetic in itself, showing us neither "luxury" nor "beauty" but the plight of the poor and the original image (*Urbild*) of the weak, whose canvas is history itself, and whose redemption can be accomplished only in the concreteness of historical time—in *Weltgeschichte*.[66] "He wanted to paint world history in its origins," Cohen writes about Michelangelo. "The ideal of world history, however, was created by the style of the prophets."[67]

Restlessness

World history, for Cohen, is a prophetic concept. Unlike mythic history it is concerned not with the past but with the future, and unlike sacred history, its future depends on human work. "The future becomes the reality of history."[68] It is the future that "validates," for Cohen, the present: "The future . . . fills my entire life and every moment of my being."[69] Prophetic history, in this regard, differs from common utopianism, as Cohen views it, for it desists the negation of the moment, affirming the present now, even in protest. Franz Rosenzweig will later distinguish between "negating utopia" (*verneinende Utopie*) and "realizing utopia" (*verwirklichende Utopie*), calling the latter "the utopia that knows that its nowhere is not nowhere but here."[70] The prophets, then, are "idealists," but it is precisely in their idealism that history becomes a concept, an idea to be realized. Rebels against the past and protesting the present, the prophets transform history into a task. Dawn is their ideal metaphor, the embodied form of the not-yet. Michelangelo's *Dawn* captures, for Cohen, the prophetic idea: from her eyes

radiates the “confidence in a new day and always youthful time,” her mouth is opened as if to announce a “nearing future,” and her fingers are already poised and elevated suggesting the “beginning of work.”[71]

Jacob Taubes, in his 1947 *Eschatology of the West*, called Israel “the restless element in world history, the ferment creating history as such”; and he calls it thus the “place of revolution.”[72] Leo Baeck, the Berlin liberal rabbi and intellectual beacon for German Jewry at its darkest hour, celebrated the prophetic spirit as revolutionary: “A revolution was at work and remained at work. . . . An act of creation in the realm of the spirit occurred.”[73] The prophets, for Baeck, were radical beginners, whose vision encompassed both the possibility of ever new beginnings and the act of beginning as disclosure: “The beginning,” writes Baeck, “and with it the great belief, commences anew, this belief that is always revolutionary . . . , never seeks to possess, but always . . . searches, always struggles. It knows itself to be a beginning.”[74] Thus, the prophets resisted “rigid dogmatism and empty need of ownership,” as they resisted closure and completion.

Buber’s gaze at the Sistine Ceiling as a “doing,” and Cohen’s understanding of Michelangelo as a renewer, whose art was, like creation itself, not work but *at* work, mirrored their respective prophetic imaginations. But it reflected also their revolutionary impulses. A prophetic artist, Michelangelo came to be regarded, *eo ipso*, as a revolutionary artist. Thus it was, perhaps, no coincidence that David Levi, the Italian Jewish revolutionary writer of the Risorgimento, claimed Michelangelo for the ideals of Young Italy, freely conjoining prophetic and revolutionary themes in his 1883 volume *La mente di Michelangelo* (Michelangelo’s Mind). Writing of the same Sistina that Buber and Cohen would visit two decades later, Levi presents the ceiling as a giant artwork of “protest” culminating in the Last Judgment. As Cohen later on, Levi marvels at the seamless composition of prophets and sibyls representing not individuals but “archetypes of humanity” and projecting a sense of “infinity” that was not metaphysical but concretely historical: “The spirit of history breathes over these figures,” the “divine immanence lives in humanity.”[75] Even in the image of the creator God, the divine takes on the form of extreme historical concreteness: “Indeed,” writes Levi, “you will not find in him a single trace of the God of the theologians and metaphysicians, but only the God of reason, the God of history, the human God; and with him begins a new creation . . . , a new Adam, a new Eve.”[76] “Man and woman are created anew,” Levi continues in another place, “a new spirit runs through them, and there begins a new humanity.”[77] But this humanity can only begin with a violent, revolutionary break: “Humanity cannot

renew itself without justice, and justice is not achieved without revolution." Thus, Levi comments on the Last Judgment, which is spread out against the wall of the chapel with sculpted clarity: "It is justice, it is the revolution, the great catastrophe that concludes one epoch, annihilates one generation, in order to usher in another, purer one."[78] "The end of the world," Hermann Cohen writes "encompasses the renewal of the world."[79] The Last Judgment, then, is the image of turning, of *Umkehr*, of revolution in its original sense, and the "colossal figure" at its center, is no longer the "Christ of the gospel," but *il Cristo novello*, the new Christ, the child of the prophets and sibyls, who bears the pains and thoughts and hopes of all nations, a Hercules, Prometheus, Jonah, calling to justice the oppressors of the peoples. Indeed, Levi insists, the Sistine Chapel, contrary to theological imagination, is no genealogy of Christ at all and shows no trace of "official Christianity." It is a *Cristologia senza il Cristo*, a Christology without Christ, or perhaps a *nuovo Cristianesimo*, a new Christianity, a "higher religious sentiment"—the "religion of science."[80] Michelangelo, therefore, became the prophet of a *nuova religione universale*, of a *nuovo messianismo* "conceived in the womb of the Jewish people" and promising true "nonmystical freedom" and human fraternity.[81] But he also became the prophet national revival. "His hands," Levi concludes, ". . . have renewed and recreated the modern Rome of art, and his great stature would suffice to realize and resuscitate an energetic and healthy people—the political and moral Rome and Italy."[82]

Body

As in Giuseppe Revere, whose encounter with the *Moses* we treated in the previous chapter, David Levi's reclamation of Michelangelo was informed by the ideals of the Risorgimento and its distinct nationalist-humanitarian orientation that had inspired the proto-Zionist Moses Hess and which would later influence, oddly enough, the young Vladimir Jabotinsky.[83] And as other Jewish observers, Levi aimed at extracting Michelangelo's creations from their doctrinal fetters to reinsert him into the prophetic tradition, which appeared to him as the prefiguration of modern socialism, of a certain *vero messianismo* surpassing even the prophets themselves.[84]

Also Hermann Cohen celebrated Michelangelo's total freedom of "dogmatic influence" leaving even in his most religious works, even in his youthful *Pietà*, no trace of *Kirchenglauben*. It was the "humanity of Christ," Cohen assures us, the return of the body to the "merely human," that characterized the *Pietà*.[85] "The Virgin," writes Levi about the same sculpture, ". . . has no divine halo . . .

and in the figure of Christ there is no trace of the divine."[86] One is reminded of Rilke's verses on the *Pietà* of 1906, which transform the sacred scene into one of unconsummated bodily love:

> So now I see your limbs, uncaressed ever
> For the first time in this night of love.
> We never lay, in our day, together
> And now all there is, is to adore and watch.[87]

But one is drawn also to Vasari's fascination with the profound human appearance, the literal incarnation, of the stone carved by the young artist with "love and zeal": "Do not let anybody think to see greater beauty of members or mastery of art in any body, or a nude with more detail in the muscles, veins, and nerves . . . , nor yet a corpse more similar than this to a real corpse."[88] Vasari's allusion to the *viva figura*, which becomes complete in the imminence of its "awakening from the dead," directs our attention to the unconcealed moment of human nature, its pure bodilyness and *Leibhaftigkeit*, which stands, for Vasari, in contrast to the near statuesque, unnatural youth of the "Our Lady."[89] Similarly, Cohen finds in the *Pietà*, as everywhere in Michelangelo's art, a "purity of love for the unity of human nature," an erotic passion for nakedness as humanity's "original image" and thus ideal concept: "The original form of man is the nude. Garment is the work of his sin."[90] In the concept of the nude, or rather, in the concept of nakedness, Cohen's aesthetics finds what may seem a surprising center.[91] The "pure feeling" of aesthetics can only be love, but love can only be conceived under the concept of the erotic. "Without nakedness," writes Cohen, "there is no revelation of Eros."[92] And without Eros, there is no love for humankind, which, for Cohen, was the *Urquell*, the original source, of all art and its messianic origin. No longer an object or representation, nudity becomes the "organon" of human form, bringing love, which cannot and must not be thought outside the sensual, to its "refinement and maturity."[93] "Before the Eros of art," writes Cohen, "vanishes all sinfulness as an expression of insurmountable fear of human fate and destiny."[94] Against religious prudery, which he exposes as nothing but veiled voyeurism, Cohen postulates nakedness as an "instrument for the discovery of man, through the love of man."[95] From such "aesthetic love" emerges a new form of shame and modesty that has nothing in common with the lusty bashfulness of the church: A modesty of "awe [*aidòs*] and admiration," which, inseparable from erotic passion or, as Freud would say, "genital love," yet also freed from the "compulsion of lust," returns the "dignity of man to all humanity."[96]

The "fear of the human body with which unfree religious morality has

intimidated the spirit" thus "grows pale" before the "bright sharpness and sunlike clarity" of the body as aesthetic *Werkzeug*.[97] Michelangelo, the master of the human body as a living form, rejected, for Cohen, not only the portrait of the face but also the portrait of the body as anything but nature itself, accepting no other model for his work than the "unity of creation." But here too creation needs to be renewed. Aesthetic love, for Cohen, is not identical with religious love. It can even sharply contradict religious love, as the story of Pygmalion illustrates.[98] But as love of the nature in man, aesthetic love also converges with religious love. For religious love, like aesthetic love, cannot but begin with the love of man: "The love of man must be the beginning, for while God created man, it is man who has to create for himself the follow man."[99] God, like an artist, must become a "creator for the second time," creating "man as fellow man through man himself." Only then, Cohen argues, only in the love of the fellow man, can love be "turned back" to God, from where it originates as its *Urbild*.[100]

Art, then, shares in the economy of love, because love cannot, even at its most transcendent, transcend the concreteness of the body, because it cannot exist without nature. "Thus, in nature as in the model," writes Cohen, "the nude remains all but an instrument to bring forth what love creates."[101] Love, like art, creates. It creates a new content and a new "form of consciousness." It is itself an act of *Neuschöpfung*.[102] Here Cohen's notion of love coincides with Simmel's Kierkegaardian perception of love as the "great forming category of being," for love's passion is in truth "creative feeling" (*erzeugendes Gefühl*). It is contrary to empathy (*Einfühlung*) and insufficiently defined by sentiment, for this feeling, Cohen writes, feels forward as it were, it is *Erfühlung*, a disclosure (*Erschließung*) of object and subject, creation and self-creation.[103] Thus art becomes love's "only legitimate home," and all other forms of love, even religious love, are "borrowed" from aesthetic consciousness. It is fundamentally wrong, for Cohen, to assume that art is nurtured by religion. The exact opposite is the case: "Religion is always nurtured by art."[104]

Humor

It follows that there cannot be, for Cohen, any other source of art than the idea of man and the ideal of *Menschenliebe*: "Love elevates the measure of man; it elevates the concept of man above all its spiritual significance, above all its moral potential."[105] It is art that discovers man through the uncovering of man's nature, through exposure, through nakedness as *dénûment*, as Emmanuel Levinas will later argue of the "face," as destitution, deprivation, hunger: "To recognize

the Other," writes Levinas, "is to give."[106] But for Cohen, who accepts the face as nudity in immanence, to recognize the Other means to recognize creation's unity and to desire the unity of man, whose inalienable form and *Urbild* is man's nakedness; and it means, therefore, to love.

There cannot be, then, for Cohen, religious art (though there can be art turned to religion), nor can there be art whose task it is to moralize. Only man can be the *Urbild* of art. Art cannot be in the service of religion, nor must it be subsumed to ethics, lest it relinquishes its inalienable sovereignty. But it must *originate* in morality, must hold *Sittlichkeit* to be its presupposition and must make freedom its principle: Not subsumed (*untergeordnet*) to ethics, but placed at its side (*nebengeordnet*), Cohen writes in opposition to Kant, who held that beauty was a symbol of morality.[107] By the same token, art must not be religion's mouthpiece, but must come to its assistance. Divine love must be complemented (*ergänzt*) by human love. "Sensuous charm is made to further the work of salvation," Erich Auerbach would later write with reference to Dante's "earthly" humor, "and it is Love itself which raises man to the vision of God."[108] And Cohen: "Beatrice must join Maria. Art must come to religion's side. Only art can unlock the depths of feeling concealed to religion."[109] Only art, Cohen continues, can rob religion of its "exclusivity"; only Dante could "undress Beatrice of her sublimity" and make Maria her "sister."[110] This, in fact, is the "peak" of Dante's humor, its *Gipfel* (outrage) and satirical undercurrent: "Beatrice as Maria's companion, the woman of love as the companion of the mother of God."[111]

Just as Dante's humor was a great "secularizing" force to Cohen, so it was the humor of Michelangelo that humanized religion: "The image of god," he writes about Michelangelo's youthful *Slave* in the Louvre, "is a slave. Is there a deeper mockery in all of culture, in all of human nature?"[112] And yet, the statue's smile is not filled with bitterness but remains a smile of Eros, of "Satyr uprooted by Eros," a smile reminiscent of Greek sculpture tearing at the "wall" between God and man to allow them to "overflow into each other," to enter a "correlation" without confusing their boundaries, and to idealize the gods while "refining the concept of man" (*Läuterung des Begriffs vom Menschen*).[113] Surveying, as Heine before him, the Sagrestia Nuova in Florence, Cohen wonders if the Madonna seated at a wall between the pagan goddesses of *Night* and *Dawn* like "an older sister" can still add "any new" to their presence, and whether it was not the purpose of the infant Jesus to turn away from the mythic sculptures, not in disgust, as one could suppose, but "as if not to outdo the sacredness below."[114] Michelangelo, thus, forced the religious element in art to retreat behind the

erotic, to sanction it even, for Eros is in truth a transfigured satyr, a reworked carnal urge, the "god of love to the nature of man," who is surpassed only by the lovers of the idea of undivided humanity—by the Hebrew prophets.[115]

Terribilità

The prophets, we have seen, were artists too for Cohen, but their aesthetic idiom was not beauty, nor pleasure, but *terribilità*. In *terribilità* seemed expressed Michelangelo's deepest quality and mystery, his congeniality with Dante and the prophets, his incontrovertible *Modernität*, and his "model for the concept of modern man."[116] We know that Michelangelo was dubbed *il terribile* already by his contemporaries, as early as 1520 by a less than satisfied Pope Leo.[117] Vasari invoked his *terrore d'arte*, and in the sixteenth century *Dialogues on Painting* by Francesco de Hollanda, Michelangelo himself speaks of the gravest (*gravissima*) terror of well-executed paintings that stir "even the least devout and those least responsive to contemplation and tears," instilling in them "great reverence and fear."[118] Commenting on the Sistine wall, another contemporary, Giovan Paolo Lomazzo, notes that Michelangelo had cast aside all beautiful manner to create "such a terrible aura, proud and full of gravity, in the faces of his figures, that it terrifies whoever regards them."[119] Stendhal, in his *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, spoke of Michelangelo's "*fidélité au principe de la terreur*," and Erwin Panofsky wrote of the cruel sculptor: "He 'tortures' the beholder [. . .] by arresting him in front of volumes which seem to be chained to a wall, or half imprisoned in a shallow niche, and whose forms express a mute and deadly struggle of forces forever interlocked with each other."[120]

Already Schelling commented on the prophetic realism of Michelangelo's Sistina: "Drawn to the foundations of organic, and in particular human form, he does not shun the terrifying but seeks it consciously, arousing it from its peaceful place in the dark workshops of nature."[121] Likewise, Cohen holds that prophetic aesthetics prefers the tragic, invokes terror, yet without final resignation, calling instead for a movement of turning—*metanoia*, change of heart, *teshuvah*. Prophetic art, in this sense, is *satirical*, bringing before us the plight of the poor while calling against surrender to despair: It is the art of social critique, one may even say "social realism."[122] While Plato understood the correlation between beauty and knowledge, the prophets understood that ugliness, that the unbeautiful, would be the "bringer of morality" (*Paraklet der Sittlichkeit*).[123] They rejected beauty for the "representation of terror and atrocity," out of which, through acts of compassion, the "historical concept of messianic humankind"

would gradually emerge.[124] "Permanent aesthetic subversion [*Umsturz*]," Herbert Marcuse will later summarize this prophetic, vaguely neo-Marxist position, "this is the task of art."[125] And in another place, he comments on the disfigured truthfulness of the social drama: "It must be *shocking*, shocking by the force of cruelty, and it must *shatter* both our self-satisfied consciousness and unconscious."[126]

Terribilità, whose attributes included also a form of aesthetic skill, thus serves to Cohen as a prophetic guidepost, without being itself a didactic tool. Against Schiller's confidence in aesthetic education, Cohen denies art the power to instruct. Art cannot educate toward that from which it must originate. It cannot "know" and, therefore, cannot educate the mind. Its sole criterion is creation.[127] But creation, to Cohen, is an act of love, and art loves to make knowable what it loves: The undivided nature of man. "The nature of man," writes Cohen, "is man's dignity. And, therefore, the love of man is also the self-awareness (*Selbstgefühl*) of humanity in man."[128] Art does not educate, but elevates and dignifies. It does so not by taming the terrible, nor by rending it beautiful. Art does not beautify the ugly. But it is love and humor that render it a "momentum of the beautiful," which in itself cannot be an object of art, but only an idea, demand, and expectation. "Love grasps the ugly," Cohen writes, and it would become "untrue" if it could not encompass and transform it.[129] The beautiful, then, is neither an aesthetic veneer nor delusion, nor, however, an object of representation, but the simultaneous formulation of foundation and task. "The idea of the beautiful," writes Cohen, "means the task of the beautiful."[130] The beautiful, for Cohen, is work, an act of doing, like creation, a satyr transformed into Eros, the ugly redeemed; and the artwork, therefore, is an "event" (*Ereignis*): "It is complete in itself to the extent that it carries in itself perfection [*Vollendung*] because of its flight towards perfection."[131] *Terribilità* disturbs the perfect to reveal its task.

Revelation

Michelangelo, to Franz Rosenzweig, abandoned the harmonies of perfected form, of beauty altogether, for beauty in art is but an "island, an isolated specter . . . , an idol."[132] In Michelangelo, Rosenzweig writes, the "true," the "good," and the "beautiful," art's most trusted allies from time immemorial, rose against the artist shattering the pretension of aesthetic idealism that beauty could lead to higher morality. Beauty, by itself, leads only to *Künstlermoral*, for Rosenzweig, to an aesthetic self-righteousness where art not only claims to resemble the

divine but becomes God's substitute (*Stellvertreter*). Every artist, in this respect, must lie, and every art is, in its last analysis, concealment (*Letherausch*), deception (*Maskenspiel*), and turning away (*Götzendienst*). But there is, every once in a while, an artist who turns away from the "falsehood of artistic life" to live out a human life, a mortal one, knowing "that his works will not follow him, that he must leave them behind on that earth whence they sprang, like everything which does not belong to the whole human being."[133] Aware that art remains world—though it is also the world's window, as Rosenzweig holds, to revelation—this artist will cast away the "magic wand" to become, as Shakespeare or Michelangelo, a "witness" to the world, one concerned no longer with rendering it beautiful but with making it cognizable (*Erkennbarmachung*).[134] Art, Ernst Cassirer will later write, "is not an imitation but a discovery of reality."[135] The artist speaks up, acknowledges, testifies, and calls upon mankind to be one in witnessing the world as testimony—a congregation of beholders, *Zeugenschaft*, whose artworks are life and atonement. "The cruel," Theodor Adorno writes, "is a piece of [art's] critical introspection [*Selbstbesinnung*]."[136]

Expression

Against the "autonomy of the beautiful," and against aestheticism's claim to higher morality, Michelangelo's art turned, as Rosenzweig puts it, to "*taedium artis*": "The desire of art to leave its skin, to step outside the frame. Today it would be Expressionism."[137] And "it is rather obvious," as the Prague Jewish philosopher Felix Weltsch wrote in 1925, "that Jews are Expressionists in the widest sense—in contrast to the Greeks, who were the artists of form par excellence. Not measured, not noble, not delicate, is Jewish art wherever it appears as such, but animated, daring, strong, striving toward the extreme, eccentric, fantastic."[138] Thus Michelangelo, to whom all these attributes applied, became not only the progenitor of expressionist art, but more specifically of "Jewish art," which Martin Buber, writing in 1903, described as the "art of pathos." What else, wonders Buber, could the Jewish artist have produced since ancient times? "Horror and bliss convulsed in him, burdened his chest, choked his throat. He had to scream them into the world."[139] Without relief in harmony, the ancient Jew had to become "either a prophet or die from the fullness of his passions." But the modern Jew, reborn in vision, found an outlet for the "ecstatic discharge" of his pathos, an aesthetic outlet prepared by the prophetic Michelangelo, yet torn open only by the modern Jewish artist.

Writing in 1901 about Lesser Ury, the Posen-born Jewish painter, whom he essentially discovered, Buber returns to Michelangelo's *Moses* to illustrate where

Jewish art had freed emotion: “Michelangelo created Moses as he confronts a rebellion of dull and undifferentiated masses. He glances at the lowly actions of the mob, he is about to intervene and force it to an end, but he desists.” Ury, however, continues Buber, “wants to show the moment after, a Moses who leaps forward . . . to literally throw the first holy tablets of the Law ‘against the heads’ of the stiff-necked, depraved people.”[140] Ury, in this regard, surpassed the Renaissance master, just as Michelangelo, as Freud would later argue, surpassed the biblical Moses. But surpassing Michelangelo meant also restoring the original “Jewish” pathos to the Moses, to re-Judaize the prophet as one characterized not by stoic calm and instinctual renunciation but by untamable energy: “Energy surges, a living energy rebels against dark powers of fate and seeks redemption. The individual struggles against the world.” This, Buber writes, is the “content” of Ury’s art; and he continues: “All things are related at their boundaries, awaken each other, develop each other. Each reveals to the other its self, brings it forth. Each lives off the other, in the other: That is the ‘form.’”[141]

Form

“Jewish art,” for Buber, was the testimony of man’s struggle against the world, and of all things bordering against another. Its “content” was rebellion, its “form” confrontation. Thus art, where it withdrew from illusion, could never master its content, nor ever complete its form. Looking at Michelangelo’s famous torsos in the grotto of Boboli, Buber found the primal image of the “struggle between the forming and the formless principles” in every human life: “Hewn in stone, we begin to fathom what runs as an eternal process through the entire history of the spirit.”[142] The formed, Buber argued, cannot remain pure form (*Gestalt*), for it is always penetrated by the formless, and it is those who experience the “unmastered rock of their soul” (*den unbewältigten Seelenblock*) as a potential rather than inertia of matter (*träge Materie*), who refuse to submit, who can truly become formers (*Gestaltende*).

But every forming, for Buber, means in truth transforming (*Umgestalten*). The “Jewish artist,” as he noted in his essay on Lesser Ury, is a “revolutionary,” one who, as the prophets themselves, “begins from movement, from transforming movement.”[143] And as all form must confront another it must also resist itself, remain porous to the unfinished struggle. “The forming struggle,” writes Buber, “is a process that always begins anew.”[144] The act of “human beginning” (*menschliches Beginnen*) thus becomes the task, or “mandate” (*Auftrag*) of art. In his 1922 lectures entitled “Religion as Presence,” Buber describes art indeed

as the "task of something that strives to become [*eines Werdenwollenden*], something Gestalt-like that is not yet actual, that is still dormant in the actual, latent in its ground, and that wants to be lived to life from within, to be actualized."[145] It is a task that differs from the task of religion and is yet narrowly related to its realm. For both art and religion encounter the formless as a boundary, a beginning to one and an end to the other, but an encounter also of the limits, where one "touches" the other creatively. At the "limits of form and formfulness," Buber writes, religion stands with "open arms, embracing and ordaining boundaries" and "pointing toward the formless and, despite all attempts at forming, un-formable."[146] Thus, where art encounters the formless, it also encounters religion, and where it makes the formless its art, it encounters yet another boundary religion embraces and ordains: the boundary of ethics. Quoting Goethe, Buber alludes to an aesthetics of deed that takes formlessness as *both* its beginning and end—as its moral imperative: "The highest, the most perfected in man is formless. One should beware of giving it any other form than the form of noble deed."[147] This, Hermann Cohen writes in a long tradition of Jewish negative theology, is the form of morality's original and ideal image, the image no man can finish; this is the transition from the plastic image to the image of the Psalms; and this is the origin of human love as desire: "Here, love, unfolding from the lyrical, reaches the limit of love of art."[148]

The dialectics of form and formlessness, then, the act of forming and leaving unformed, which is inherent in the dialectic of forming itself, is precisely what can yield to form its pointing-beyond, and to art its aesthetic desire. To recognize the individual and its world as in need of form and, at the same time, as threatened by the self-sufficiency of form, will become the imperative of aesthetic formation. Thus, Buber chastises "the impotence and alienation of the formers" as a disease of petrified form in the exilic life, while he hopes for the return of the "forming ones" as a result of national awakening.[149] As in the unfinished torsos by Michelangelo, the seeming victory of form over the formless spirit is no more than an illusion: To the contrary, his sculptures bear witness to the unconquered (*Zeugnis des Unbewältigten*). But in this testimony of outward defeat, which, as in the story of Moses himself, is the "symbol of all unfulfillment [*Nichtvollbringen*]," lies also their victory of "inner overcoming" (*inneres Überwältigen*)—their ability for moral transformation.[150]

Unfinishedness

From the unfinishedness of form, or conversely, from its deformation and fragmentation, emerges a new *Urbild* for art: Man as a "molder and maker" of

himself, as the great humanist Pico della Mirandola put it, a "wonderful chameleon" that wills what it wants to be: "We have given you [. . .] no form of your own [. . .]; you may sculpt yourself into what ever shape you prefer."[151] "A human being is formed," writes Hermann Cohen of the event that is art, and this means that the "self is not given as a finished thing." In art, the self becomes event (*Ereignis*); there occurs the "creation [*Erzeugung*] of the self."[152] Claiming the same eventlike character of art, Franz Rosenzweig writes: "To be real and to enter reality, art must trans-create [*umschaffen*] the human being."[153] The artist, who, like his work, stands both within and outside the realm of world and mankind, who is *Unmensch*, "not wholly man," yet "pouring his surplus of love of the whole of mankind" into his work, becomes "author," *Urheber*, in a dual sense: Creator and revealer. "His creativity is his self-creation; . . . in his artistry occurs self-revelation."[154]

The ability and need for human self-creation, for change, for self-modeling, the necessity of man to be, as Arendt saw it, a beginner, makes man himself a raw *concetto*, an artwork in the making, a form not yet brought to realization. Man, to Pico, is his own sculptor and sculpture, just as Michelangelo viewed himself on many an occasion as a sculpted work in progress, whose soul has to be chiseled free from the "vile shell" of "superfluous flesh":

> The stone unhewn and cold
> Becomes a living mold,
> The more the marble wastes,
> The more the statue grows.[155]

Confined in the block of marble the living "ideal" must, if it is to remain a living ideal, resist its own finished form. The statue that grows is, at the same time, the statue that diminishes. The very act of sculpting, the chiseling and molding and making, which Walter Pater likened to an act of "resurrection," cannot come to an end.[156] Indeed, it is, as if the sculpted image has to continue sculpting itself, as if it must continuously rework its form, as if it must, in short, unfinish itself, to be true to the *viva figura* that is inside of it. Referring to the unfinished, to the "principle of incompleteness," Steven Schwarzschild, who continued Hermann Cohen's legacy for American academia, once wrote about Jewish art what could have applied just as well to the Jewish imagination of Michelangelo: that it was the "fragmentariness or distortion of the human image" which represented "in effect not a reduction but an *expansion* of the human form."[157]

What the Jewish beholder frequently extracted from Michelangelo's sculptures was the very principle of unfinishedness, which Michelangelo scholars have long known as the "poetry of the *non-finito*."[158] In the unfinished,

in the fragmentary, in the eternal not-yet of the *abbozzato*, the dialectical counterplay of form and formlessness, Medusean petrification and Pygmalean coming-to-life, receives its inner momentum, its unending motion and emancipation from the statuesque.[159] It is here that a statue's fixity, that the image itself, is dislocated. The *non-finito*, to Buber, engendered creation's concept of the world as not only incomplete but in need to "de-completion" (*Unvollendung*).[160] The *non-finito*, Lionel Kochan will later write in his essay on Jewish aesthetics, represents the "passage from space to time," a "defectiveness" enlarging the "contours of the existent," an "opening, through its very negation of the status quo, towards the future."[161] As if to alleviate the fear against the graven image, the *non-finito* opened, to Jewish aesthetics, a realm of negativity that would resonate with all supposed aniconic sensibility and with all resistance to determined form. "The rejection of *determinatio*," writes Kochan, "the embrace of the *non-finito*, establish a tripartite cosmic correspondence amongst God and the unfinished world and the unfinished image, in their common challenge to the idol and the fixity of reification."[162]

The "fixity of images" was Emmanuel Levinas's supreme concern about the visual arts, allowing him to chastise every artwork as "in the end a statue—a stoppage of time" that "endures without a future" and is destined to remain, therefore, a present as impotent and fateful as the pagan gods themselves.[163] Idolatry, as we have seen above, has been both a Jewish and a modern fear, and it was none other than Kant who celebrated the "sublime place" of the Second Commandment, for it captured, through "negative representation" (*negative Darstellung*), the moral expansion of the soul beyond its sensual limitations.[164] Heinrich Graetz, one of Hermann Cohen's teachers in Breslau, portrayed Judaism as nothing short of a "history of negation," a "Protestantism" against pagan culture,[165] which, as a theme, would return in Max Weber's understanding of the Decalogue as disenchantment and, of course, permeate the writings of the Frankfurt school.[166]

The negativity of the *non-finito* allowed Jewish thinkers to reconfigure the idea of the plastic image as one that could shatter its own plasticity and thus, as in Pico, in Cohen, Rosenzweig, or Buber, anticipate the ideal image of man as an eternal creator of himself—the *Urbild* of the antistatue. In this sense, the sculpture in *non-finito* no longer belonged to what Rosenzweig called the plastic, "everlasting protocosmos," no longer endured mutely and without future, but returned to where Hegel had left it in his system: to the "ideal sculpture" foreshadowing the end of art while striving for its completion. Conscious of its own "unfinishedness" (*Unvollkommenheit*) and transpired by its own Romantic

“animation” (*Beseelung*), this sculpture reached beyond the “statuary” and beyond “mere beauty” (*bloße Schönheit*) into the “infinite realm of its reality,” into the “vital expression of the present,” and into the “whole of individuality”—into the unrepresentable.[167] To Hegel, the master of this ideal sculpture was, of course, none other than Michelangelo. But the classical precursor to the idealist self-dissolution of the sculpted image was the expression of the “animal, half-animal, and faun.” Though not fully freed from the convention of the static image, from the sculpture that does not open itself up to “transformation” (*Veränderung*), the ancient faun still points beyond the positive features of the human and toward the negativity of the subjective, toward the “principle of depth and infinity” that reveals, writes Hegel, the “*inner* reconciliation of the spirit and the absolute, the ideal unification of humanity and God.”[168]

The faunish, satyrlike features of Michelangelo’s *Moses* so took on a new, ideal meaning also to Cohen, who understood the satyr as humanity’s “image” and resemblance (*eine Art von Abbild*), yet also as its “limit,” its call for transformation, the form, in a word, that could explode the statue as anything but an idea.[169] The satyr must become ideal image, *Urbild*, it must be transformed into Eros. Hegel’s ideal unification, then, became thinkable through the idea of the satyr as a premonition of humanity transformed from animal to human being, a transformation that, in turn, required the idea that humanity was formed in God’s image, that *Adam*, the Earth-man, had been the first sculpture, and that *Hashem*, the Name, had been the first sculptor. “God Almighty made man, who was the first statue,” Vasari noted in the introduction to his *Lives*, explaining that this aesthetic correlation made the art of sculpture virtually identical with human nature.[170] But this correlation, as Hugo Bergmann later argued in a classic essay of 1912, became correlation only because God, like Michelangelo, left his works unfinished. To be sculpted in God’s image means to be sculpted in *non-finito*. For it is the “I am” of God that is spoken in the “imperfect, in the tense of uncompleted being and that should thus be rightfully rendered as ‘I will be’: God declares himself as being and yet, at same time, unfinished, as an I that still has to be realized.”[171] What brings God and man in correlation is their unfinishedness, each a sculpture *non-finito* calling, like Rilke’s *Torso*, for a change of life; each in the time-form of incipience, each in a simultaneous state of being and nonbeing, which was, to Hegel, the state of all beginning—each then, a beginner.

Hope

In the *non-finito*, art, whose sole idea was, to Cohen, the idea of man and whose

sole origin was human love, could share in the idea of religion, turning to time and turning time, in an act of aesthetic *teshuvah* and transformation, of *Umwendung* and *Umwandlung*, away from the everlasting image toward the eternal "not yet."[172] When Ernst Bloch embarked on his pursuit of the utopian in art, he too arrived at Michelangelo's unfinished sculptures as fragments of the utterly un-Egyptian, un-Hellenic "non-temple-like" (*Un-Tempelhaften*), of the "nonharmonic cathedral-like (*Kathedralischen*), where the aesthetic task is not one of contemplating beauty, but one of "conscience": "The depth of aesthetic perfection itself sets the unfinished in motion."[173] Michelangelo's awareness of his "inability to finish," which resisted the "roundness and perfection" of his art, was the secret articulation of his utopian consciousness, of his aesthetic conscience, his "anticipatory illumination" (*Vor-Schein*) of the fragmentary. The artwork so came to incorporate the "self-dissolution of its false finality [*Abgeschlossenheit*]," its "incapacity of coming to an end [*Nicht-Enden-Können*]," the immanent "*Ultimatum*." The "otherness" and the "true" of art occurs only where the artwork is cut open by its "inner iconoclasm" (*innerer Bildersturm*) to reveal a "hollow space," a fissure toward infinity. Neither iconoclasm itself, nor external ruination, could accomplish, for Bloch, what art must accomplish on its own: the mastery of the "unclosed" (*Ungeschlossenheit*), which is not the same as the accidentally unfinished. "Thus," writes Bloch, "Michelangelo left more fragments than any other great master, and this should give us cause for thought because it was the métier in which he was most adept, in sculpture, not in painting."[174] What he finished in great detail as a painter, Michelangelo left unfinished in the realm of the graven image, where completeness in the finished work is at its most complete. Plastic totality thus became transformed into a utopian reality, filled with the "eschatological consciousness" that characterized, for Bloch, already the "religion of the Exodus." In the anticipatory fragment, in the torso as ideal, the utopian becomes not only "aesthetic immanence" but also "most thoroughly immanent to itself."[175] The unfinished figure, as it lies in the terror of incompleteness, points also beyond this terror—into the future of "hope."

That art must not be eudaemonistic but "terrible," that it must be filled with the "iconoclast's rage," like Savonarola, that it must make the fragment part of its own image, determined by "concrete utopia" and fearless of the tragic, remained an aesthetic trope also for Bloch. "All art is tragic in its content," wrote Franz Rosenzweig in his *Star of Redemption*, "it depicts suffering."[176] But as it depicts, it also becomes comic in form, depicting even the most monstrous with a certain "Romantic-ironic levity"; a levity, however, that is neither mockery nor

disrespect, much less concealment and, much less still, averting one's eyes, but to the contrary, a gaze of figuration that at once makes life's suffering more difficult and easier to bear. "Art . . . can overcome only by turning suffering into form, not by denying it."[177] Its double countenance, Rosenzweig continues, teaches man to overcome without forgetting, to bear sorrows and to be consoled; it wipes the tears from the mourner's face (Isa. 25:8), and yet keeps them gleaming in his eye until the "great renewal of all things." Indeed, the soul renews itself in art and would remain, without art, a "cripple;" but art becomes its "rigid iron ring" if it fails to guard the space of what Rosenzweig calls the "form-giving, factualizing And," the mysterious *Urwort* that connects the disjointed elements of world, God, and man, thus constituting a poetic intervention into the everlasting muteness of the plastic world.[178] Without this "And," art would remain, like Pygmalion's fashioned companion, mute and "merely spoken" (*Gesprochenes*) but not speech (*Sprache*). "The work," writes Rosenzweig in the language of Cohen's aesthetics, "comes to life in the love of man himself."[179] Not statue love but the love of man awakens the "sleeping matter of marble." Love awakens the human soul from its "rigid sleep of the self," from its habit "not to see and not to hear," like Michelangelo's *Night*, and in love the self recognizes its createdness, relinquishing, at the same time, its "totality and closedness." Art, too, if it seeks to unshackle its iron clad around the soul, must sacrifice its end to anticipate *Vollendung*: It must join the category of creation with the category of redemption, whose aesthetic mirror is the event of *Fertigwerden*, the "end before which all that has begun sinks back into its beginning."[180] Thus, weaving together the Psalmists and the *abbozzati* of Michelangelo, Rosenzweig hands his own "absence" to Blanchot's unending question: the artwork that, like nature in its prophetic apperception, like man for the humanists, is the art that is always at its beginning and, therefore, never for itself. "There emerges," Rosenzweig writes in 1920, thinking of Cohen, but thinking also of the artist who as none other inspired his imagination, "in beginnings—and in beginnings only—an art of infinity [*Kunst der Unendlichkeit*]": "Michelangelesque sculpture as opposed to Greek sculpture."[181]

And

Far from being a simple "companion of words," the copula "and," in Rosenzweig's grammar, signified the root-word of "living reality," the awakening of the isolated elements to their existence in relation to each other.[182] "And" conjoins without synthesizing; it leaves intact difference and the

autonomy of otherness. But it robs difference and otherness of their rigidity and "night." It awakens, like a dream, the self from its sleep, causing it to overflow. What Freud called the "dream's 'And'" is here at work. "The dream," writes Freud, "knows no either-or, but only a simultaneous next-to-each-other [*Nebeneinander*]."[183] In the dream everything is present to be called upon, and to call upon. Dreaming, like love, forces us to speak. To Rosenzweig, it was the lover's call that awakened the soul from the "seclusion of the self," not by denying the self, but by emerging from it as a *viva figura*. Love allows the "mute self to come of age as eloquent soul."[184] It renders the soul *mündig*, capable of speaking for itself. But it also renders the soul fragmented by desire, and by desire's need for the not-yet. "Incompleteness . . . is the law of love," writes Levinas, "it is the future itself, the coming of a world that never ceases coming."[185] Love's lesions are openings and fissures promising a coming world. Levinas's desire opens itself to infinity, while Rosenzweig's "and" ties together "belovedness and love" with the bonds of eternity.[186]

But neither eternity nor the coming world have informed this present book. To be sure, "love" opened our meditations, but it held no promise beyond the past and gave no sign of friendship. Love served merely as a hermeneutic category to unravel a history, whose grammatical root-word, I believe, is the word *and*, which is there to replace cultural syntheses and embarrassed hyphens. The thin sliver of history upon which we have reflected, and the even smaller angle we have chosen to study, is a history of scattered "ands," self-openings and self-creations, which exist in unfaithful simultaneity, not dialectical but, in some sense, dialogically entwined. The soul in love, Rosenzweig argues, is the soul opening itself out to speech, toward the "hurried back and forth of words," that defines, parabolically, the events of revelation, whose other parable is the parable love itself.[187]

History, of course, cannot be written in love and revelation, let alone on the humble word *and*. Yet, love in an impure, capricious, cultural sense, can indeed "reveal" something to the historian. It can reveal real cultural affinities, which, precisely because they follow the grammar of Eros, are no mere fantasies, nor simple substitutions but grammatical inclusions. German and Jewish, Hebrew and Greek, Rome and Jerusalem, pagan and prophetic, old and new, whatever the word-pairs may be, they strike us first as historical dichotomies, then as conceptual tensions, but finally as erotic speech. Michelangelo, in our study, served as the main interlocutor of this erotic speech, the embodiment of parallel Jewish loves, which included, among others, Italy and the idea of the Mediterranean, not for their inherent exoticism but because, in Jewish dreams,

they revealed themselves as parables and places of infinite "ands." Thus, Michelangelo and his works "spoke" to the Jewish beholder. But they only spoke because the Jewish beholder called out to them. "Without the beholder," writes Rosenzweig, "the work . . . remains mute."[188] It is the calling out, or as Rosenzweig put it, the "screaming of an open question," that gives cultural love meaning beyond the romantic and sentimental. It is in the calling out, in the varieties of speech, and in the openness of its question, that love knows itself and comes to know the stranger. What I hope to have described is not the same as the act of "reading into," nor the phenomenon of mere "reception," but, indeed, the act of calling out: The standing before Apollo to claim one's place as the statue's Other. Perhaps, the history of modern Jewish thought—which remains, by default alone, this author's imperfect mode of apperception—ought to be remembered as a tireless declaration of love, whose lonely pinnacle was not love's beauty, nor, as Scholem assumed, its illusion, but love's imperative: the desire to fill the *Liebesgebot* with intellectual profundity and concrete hope. The parable of love, then, means something to us not because it suggests goodness in the world, but because love, like speech, like revelation, is "restless," as Hermann Cohen put it, and in essence a duel.[189]

Farewell

Here, I must bid the reader farewell. It will be a short farewell, without unnecessary ceremony. I have promised to write about Jewish variations on a modern theme. But I have left unanswered what was Jewish about these variations and what was the theme. Dreaming of Michelangelo is, perhaps, no theme at all but merely what it is: a dream. We dream when we sleep. But sleep does not disengage us from the world. It is not disinterestedness, but, in fact, as Blanchot noted, utmost "fidelity" and "unity": "Sleep is my absolute interest in assuring myself of the world."[190] "Sleep," he writes, "transforms night into possibility." When night falls, sleep becomes vigilance, and a dream can insert itself as a "reawakening of the interminable . . . through the persistence of what cannot finish."[191] The dream, in this respect, robs beginnings, and thus human initiative, of their self-certitude, and while it cannot be more than a likeness referring eternally to likeness, a resemblance without original image, it still casts the self to be, if not another, then at least a "premonition of the other." Unable to recognize its "I" any longer in itself, the dreaming self is still "reincarnated in another," still "somebody," receiving from the dream, as it interrupts sleep, a de-interruption of awakening. Dreaming is always at the now of dawn.

Dreaming of Michelangelo is sleep and vigilance, likeness and premonition. It

is the dream of lovers assuring themselves of the world despite its great uncertainty. Thus we began with love, not as a meaningless code for universal peace, but as unworldly accusation of a world withholding response. Cultural eroticism, unless it is satisfied in self-love, is the desire to be transformed, the dream to be changed by the beloved, to be one's own premonition of another. But it is also confrontation, forming, and refusal to surrender. No more than the simple image of the unrequited lover was the departure of our meditation. No other image could help us understand the meaning of a "Jewish" variation, which includes the meaning of the unrequited as it includes, for Heine, the meaning of the poet or, for Arendt, the meaning of the pariah, without, however, being sufficiently, or only remotely, defined by it.

In the world of unrequited Eros, art and religion, Galatea and God, must love the lover in return. But if this love is not to throw its lovers back onto the side of immanence, if it is not to be divested of the "not yet," of the "future not future enough," as Levinas put it for us;[192] if it is not to return upon itself, like the two separated halves in Plato's *Symposium*, then the beloved statues and gods must, always anew, undo themselves to make room for desire. "Desire," as Hermann Cohen wrote, "is the tissue that entwines the souls of the lovers, tying them together."[193] It entwines them, as Levinas develops this thought, by transcending completion, by resisting fulfillment, to become but "deepening." Desire, Levinas writes, "understands" (*entend*).[194] The remoteness and utter alterity of the Other are the ground and origin of desire's freedom, but also of its suffering. The I, Cohen notes in his *Aesthetics*, desires to be not only loved by the Other but also to be known. The "monologue of desire becomes a dialogue—a duel of lovers." And it is here that desire, for Cohen, becomes the "sister of hope."[195] Desire, in this regard, constitutes more than love can constitute, for it entangles even if unrequited, affirms before it can be disappointed, and reaches toward "the hidden" without exhausting itself. Thus desire postulates justice where justice is denied to the unrequited lover, and solitude ceases to be suffering to become desire's "fertile ground." In the world of unrequited Eros, desire and dreaming assume concrete significance, meaning even, for it is here that imagination can "deepen" and illuminate. Dreaming of Michelangelo is not, as I have cautioned you from the start, about Michelangelo, but about dreaming and its dreamers: About dreaming the Jewish condition as entwined and entangled with the human condition in some interminable sense.

Unhappy lovers, to return to Scholem's image, the Jewish lovers of Michelangelo found refuge in Michelangelo's tortured bodies and fragmented figures as images, perhaps not of holy rage or impending punishment in another

world, but of this world unveiled, accused, laid bare, yet also eternally desired. “Stillborn and created for death,” as Franz Rosenzweig wrote in 1921, the world must be “loved into life” (*zum Leben umgeliebt*).[196] To love this world without being devoured by it, to accuse it without denial, and to trust that there was hidden in its stillborn body a soul that could be loved and entangled by desire: this would become the “Jewish variation” of the dream of Michelangelo. Indeed, without Michelangelo’s marbles offering resistance, without its marble body, this soul, as Georg Simmel wrote, would have fallen into the depths of nothingness.[197]

Epilogue

The story these pages set out to tell has come to its end, almost abruptly, as history sometimes does, without resolution, without adding up. We stand outside its unfinished walls, and we might wonder: What does it all mean? What did this story really tell us? Or, for the reader reading with a purpose: what can I take from it?

I have called this book a meditation, not because it elevates us to a different state of consciousness, but because it took synthetic liberties, which belong to storytelling more than to historical analysis; and because meditations can linger in the middle without foreseeing their conclusion. There is no essential novelty this book could claim, no radical argument that will alter the way we look at Michelangelo or at German Jewish history, or at modern Jewish thought. In a certain sense, its themes, tensions, and turning points have always been there, so familiar to us that we seldom stop to wonder or to meditate about them. In another sense, we scholars by profession and certificate are rarely satisfied with the familiar, because we are professionally distrustful of stories, dreams, and sentiments. And yet, it was the sentiment of sentiments—love—that wove together our meditations, and dreaming was the work of imagination that added to its story. We took seriously the theme of love to write about the history of German Jews, for this is how German Jewry wrote about itself. But we refused to accept this love as romantic passion, refusing also to depict modern Jewry under a constant state of weakness turned to power only by the efforts of all variants of Zionism and Jewish nationalism becoming, must needs, political. These efforts, I believe, need no justification and remain, despite their imperfections, justifiable for all the known reasons, but especially for their desire to restore a state of normalcy and an existence without ambiguity and shame. But the same efforts took place also in the apolitical, even in the non-Zionist, or not-yet Zionist sphere, affirming the possibility of normal, though not selfless, life outside a land of its own, the possibility, then, of diaspora as the homeland of multiple, at times contradictory, allegiances.

If we recall Erich Auerbach defining the modern human condition as the "problem of man's self-orientation" and "task to create for himself a place to be at home without fixed points of existence," then we can venture to understand how this affirmation constituted in effect a self-orientation that viewed itself as

borderless while at the same time not without a need to be “at home.” It is here, in this process of self-orientation, in the creation of a home without fixed points, that works of love cast their tenuous web of elective affinities, whose knots and spaces are tied by imaginary, yet, as love itself, world-creating, “ands.” No syntheses, but cultural liaisons are established through the works of love. Cultural eroticism, as I hope these pages have intimated, differs, then, from the intellectual fantasy of cosmopolitanism, as it differs from the ideological confusions of diasporism, both of which celebrate, as intellectuals frequently feel obliged to do, the supposed virtues of disempowerment: for the one denies us the power to elect while the other remains trapped in a self-imposed dualism of mutual exclusion. Indeed, the German Jewish love for Italy was neither “cosmopolitan” nor strictly “diasporist.” Rather, it was elective, a declaration of affinity in defiance of cultural and historical boundaries, and as such a singling out, the declaration of a particular love that constituted a particular lover and a particular beloved; and it was inclusive, affirming and defending the possibility of multiple homes and spiritual homelands without surrender to the binary world of exile and return. The Jewish love for Italy, then, was at once an affirmation of diaspora and a rejection of exile. Rome, in this respect, ceased to be Jerusalem’s rival to become its “other” city.

If there is a spiritual souvenir to take from the story I sought to tell, then it would be that “love” and “dreaming,” as they permeated German Jewish thought and imagination, should be viewed as forms not of powerlessness but of self-empowerment; that the Jewish love for Italy, the Jewish “re-reading” of Michelangelo, had little in common with Eurocentric exoticism and self-negation but signified, in fact, an act of self-affirmation through the affirmation of other, alternative, spiritual lands. At home in “both” worlds, like Michelangelo’s *Moses*, the Jewish lover of Italy hoped for a love *sans adversité*, the same hope that had driven Pygmalion to the animated work of art—the love that can soften stone.

Love confronts and demands. I have tried to deromanticize its concept to stress its dialogic imperative: the accusation of muteness, the call for response. I have also called dreaming of Michelangelo a modern theme: Because I see its dream as symbolic of modernity, a response to modernity as much as a demand of modernity’s response. To be seen, acknowledged, loved by modernity’s plastic cosmos becomes the dream of those to whom modernity is not yet finished, still ambivalent and filled with ambiguity, still mute, uncanny, and withholding. Thus I have called this dream a Jewish variation: Because Judaism’s response to modernity was not only a response, let alone a submission, but a confrontation as well. *Dreaming of Michelangelo*, then, is as much an intellectual history of the

modern Jewish experience as it as a symbolic history of modernity itself. Its Jewish variation is one rooted in multiple Jewish identities, which again are symbolic of experiencing modernity through its ambivalence and conscious of its inherent ambiguity: the experience of modernity as imperfect and, therefore, as task. The Jewish variation on the theme of modernity thus transcends its own "Jewishness" to encompass the margins of modernity located *within* its centers. The Jewish variation, in this sense, is a variation of modernity's spiritual borderlands.

But this variation also reveals something about the varieties of the modern Jewish experience, which we can now recognize in its constant struggle between transgression and demarcation. This struggle is no mere "pushing" of limits. Rather, it is the mobilization of selfhood, or "identity," its demarcation through multiple force fields of attraction. The limits of assimilation, then, are not contractions or reversals of an expanded consciousness, but expansions of self-recognition—the invention of new lands of familiarity. The story of modern Jewish Italophilia and its symbolic encounter with Michelangelo, recalls one such familiarity, or elective identification, which displaced, through a series of "cultural conversions," the boundaries between "religious" and "secular," German and Jewish, assimilation and demarcation, not to eradicate its limits but to transpose them to an alternative cultural discourse. Just as in Georg Simmel's Rome the distant and most alien coexisted with the familiar in great erotic intimacy, so the Jewish love for Italy and Michelangelo existed alongside similar liaisons, one of many in love's wayward passions. But, rather than being the flight into a new naiveté, it existed in a state of social vigilance—as an expression of cultural *critique*.

Likewise, German Jewish identity itself, which again took on a symbolic quality, was neither monolithic nor dualistic but formed by distinct transcultural, transnational liberties—without, however, compromising the Jewish love and loyalty to German language and culture, and to its great, unfulfilled, promise for a better humankind. Here perhaps lies the fundamental difference between German and German Jewish love for Italy: That one came as a love affair, perhaps as a dissolution of a legal marriage, as it were, an alternative to unambiguous, consummated, and always reclaimable Germanness; whereas the other came as love itself, from love's incalculable risk, from an existential ground of profound loneliness, uncertain of its home and without any fixed points other than the hope for love requited. This hope, this dream, was neither irrational nor contingent upon transcendence but, to the contrary, replete with realism and judgment: it was the desire to be entangled by immanence, by the body of culture, nation, history, to be seen by the beloved while willing to be

transformed—to be embraced, in short, without shame. And here we begin to realize the deeper meaning also of modern Judaism's aesthetic preponderance, of its search for what Hermann Cohen called "pure feeling." For it was only in aesthetics that love came to be speech, and it was only in art that revelation came to reveal what religion knew but from afar: humanity's original image.

Notes

PREFATORY NOTE

1. Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 267.

2. Theodore K. Rabb, "Why Michelangelo Matters," *Commentary* (September 2006): 56–59.

3. My approach coincides, in this regard, with Ken Koltun-Fromm's recent work on material culture and American Jewish thought, with which, however, I have some quarrels, as well as with earlier studies especially by Zachary Braiterman and Leora Batnitzky, both of which have been formative to this author's thinking. See Ken Koltun-Fromm, *Material Culture and Jewish Thought in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010); Zachary Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation: Aesthetics and Jewish Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

4. Michelangelo's influence on Jewish artists, especially sculptors, deserves to be treated separately. An obvious example would be Alfred Nossig's lost sculpture *The Wandering Jew* (1901), which is, in effect, a reworking of Michelangelo's *Moses*. See Richard I. Cohen, *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 228–29. Likewise, Henryk Glicenstein's *Messias* and Arnold Zadikow's *Mutterschaft* can be viewed as quotes from the *Moses* and *Pietà*, respectively. Cf. Karl Schwarz, *Die Juden in der Kunst* (Berlin: Welt Verlag, 1928), 186, 198. Of contemporary Jewish artists one might think, most immediately, of Samuel Bak's self-professed "admiration for the genius of Michelangelo," which is expressed throughout his work. Bak himself temporarily settled in Rome in 1959, opening a studio on the Cassia Vecchia. See Samuel Bak, *Painted in Words* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 477.

5. For a helpful overview of German and German Jewish literature on Italy see Manfred Beller, *Le metamorfosi di Mignon: L'immaginazione poetica dei tedeschi in Italia da Goethe ad oggi* (Rome: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1987). On German Jews seeking refuge in Italy see Klaus Voigt, *Zuflucht und Widerruf. Exil in Italien, 1933–1945* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1989). Karl Wolfskehl, *"Jüdisch, römisch, deutsch zugleich . . ." Briefwechsel aus Italien, 1933–1938*, ed. Cornelia Blasberg (Hamburg: Luchterhand, 1993). Walter Benjamin, "Meine Reise in Italien Pfingsten 1912," in Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Fragmente vermischten Inhalts), ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), 6: 252–92. On Rudolf Borchardt's affinities to Italy and Italian literature (including his translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*), see his *L'Italia e la poesia tedesca: Aufsätze und Reden, 1904–1933*, ed. Gerhard Schuster and Ferruccio della Cave (Frankfurt am Main: Deutsch-Italienische Vereinigung, 1988); Gerhard Schuster, "Toskana als geistige Lebensform. Zur Entwicklung des Italienbilds bei Rudolf Borchardt 1898–1906," in *Rudolf Borchardt, 1877–1945: Referate des Pisaner Colloquiums, ed.* Horst Albert Glaser (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1987), 151–74; Jacques Grange, *Rudolf Borchardt 1877–1945: Contribution à l'étude de la pensée conservatrice et la poésie en Allemagne dans la première moitie du 20e siècle* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983), esp. 828–83.

6. See, with respect to German studies, Steven E. Aschheim, "German History and German Jews: Junctions, Boundaries, and Interdependencies," in *In Times Of Crisis: Essays on European Culture, Germans, and Jews* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 86–92.

7. Martin Jay, *Force Fields: Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 2.

8. Ibid., 3.

9. Cf. Dominick LaCapra, *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 17–20.

10. Ibid., 5.
11. Cf. Dominick LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 52–63, 311–19.
12. Cf. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays,* ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 260–64.
13. Paul Mendes-Flohr, "The Study of the Jewish Intellectual: A Methodological Prolegomenon," in *Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 23–53.
14. Cf. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), esp. 117–23.
15. Auerbach refers here to Montaigne, whom he considers the first modern to articulate this. Cf. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1959), 296: "Problem der Selbstorientierung des Menschen," "die Aufgabe, sich ohne feste Stützpunkte in der Existenz Wohnlichkeit zu schaffen."
16. Mendes-Flohr, "Study of the Jewish Intellectual," 14.
17. Walter Goldstein, *Hermann Cohen und die Zukunft Israels* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1963), 19–20. The original version appeared in a published typescript (Edition Dr. Peter Freund) in Jerusalem in 1942.
18. Ibid., 21.
19. Aschheim, *In Times of Crisis*, 67.
20. Cf. Jean Francois Lyotard, "Taking the Side of the Figural," trans. in *The Lyotard Reader and Guide, ed.* Keith Chrome and James Williams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 34–48.
21. Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 197.

CHAPTER 1

1. *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Michelangelo*, trans. Creighton Gilbert (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 85. Gilbert, whom I follow here, translates “e non ti costa” as “you do not feel,” which is questionable, though more appropriate for the theme of this chapter. Saslow translates: “If my love’s no burden to you, forgive me, as I do such a great tormentor, who, unlike who kills me, wants me to die.” James M. Saslow, *The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 262. Original from Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Rime*, ed. Enzo Noè Girardi (Bari, Italy: Laterza, 1960), 68 [G 122]. I will work with both translations throughout the book. All other translation, unless noted otherwise, are mine.

2. Ernst Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 1: 431.

3. Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Leonard Eckstein Opdycke (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 221.

4. For a reflection on this term—as understood by Goethe and, later, Max Weber—in the German Jewish context, see Michael Löwy, *Redemption and Utopia: Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe; A Study in Elective Affinity* (London: Athlone Press, 1992), esp. 6–13. Heinrich Heine, incidentally, mocked, in 1841, the “elective affinity” of his time to the Italian Renaissance: “Woher die Vorliebe für diese Zeit der Renaissance, der Wiedergeburt oder vielmehr der Auferstehung . . . ? Empfindet unsere Jetztzeit eine Wahlverwandtschaft mit jener Periode, die, ebenso wie wir, in der Vergangenheit eine verjüngende Quelle suchte, lechzend nach frischem Lebenstrank? [Why such penchant for the time of the Renaissance, for rebirth or, rather, resurrection? Does our time feel an elective affinity to that period, which, just as we do, searched for a rejuvenating font in the past, thirsty for an elixir of life?].” Heinrich Heine, “Lutetia,” pt. 1, xxxvii (Paris, December 11, 1841), in *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Klaus Briegleb (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1974), 5: 375.

5. Gershom Scholem, “Juden und Deutsche,” in *Judaica* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), 2: 39. English as “Jews and Germans,” in *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis: Selected Essays* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 86. Unfortunately, Katja Garloff’s important essay on this subject appeared too late to be considered for this book. I am referencing it here for the reader to consult. Katja Garloff, “Unrequited Love: On the Rhetoric of a Trope from Moritz Goldstein to Hannah Arendt,” *Nexus: Essays in German Jewish Studies* 1 (November 2011): 47–66.

6. Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974). On Arendt’s rethinking of German-Jewish history through the category of love see Gabriel Motzkin, “Love and *Bildung* for Hannah Arendt,” in *Hannah Arendt in Jerusalem, ed.* Steven E. Aschheim (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 281–91. I am indebted to my colleague Daniel Doneson for pointing me to Motzkin’s essay.

7. Cf. Simmel, “Über die Liebe” (Fragment), in *Fragmente und Aufsätze aus dem Nachlaß und Veröffentlichungen der letzten Jahre*, ed. Gertrud Kantorowitz (Munich: Drei-Masken-Verlag, 1923), 85–91. Simmel sharply distinguishes *allgemeine Menschenliebe* from *christliche Liebe*.

8. Amos Elon, *The Pity of It All: A History of Jews in Germany, 1743–1933* (New York: Henry Holt, 2002), 9. For an earlier source see especially George L. Mosse, *German Jews Beyond Judaism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1–20; Paul Mendes-Flohr, *German Jews: A Dual Identity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), esp. 1–15. For the German ideal of *Bildung* and reference to earlier works see Aleida Assmann, *Arbeit am nationalen Gedächtnis: Eine kurze Geschichte der deutschen Bildungsidee* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1993).

9. Cf. Walter Benjamin “Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften,” in *Illuminationen: Ausgewählte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977), vol. 1, esp. 134. Thus, Ottilie, the passive heroine of Goethe’s novella, perceives with clarity everything around her not from a distance, but “as if from another world.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften: Goethes Werke; Festausgabe* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1926), 13: 232.

10. Cf. Jonathan M. Hess, *Germans, Jews, and the Claims of Modernity* (New Haven, CT: Yale

University Press, 2002), 7–11.

11. Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength: The Reception of Michelangelo in Late Victorian England* (Aldershot Hants, England: Ashgate, 1998). A useful study on the German Michelangelo reception, which occasionally took on *völkisch* dimensions, remains Niklaus Oberholzer, *Das Michelangelo-Bild in der deutschen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Künstlerdichtung* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1969). Also, most recently, Joseph Imorde, *Michelangelo Deutsch!* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2010).

12. Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. Robert Wark (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 82 (discourse 5), 272 (discourse 15).

13. Friedrich Hebbel, *Michel Angelo: Ein Drama in Zwei Akten*, in *Werke: Dramen*, ed. Gerhard Fricke *et al.* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1963), 1: 651–78. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Michael Angelo: A Fragment*, in *The Writings of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 11 Volumes* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1886), 8: 45–176; Gustav Eberelein, *Michelangelo nebst anderen Dichtungen und Gedanken über Kunst* (Schöneberg: Meisenbach, Riffarth, 1903); Rainer Maria Rilke, "Von einem der die Steine belauscht," in *Sämtliche Werke: Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1977), 4: 347–51; Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, "Michelangelo und seine Statuen," "Il Pensieroso," "In der Sistina," in *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Hans Zeller and Alfred Zäch (Bern: Benteli Verlag, 1958), 1: 331–33 (for "Knecht der Leidenschaft," ibid., 350). It is noteworthy that Hugo Wolf set some of Michelangelo's poems to music. Hugo Wolf, *Michelangelo-Lieder für eine Bassstimme und Klavier* (Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1908).

14. On the 1875 celebrations see Christine Tauber, "'Mit einem Kranze aus dem Laube unserer hercynischen Wälder': Bürgerlicher Kunstgenuß in Deutschland und das Michelangelo Jubiläum 1875," in *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 30 (2003): 269–87.

15. See, of course, Irving Stone, *The Agony and the Ecstasy: A Novel of Michelangelo* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961); Sidney Alexander, *Michelangelo, the Florentine: A Novel* (Montreal: Mario Casalini, 1965); Sidney Alexander, *The Hand of Michelangelo: A Novel* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1977). Of the many curious examples one should cite the recent attempt by Rabbi Benjamin Blech and Roy Doliner to "Judaize" Michelangelo in their book *The Sistine Secrets: Michelangelo's Hidden Messages in the Heart of the Vatican* (New York: Harper and Collins, 2008); and, of course, Michelangelo Antonioni's cinematic essay on Michelangelo's Moses: *Lo sguardo di Michelangelo* (2005).

16. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979), 223.

17. On the literary origins of Fernliebe see Lotte Zade, *Der Troubadour Jufre Rudel und das Motiv der Fernliebe in der Weltliteratur* (Greifswald: Universität Greifswald, 1919), esp. 18–38.

18. Simmel, "Über die Liebe," 55. See also Simmel's letter to Edmund Husserl, of December 3, 1907: "Florenz ist 'mein Land,' die Heimat meiner Seele, soweit unsereiner überhaupt eine Heimat hat," in *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel: Briefe, Erinnerungen, Bibliographie zu seinem 100; Geburtstag am 1. März 1958, ed.* Kurt Gassen and Michael Landmann (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1958), 85.

19. Simmel, "Über die Liebe," 56, and Simmel, "Der Platonische und der moderne Eros," *Fragmente und Aufsätze aus dem Nachlaß*, 132: "Denn die Seele, wie wir sie fassen, heißt: ein fortwährendes Schöpfertum üben." On love as *Mitteilung* see Hermann Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1923), 1: 175.

20. Niklas Luhmann, *Liebe als Passion: Zur Codierung von Intimität* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 23.

21. Simmel, "Über die Liebe," 59–60.

22. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 243. Luhmann, *Liebe als Passion*, 220.

23. Michelangelo, madrigal to Vittoria Colonna (G 235), *Complete Poems*, trans. Gilbert, 131. Simmel, "Über die Liebe," 68, 74.

24. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), 13.

25. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 242.

26. Ibid.

27. Simmel, “Über die Liebe,” 74.

28. Wilhelm Dilthey, “Über die Möglichkeit einer allgemeingültigen pädagogischen Wissenschaft,” in *Gesammelte Schriften, vol. 6, Die Geistige Welt: Einleitung in die Philosophie des Lebens* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1968), 74. See also, Theodore Plantinga, *Historical Understanding in the Thought of Wilhelm Dilthey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), esp. 93–94.

29. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 137–38.

30. Shulamit Volkov, *Germans, Jews, and Antisemites: Trials in Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 202.

31. Cf. Simmel, “Über die Liebe,” 115–16.

32. Ahad Haam, “Äussere Freiheit und innere Knechtschaft,” in *Am Scheidewege*, trans. Israel Friedlaender (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag 1913), 1: 141. This polemic appears still in Leo Strauss, “Progress and Return,” in *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity: Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought*, ed. Kenneth Hart Green (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 92.

33. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1965), 278, 280. It should be noted that the English translation does not convey this point if it renders “sich in der Sache verstehen” as “to understand the content of what is said.” See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, rev. trans. Joel Wertheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London: Continuum, 2006), 294.

34. Charles de Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*, trans. Margaret Mauldon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3.

35. Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire,” *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989): 18

36. Georg Simmel, “Der Fremde,” in *Das individuaelle Gesetz: Philosophische Exkurse*, ed. Michael Landmann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), 65.

37. Madrigal to Vittoria Colonna (G 235), *Complete Poems*, trans. Gilbert, 131.

38. For the generally one-sided terminology of assimilation and acculturation and its gradual replacement by the bilateral processes of “performance” and “co-constitution” see David Sorkin, “Emancipation and Assimilation: Two Concepts and their Application to German-Jewish History,” *Leo Baeck Insitute Yearbook* (henceforth as *LBIYB)* 35 (1990): 17–33, and the lengthy debate on German-Jewish History involving Evyatar Friesel, Christhard Hoffmann, Samuel Moyn, and Shulamit Volkov, in *LBIYB* 41 (1996): 263–320. Also, Steven E. Aschheim, “German History and German Jewry: Boundaries, Junctions, and Interdependence,” *LBIYB* 43 (1998): 315–22; Klaus Hödl, “Jenseits des Nationalen: Ein Bekenntnis zur Interkulturation,” *Transversal* 5, no. 1 (2004): 3–17; and Klaus Hödl, *Wiener Juden—Jüdische Wiener: Identität, Gedächtnis und Performanz im 19. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck, Vienna: Studien Verlag, 2006), esp. 30–32.

39. Cf. Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, 1: 9 84; 5.

40. Cf. Hermann Cohen, “Liebe und Gerechtigkeit in den Begriffen Gott und Mensch,” in *Jüdische Schriften, vol. 3, Zur jüdischen Religionsphilosophie und ihrer Geschichte* (Berlin: C. A. Schwetschke, 1924), 57.

41. Cohen, “Der Nächste,” in *Jüdische Schriften, vol. 1, Ethische und religiöse Grundfragen* (Berlin: C. A. Schwetschke, 1924), 188. For a richer historical context of Cohen’s essay and a beautiful elaboration on this theme see also Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Love, Accusative and Dative: Reflections on Leviticus 19:18*, B. G. Rudolph Lectures in Judaic Studies 4, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007), esp. 7–8.

42. Cf. Scholem, “Juden und Deutsche,” 30; Georg Simmel, “Michelangelo,” in *Philosophische Kultur: Gesammelte Essays* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1923), 173; Georg Brandes, *Michelangelo Buonarroti* (Berlin: Erich Reiss Verlag, 1924), 431. On Brandes and his particular identification with Michelangelo, see Eduard Rosenbaum, “Ferdinand Lasalle: A Historiographical Meditation,” *LBIYB* 9 (1964): esp. 126–7. Also, Marie Herzfeld, “Essays von Georg Brandes,” *Moderne Dichtung* 1, no. 5 (May 1890): 318–22; reprinted in Gotthart Wunberg, *Das junge Wien: Österreichische Literatur-und Kulturkritik, 1887–1902* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1976), 64–72. For detailed biographical information see Henri Nathansen, *Jude oder Europäer: Porträt von Georg Brandes*, trans. Erwin Magnus (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten and Loening, 1931); and Maria Giacobbe, ed., *Georg Brandes in Italia* (Moncalieri, Italy: Centro interuniversatario di

ricerche sul “Viaggio in Italia,” 2004). It should be noted that Brandes’s interest in Michelangelo may well have been influenced by the Danish poet Jens Peter Jacobsen, whose poem “*Arabesque to a Drawing by Michelangelo”* is a curious example of nineteenth-century Danish Michelangelism. See Peter Bornedal, “The Fragmented Nietzschean Subject and Literary Criticism: Conflicting Images of Woman in Jacobsen’s ‘Arabesque to a Drawing by Michelangelo,’” *The Comparativist* 30 (May 2006): esp. 14–36.

43. No better example can illustrate this hope than Arendt’s reflections on the disappointed loves—human and cultural—of Rahel Varnhagen. See Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman*, esp. 224.

44. On the subject of idolatry see intra, chap. 2, 40–44; Lionel Kochan provides a short, but well selected bibliography on Jewish aesthetics, especially in its German Jewish context. Kochan, *Idols and Messiahs: The Challenge from History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 211–12. See also the brief but excellent comments by Steven Nadler, *Rembrandt’s Jews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 73–76. Classic texts on this subject remain Vivian B. Mann, *Jewish Texts on the Visual Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Kalman P. Bland, *The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Margaret Olin, *The Nation Without Art: Examining Discourses on Jewish Art* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001). See also Kenneth Clark, “Iconophobia,” in *Moments of Vision and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 30–49.

45. Barbara Mann, “Visions of Jewish Modernism,” *Modernism/Modernity*, 13, no. 4 (2006): 674. For the changing role of Jewish text-centeredness see Moshe Halberthal, *People of the Book: Canon, Meaning, and Authority* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), esp. 129–34.

46. For an extensive account of German Jewish cultural life see Monika Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland*, vols. 1 and 2 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976–79).

47. Arnold Zweig, *Bilanz der deutschen Judenheit. Ein Versuch* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1991), 147.

48. On Jakob Guttmann (1811–60), whose works include a bronze statuette of the Baron Salomon von Rothschild and a bust of Pope Pius IX, see Hermann Müller and Hans Singer, eds., *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon* (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten & Loening, 1895–1901), 2: 110. For Joseph Engel (1815–1902) see *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1901–6), 5: 161. On Samuel Friedrich Beer (1846–1912) see Theodor Zlocisti, “Friedrich Beer,” *Ost und West* 13, no. 7 (1913): 84–87. After his training in Vienna, Beer opened a studio in the Palazzo di Venezia in Rome, later in Paris. On Moses Jacob Ezekiel see Ezekiel, *Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian*, ed. Joseph Gutmann and Stanley F. Chyet (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975). “Everybody who knows me knows that I am a Jew—I never wanted it otherwise,” wrote Ezekiel in 1876, though he resisted very much being stamped a “Jewish sculptor,” invoking, instead, the universality of art (cf. ibid., 21). Ezekiel’s studio, incidentally, was located not far from yet another “Jewish sculptor” in Rome, the Russian Mark Antokolski (cf. ibid., 178); see also the critical essay by Georg Hermann, “Moses Ezekiel,” *Ost und West* 3, no. 12 (1903): 805–14. For an early account of Jewish sculptors in general see Karl Schwarz, *Die Juden in der Kunst* (Berlin: Welt Verlag, 1928), 172–201. For the rise of Jewish artists in the nineteenth century see Susan Tumarkin Goodman, ed., *The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Jewish Museum, 2001).

49. *Der Israelit* 25, 2nd supplement, no. 50 (June 1884): 840–81. For the reception of Oppenheim see Ismar Schorsch, “Art as Social History: Moritz Oppenheim and the German Jewish Vision of Emancipation,” in *Danzig, Between East and West: Aspects of Modern Jewish History, ed.* Isadore Twersky (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 141–72. On Isidor Kaufmann see Tobias Netter, ed., *Rabbiner—Bocher—Talmudschüler: Bilder des Wiener Isidor Kaufmann, 1843–1921*, exhibition catalog (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum, 1995). Mauricy Gottlieb, Hermann Struck, or Jozef Israels were likewise favored by the Orthodox. See Mordechai Breuer, *Modernity Within Tradition: The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany*, trans. Elizabeth Petuchowski (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 160–62.

50. “Giebt es seine jüdische Kunst?” *Der Israelit* 41, no. 95 (November 1900): 1975.

51. *Ost und West*, 1, no. 12 (December 1901): 955–56.

52. Heinrich Graetz, *Die Konstruktion der jüdischen Geschichte: Eine Skizze* (Berlin: Schocken, 1936), 13, 10; and Graetz, *Tagebuch und Briefe*, ed. Reuven Micheal (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1977), 211.

53. Max Liebermann to Franz Servaes, February 12, 1900, in Liebermann, *Siebzig Briefe*, ed. Franz Landsberger (Berlin: Schocken, 1937), 27. On the modernist hope of universalism see Ezra Mendelsohn, "Jewish Universalism: Some Visual Texts and Subtexts," in *Key Texts in American Jewish Culture*, ed. Jack Kugelmass (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), esp. 181.

54. Cf. George L. Mosse, "Jewish Emancipation: Between Bildung und Respectability," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture from the Enlightenment to the Second World War*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Walter Schatzberg (Hanover, NH: University of New England Press, 1985), 14.

55. "Ein offener Brief: Jüdische Macaene und Jüdische Kunst," *Ost und West* 2, no. 2 (February 1902): 109.

56. Henry J. Kellermann, "From Imperial to National-Socialist Germany: Recollections of a German-Jewish Youth Leader," *LBIYB* 39 (1996): 309.

57. Kurt Singer, "Erinnerungen an Georg Simmel," in *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel*, ed. Gassen and Landmann, 296.

58. Rachel Katznelson, *Man as He Is*, ed. Michal Hagati (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1989), 109–10, quoted in Muki Tsur, "Pessach in the Land of Israel: Kibbutz Haggadot," *Israel Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 79. My thanks to Vanessa Ochs for pointing me to this source.

59. See Annette Weber, "Moritz Daniel Oppenheim und die Familie Rothschild," in *Moritz Daniel Oppenheim: Die Entdeckung des jüdischen Sebstbewußtseins in der Kunst*, ed. Georg Heuberger and Anton Merk (Frankfurt am Main: Wienand Verlag, 1999), esp. 170–71.

60. Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Stockholm: S. Fischer Verlag, 1958), 31. Likewise, Amos Elon: "No other class in Germany (or the rest of Europe) carried love of art to as great lengths as did middle-and upper-middle-class Jews in turn-of-the-century Germany." Amos Elon, *The Pity of It All: A History of Jews in Germany, 1743–1933* (New York: Henry Holt, 2002), 260.

61. Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern*, 22.

62. In his autobiography, George Mosse refers to a cultural phenomenon that included his own family's portrait painted in fresco by the historical painter Anton von Werner in 1899. George L. Mosse, *Confronting History: A Memoir* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 9–10.

63. Thus, Karen Michels sees a clear distinction between Jewish art historians of the early twentieth century and their German counterparts: "The most striking difference with respect to German mainstream art history was the tendency of Jewish art historians to deal predominantly with the source of humanistic ideals, that is, with Renaissance topics." Karin Michels, "Art History, German Jewish Identity, and the Emigration of Iconology," in *Jewish Identity in Modern Art History*, ed. Catherine M. Soussloff (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 168. Erich Auerbach's doctoral dissertation, *Zur Technik der Frührenaissancenovelle in Italien und Frankreich* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1921), may be symptomatic of the tendency to recover humanism as a new affirmation of the "Irdische" and, as Auerbach argues with respect to Boccaccio, "Veredelung durch die Liebe" (ibid., 6). Auerbach would return to this new "Irdischkeit" in *Dante als Dichter der irdischen Welt* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1929); English as *Dante: Poet of the Secular World*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). That the yearning for humanistic ideals often came in conflict with their Jewish identity emerges most clearly from Berenson's late diaries. See Bernard Berenson, *Sunset and Twilight: From the Diaries of 1947–1958*, ed. Nicky Mariano (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1963), esp. 105–8.

64. August von Platen, *Die Tagebücher des Grafen August von Platen: Aus der Handschrift des Dichters*, ed. Georg von Laubmann and Ludwig von Scheffler (reprint, Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms, 1969), 2: 684; quoted in Gunter E. Grimm et al., *"Ein Gefühl von freierem Leben": Deutsche Dichter in Italien* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1990), 138.

65. Wilhelm Heinse, "Tagebücher von der Italiänischen Reise, 1780–1783," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Carl Schüddekopf and Albert Leitzmann (Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1909), 7: 98.

66. Cf. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, in *Goethe's Werke 11: Autobiographische Schriften* (Hamburger Ausgabe) (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1981), 3: 147: "Ich zähle einen zweiten Geburtstag, eine wahre Wiedergeburt, von dem Tage, da ich Rom betrat." Also ibid., 150, 386, 399, 489; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke*, 7: 172. See also Richard Block, *The Spell of Italy: Vacation, Magic, and the Attraction of Goethe* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 85.

67. Heinrich Heine, “Reise von München nach Genua,” in *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 2, *Reisebilder*, ed. Klaus Briegleb (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1969), 327. For Heine’s Italian journey see also Klaus Pabel, *Heines “Reisebilder”: Ästhetisches Bedürfnis und politisches Interesse am Ende der Kunstperiode* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1977), 175–230; Stefan Oswald, *Italienbilder: Beiträge zur Wandlung der deutschen Italienauffassung, 1770–1840* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1985), 136–41. See also the instructive essay on Heine’s reception *in* Italy by Luciano Zagari, “Permanence in Change: Heine’s Reception in Italian Culture Through Two Centuries,” in *Heinrich Heine and the Occident: Multiple Identities, Multiple Receptions*, ed. Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Sander L. Gilman (Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 87–109. On Anglophone variations of the Italian Journey see, for instance, Van Wyck Brooks, *The Dream of Arcadia: American Writers and Artists in Italy, 1760–1916* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1958); for an earlier discussion see Camillo von Klenze, *The Interpretation of Italy During the Last Two Centuries: A Contribution to the Study of Goethe’s “Italienische Reise,”* Decennial Publications, 2nd ser., vol. 17 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1907), esp. 145–47.

68. Cf. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Tagebuch der Italienischen Reise 1786: Notizen und Briefe aus Italien*, ed. Christoph Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1982), 107; quoted in Grimm, *“Ein Gefühl von freierem Leben*,” 80. For Freud see *Die Traumdeutung*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Anna Freud (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1969), 2.3: 200.

69. Walter Pater’s famous definition of *Anders-Streben* as “a partial alienation from its own limitations through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces” seems almost emblematic of this phenomenon, if we replace aesthetic categories by categories of what we might call cultural conversion. For Pater, of course, the *Anders-Streben* of “all art” was art’s desire to consummate itself in music. Cf. Walter Pater, “The School of Giorgione,” in *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005), 89–90. For Pater’s use of *Streben* as struggle also see his essay “A Study of Dionysus: The Spiritual Form of Fire and Dew,” in *Greek Studies: A Series of Essays* (Charleston, SC: BiblioBazar, 2006), esp. 27. It is no accident, as has recently been shown, that Hugo von Hofmannsthal found in Pater’s notion of the *Anders-Streben* a suitable model for the fin-de-siècle understanding of the visual arts and language striving to sublate their limitations. See Ulrike Stamm, *“Ein Kritiker aus dem Willen der Natur”: Hugo von Hofmannsthal und das Werk Walter Paters* (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 1997), esp. 97–120. Finally, it should be added that the Hegelian concept of self-othering has recently found new application in scholarship. See, in particular, Nicholas A. Germana, “Self-Othering in German Orientalism: The Case of Friedrich Schlegel,” in *The Comparativist* 34 (May 2010): 80–94.

70. See Franco Farina, “Viaggio in Italia con la giovane greca,” in *Goethe e l’Italia*, exhibition catalog (Milan: Electa, 1989), 47. For Herder, see Gunter E. Grimm, “‘Das Beste in der Erinnerung’: Zu Johann Gottfried Herders Italien-Bild,” in *Johann Gottfried Herder: Aspekte seines Lebenswerkes*, ed. Martin Keßler and Volker Leppin (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 2005), 151–77.

71. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Briefe: Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Munich: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 6: 50.

72. Heinrich Finke, *Der Briefwechsel Friedrich und Dorothea Schlegels, 1818–1920, während Dorotheas Aufenthalt in Rom* (Munich: Kösel and Puster, 1923), 342. For Dorothea’s Jewish and later Catholic life see S. Hensel, *Die Familie Mendelssohn, 1729–1847: Nach Briefen und Tagebüchern* (Berlin: B. Behr’s Verlag, 1896), 1: 42–50.

73. Henriette Herz, *In Erinnerungen, Briefen und Zeugnissen*, ed. Rainer Schmitz (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1984), 392.

74. Cited in Hans Geller, *Deutsche Künstler in Rom: Von Raphael Mengs bis Hans von Marées, 1741–1887* (Rome: Herder, 1961), 5.

75. Fanny Lewald, *Römisches Tagebuch, 1845–1846*, ed. Heinrich Spiero (Leipzig: Klinkhardt and Biermann, 1927), 27. On Lewald’s biography and literary oeuvre see the recent works by Margaret E. Ward, *Fanny Lewald: Between Rebellion and Renunciation* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006); Alba Amoia and Bettina Liebowitz Knapp, eds., *Great Women Travel Writers: From 1750 to the Present* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 86–95; Todd Curtis Kontje, *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation, 1771–1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 152–70. Carol Diethe,

Towards Emancipation: German Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), 80–91; Frances Malino and David Sorkin, eds., *Profiles in Diversity: Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750–1870* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 202–22.

76. Heine, "Reise von München nach Genua," 326.

77. Hans Geller, in a study still tainted by Germanic pride, speaks of about three hundred German artists living in Rome between 1800 and 1830. See Geller, *Ernste Künstler—fröhliche Menschen* (Munich: Münchner Verlag und Graphische Kunstanstalten, 1947), 11; also Geller, *Deutsche Künstler in Rom: Von Raphael Mengs bis Hans von Márees, 1741–1887* (Rome: Herder, 1961). On the Nazarenes and the history of Deutschrömer see Friedrich Noack, *Deutsches Leben in Rom, 1700–1900* (Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1907); Keith Andrews, *The Nazarenes: A Brotherhood of German Painters in Rome* (London: Clarendon Press, 1964); Rudolf Bachleitner, *Die Nazarener* (Munich: Heyne, 1976); Herbert Schindler, *Nazarener: Romantischer Geist und christliche Kunst im 19. Jahrhundert* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1982); Elke Schulze, "Das vergessene Memento: Ein Portrait Album deutscher Künstler in Rom, 1832–1836," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen 41* (1999): 213–44; Christa Steinle and Max Hollein, eds., *Religion Macht Kunst: Die Nazarener. Katalog zur Ausstellung in der Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt* (Cologne: Walther König, 2005).

78. Cf. Lewald, *Römisches Tagebuch*, 40, 89.

79. Ibid., 89.

80. Overbeck's own interpretation that "Es ist endlich . . . die Sehnsucht gemeint, die den Norden beständig zum Süden hinzieht, nach seiner Kunst, seiner Natur, seiner Poesie [what is meant, finally . . . , is the longing that persistently attracts the North to the South, to its art, its nature, and to its poetry]," obscures the lines of an active Germania and a passive Italia graciously receiving instructions from her Nordic redeemer. It should be noted that the image was originally intended to be an allegory on Shulamit and Maria, based on a design by Overbeck's close friend Franz Pforr. See, Jürgen Gläsemer and Willi Geismeier, *Traum und Wahrheit: Deutsche Romantik aus Museen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, exhibition catalog (Bern: A. Niggli, 1985). Thus, we can understand the Nazarene painter Schnorr von Carolsfeld proclaiming in 1818: "Das eigentliche wahre Rom gehört uns [the real and true Rome is ours]." Cf. Schulze, "Das vergessene Memento," 234. On the discontents such "cultural colonialism," see Luisa Rubini, "Della 'traducibilità' del folklore: Figure e aspetti della mediazione culturale tra Italia e Germania nell'Ottocento," in *La Ricerca Folklorica*, no. 33, *Romantici in Europa. Tradizioni popolari e letteratura* (April 1996): 51–57.

81. Henriette Herz, *Erinnerungen*, 134.

82. Cf. Heinse, "Aphorismen: Von der Italienischen Reise," *Sämtliche Werke*, 8.1: 434–35. For Goethe see, Grimm et al., "Ein Gefühl vom freieren Leben," 69; for Platen see ibid., esp. 140; 149–50.

83. Cf. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Römische Elegien*, 1: 13–14 (ms. version), in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke, vol. 1, Gedichte, 1756–1799* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987), 392. The manuscript of Goethe's *Elegien*, which appeared first in 1795 in the journal *Die Horen*, was originally entitled "Erotica Romana," a title subsequently removed from all print editions, along with other unseemly imagery. Nevertheless, the *Elegien*, composed between 1788 and 1790, immediately after Goethe's second Roman journey, still aroused public criticism for their explicit and personal content. See also Gretchen L. Hachmeister, *Italy in the German Literary Imagination: Goethe's "Italian Journey" and Its Reception by Eichendorff, Platen, and Heine* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2002), esp. 60–72.

84. Cf. Walter Pater "Winckelmann," in *The Renaissance*, 144. Commenting on Franz Overbeck's Nazarene style in 1820, one critic noted that true Christian art "no longer has to ogle with lewdness after pagan legends. . . . Art will bring salvation to humankind only if it approaches its celestial groom, as wise virgins do, with the burning lamp of faith and fear of God, with noble devotion and chastity." Quoted in Jörg Traeger, *Renaissance und Religion: Die Kunst des Glaubens im Zeitalter Raphaels* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1997), 428–29.

85. Cf. Heinse, *Sämtliche Werke*, 7: 56; 60; 216; and *Sämtliche Werke*, 8.1: 198.

86. Hippolyte Taine, *Rome and Naples*, trans. J. Durand (New York: Holt and Williams, 1873), 257.

87. Cf. Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung: Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* (Munich: Piper, 1911), esp. 114–31.

88. Cf. Emil Ludwig, *On Mediterranean Shores*, trans. Eden Paul and Cedar Paul (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929), 9. The original edition appeared as *Am Mittelmeeer* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt, 1923). The subject of Mediterraneanism cannot be discussed here at length. An instructive essay remains Miriam Cooke, "Mediterranean Thinking: From Netizen to Medizen," *Geographical Review* 89, no. 2 (April 1999): 290–300. See also the collection of essays *Mediterranean Paradigms and Classical Antiquity*, ed. Irad Malkin (London: Routledge, 2005)

89. Cf. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 116; Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Sizilien und wir" (1925), in *Ausgewählte Werke in zwei Bänden*, ed. Rudolf Hirsch (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1961), 2: 713–14. The common source for this form of Mediterraneanism was most likely Nietzsche's great appreciation for the Mediterranean Sea and the ancient ideal of a "gesammtgriechichscher Mittelmeer-Staat." Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, esp. *Morgenröthe*, bk. 5, § 496, *Kritische Studienausgabe* (henceforth as KSA), ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag and Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 3: 291–92.

90. Arnold Zweig, "Das neue Kanaan," in Zweig, *Herkunft und Zukunft: Zwei Essays vom Schicksal eines Volkes* (Vienna: Phaidon Verlag, 1929), 175; 177.

91. Cf. ibid., 178, 180.

92. Ibid., 190. One could compare this to Max Brod's endorsement of the "Mediterranean" style in his 1951 study *Israel's Music*: "Southern, infused with the bright light of the Mediterranean air, lucid, striving for clarity; . . . ceaseless variation which enchants by its apparent freedom from rule and impulsiveness." Max Brod, *Israel's Music* (Tel Aviv: Sefer, 1951), 57. I owe thanks to my colleague Assaf Shelleg for this reference. See also Assaf Shelleg, "Israeli Art Music: A Reintroduction," *Israel Studies* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2012): n.p.

93. Zweig, "Das neue Kanaan," 191.

94. Rabbiner Dr. [Georg] Wilde, "Eine Mittelmeer-Reise," *Ost und West* 9, nos. 8–9 (August 1909): esp. 560–61. Wilde served as the rabbi of Magdeburg until his deportation to Buchenwald in 1938, before he escaped to England. See Jon Epstein and David Jacobs, eds., *A History of Our Time: Rabbis and Teachers Buried at the Hoop Lane Cemetery* (London: Sternberg Centre for Judaism, 2006), 24. On German Jewish national feelings see Ulrich Sieg, "Bekenntnis zu nationalen und universalen Werten. Jüdische Philosophen im Deutschen Kaiserreich," *Historische Zeitschrift* 263, no. 3 (December 1996): 609–39.

95. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 383, 145. For Goethe's *Urworte* see Goethe, "Urworte, Orphisch," *Goethes Werke*, vol. 16, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Festausgabe), ed. Robert Petsch (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1926), 413.

96. Cf. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 386; for Goethe on Raphael, see ibid. 145–146, 362–363. On Michelangelo and Raphael in Goethe see Helmut Prang, *Goethe und die Kunst der italienischen Renaissance: Germanische Studien* 198 (1938) (reprint, Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1967), 86–88. Also Herbert von Einem, "Goethe und Michelangelo," *Goethe Jahrbuch* 92 (1975), ed. Karl-Heinz Hahn (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1975), 165–94.

97. Cf. Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, 84–85 (discourse 5); Hermann Grimm, "Rafael und Michelangelo," in *Die Venus von Milo, Rafael und Michelangelo: Zwei Essays* (New York: Henry Holt, 1870), esp. 29–30; 52–3; 75; A[lbert] E[rich] Brinkmann, *Michelangelo: Vom Ruhme seines Genius in fünf Jahrhunderten* (Hamburg: Hofmann und Campe, 1949), esp. 22.

98. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente Herbst 1884 bis Herbst 1885* (KSA 11), 470. Here belongs Otto Weininger's disparaging remark: "Daß man den rafaelischen Dreck neben Michelangelo hat nennen können, begreife ich; man wird dies wohl immer tun, denn Rafael ist ganz *ohne*, Michelangelo nur *durch* Genie zu verstehen [I understand why one had to mention Raphael's rubbish next to Michelangelo, for Raphael must be understood *without* genius, while Michelangelo can only be understood *through* genius]." Otto Weininger, *Taschenbuch und Briefe an einen Freund* (Leipzig: E. P. Tal Verlag, 1919), 44; also 45. On Weininger's affinity to Michelangelo see Georg Klaren, *Otto Weininger: Der Mensch, sein Werk und sein Leben in fünf Gesprächen* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1924), 23–24.

99. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente* (KSA 11), 470.

100. Henry Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, vol. 1, *Das Genie und die Welt* (1901; reprint, Berlin: Grotesche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1912), 47.

101. Cf. Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, vol. 2: *Der Dichter und die Ideen der Renaissance*, 421: “Ob er, man möchte sagen, in kindlicher Naivetät festhielt an der katholischen Lehre . . . , an dem Besuche der Messe (wovon Vasari einmal berichtet), ja an der heilbringenden Wirkung von Pilgerfahrten—der Grund und die bewegende Kraft alles seines religiösen Lebens ist doch der Glaube gewesen, der in dem unendlichen Liebesbedürfnis seines Wesens wurzelte [Whether or not he clung to Catholic doctrine with, as one might say, childlike naïveté, going to mass (as Vasari reports), and believing even in the miracles of pilgrimages—whether or not all this is true, the driving force of his religious life was no other faith than the one originating in his endless need for love].”

102. Alfred Döblin, *Hamlet oder die lange Nacht nimmt ein Ende* (Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter Verlag, 1966), 365.

103. Emil Ludwig, *Michelangelo* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt, 1930), 104. Ludwig, who was born Emil Cohn, converted to Catholicism at age twenty-one, but returned to Judaism, in protest to Rathenau’s assassination, in 1922.

104. Cf. ibid., 136, 65.

105. Hans Mühlestein, *Ausgewählte Sonette der Vittoria Colonna*, trans. Hans Mühlestein (Celerina, Switzerland: Quos Ego Verlag, 1951), 98. The first edition was published in 1914. What this “coming humankind” should look like we can infer from Mühlestein’s social fantasy *Die Herrschaft der Weisen* (Leipzig: Der Neue Geist Verlag, 1918), esp. 3–9; 28–29. Despite his “Jewish sounding” name, Mühlestein came of Protestant background.

106. Cf. Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien, Gesammelte Werke (Basel: B. Schwabe, 1959), 3:* 303. On Michelangelo’s sublimated love for Vittoria Colonna see also Robert Clements, “Michelangelo as a Baroque Poet,” *PMLA* 76, no. 3 (June 1961): 182–92; Roberto Fedi, “’L’imagine vera’: Vittoria Colonna, Michelangelo, e un’idea di canzoniere,” *MLN* 107 (1992): 46–73.

107. Cf. Thomas Mann, “Die Erotik Michelangelos” (1950), in *Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden IX: Reden und Aufsätze* (Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1974), 783–93. Less than flattering, if not downright anti-Semitic, is what the Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz wrote in his diary in 1954: “It is curious that the life of even the most common, most healthy Jew is almost always the life of an outstanding man. Even though he may be healthy, ordinary, undistinguished from others, he is nevertheless different and treated differently. He must be isolated and is, even though he does not will it, on the peripheries. One could say, therefore, that even the average Jews is sentenced to greatness, only because he is a Jew. And not just to greatness. He is sentenced to a suicidal and desperate battle with his own form because he does not like himself (like Michelangelo).” Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary: Volume One (1953–1956)*, trans. Lilian Vallee (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 81.

108. Georg Simmel, “Michelangelo als Dichter” (1889), in *Gesamtausgabe, vol. 2, Aufsätze 1887 bis 1890*, ed. Heinz-Jürgen Dahme (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 38, 40. It should be noted that Simmel was trained for his doctoral minor (*Nebenfach*) in Renaissance literature by the important Michelangelo scholar Herman Grimm, taking his second and third doctoral exams on Petrarch and Michelangelo, respectively. On Simmel’s academic career see Michael Landmann, “Bausteine zur Biographie,” in *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel, ed.* Kurt Gassen and Michael Landmann (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1958), 15–18. For Simmel’s interpretation of Michelangelo, see also Hans Liebeschütz, *Von Georg Simmel zu Franz Rosenzweig: Studien zum jüdischen Denken im deutschen Kulturbereich* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1970), 131–36; Felicitas Dörr, *Die Kunst als Gegenstand der Kulturanalyse im Werk Georg Simmels* (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1993), esp. 64–71.

109. Simmel, “Michelangelo,” 174.

110. Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso* 33.145, ed. Giuseppe Vandelli (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1960), 924. While Simmel does not make reference to Dante, it is still noteworthy that he contemplated an inaugural lecture “Über Dantes Psychologie” already in 1884. Cf. Michael Landmann, “Bausteine zur Biographie,” in *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel*, ed. Gassen and Landmann, 21.

111. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 33.

112. Simmel, “Michelangelo,” 174; and Simmel, “Michelangelo als Dichter,” 48.

113. Simmel, “Michelangelo,” 178.

114. Cf. Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance, vol. 1, Das Genie und die Welt*, 10; vol. 3,

Der Künstler und seine Werke (Berlin: G. Grote, 1912), 370: “Alle die Propheten und Sibyllen haben ihre Stellung im Gemäldezyklus doch nur in Rücksicht auf Christus, auf die Erlösung! [All the prophets and sibyls have only one purpose in these paintings: to point toward Christ, toward redemption!].”

115. Simmel, “Michelangelo,” 176.

116. Ludwig, *Michelangelo*, 65.

117. Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente Herbst 1885 bis Herbst 1887* (KSA 12), 223; and Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente Herbst 1884 bis Herbst 1885* (KSA 11), 470–71.

118. Simmel, “Michelangelo,” 168.

119. Brandes, *Michelangelo*, 431.

120. Cf. Heinrich Heine, “Die Bäder von Lucca,” *Reisebilder, Dritter Teil: Italien, 1828*, in *Sämtliche Schriften* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1962), 2: 427–29.

121. Ibid., 427.

122. Herz, *Erinnerungen*, 133.

123. Abraham Geiger, “Das Judentum unserer Zeit und die Bestrebungen in ihm,” *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie*, 1, no. 1 (1835): 5.

124. “Against the magic of Catholicism, among whose victims have been many artists of name over the past two decades, there is only *one* remedy: the sharp, naked sword of bright reason.” Fanny Lewald, *Italienisches Bilderbuch* (1847; reprint, Berlin: Rütten and Loening, 1983), 166; also ibid., 165: “Je größer nun für die phantasiereiche Seele deutscher Künstler und der Nordländer überhaupt der phantasieanregende Kultus, die ganze Mysterienwelt des Katholizismus ist, in einem Lande, in welchem schon die südliche Natur und die ganze Kunstwelt die Seele in außergewöhnliche Aufregung versetzen, um so nötiger wäre es, in Rom protestantische Geistliche von echt protestantischem Rationalismus als Gegengewicht zu haben [Given the extent to which the fantasy-inspiring cult and the entire Catholic world of mysteries have captivated the imaginative soul of German artists and of northern men, who get extraordinarily excited by the mere presence of southern nature and art, it would be desirable to bring to Rome Protestant ministers of true Protestant rationalism].” On Fanny Lewald’s Italian diaries see Lia Secci, “Viaggio italiano di Fanny Lewald,” in *Viaggio e scrittura: Le straniere nell’Italia dell’Ottocento*, ed. Liana Borghi *et al.* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1988), 101–8.

125. Friedrich Wilhelm Johann Schelling, “Philosophie der Kunst,” in *Schellings Werke*, vol. 3, *Schriften zur Identitätsphilosophie, 1801–1806*, ed. Manfred Schröter (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1927), 463: “Nur der Katholicismus lebte in einer mythologischen Welt. Daher die Heiterkeit der poetischen Werke, die in dem Katholicismus selbst entsprungen sind [Only Catholicism lived in a mythological world; hence the gaity of all poetic works that emerged from Catholicicm itself].”

126. Lewald, *Italienisches Bilderbuch*, 276–77, 409.

127. Cf. ibid., 23–25.

128. Cf. ibid., 284; 300.

129. Ibid., 409–10.

130. For Lewald’s account of the practice to parade Jewish converts to Catholicism every year before Easter see ibid., 279–81. Moritz Oppenheim relates a similar observation in his *Erinnerungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Verlags-Anstalt, 1924), 40–41. Also the otherwise unsympathetic Ferdinand Gregorovius, who described the “feierliche Juden-und Türkentaufen” in 1853. Gregorovius, *Der Ghetto und die Juden in Rom. Mit einem Geleitwort von Leo Baeck* (Berlin: Schocken, 1935), 58.

131. Cf. Borghi, *Viaggio e scrittura*, 17, 29.

132. Lewald, *Römisches Tagebuch*, 119. Likewise, Max Liebermann marveled at the “naïve” Italians, who lived, almost poetically, close to nature. Liebermann to Waldemar von Seidlitz (April 1, 1894), in Liebermann, *Briefe*, 18.

133. Lewald, *Römisches Tagebuch*, 26.

134. Ibid., 38.

135. “Ich muß nach Rom . . . ich mach in Rom mein Meisterstück. Er sprachs, dann zog er fort im Rausche durch jene Welt, die er erhofft.” Rilke, “Der Junge Bildner” (1895), in *Sämtliche Werke* 1: 21.

136. Zeev Jabotinsky, “Sippur Yammai,” in *Ketavim* (Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1958), 1: 27–28.

137. Margarete Susman, “Erinnerungen an Georg Simmel,” in *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel*, ed.

Gassen and Landmann, 286; and ibid., 85: Simmel to Husserl, March 12, 1907.

138. Marthe Robert, *From Oedipus to Moses: Freud's Jewish Identity* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 103. See also Peter Loewenberg, "A Hidden Zionist Theme in Freud's 'My Son, the Myops . . .' Dream," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 31 (January–March 1970): 129–32; Sebastiano Timpanaro, "Freud's 'Rome Phobia,'" *New Left Review* 147 (September–October 1984): 4–31; Block, *Spell of Italy*, 167–72.

139. Bluma Goldstein, *Reinscribing Moses: Heine, Kafka, Freud, and Schoenberg in a European Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 72. Goldstein, however, links Freud's neurotic "Rome-phobia" to his early experiences of anti-Semitism.

140. Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981), 190.

141. See David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: D. van Nostrand, 1958), 177; also Walter Schönau, *Sigmund Freuds Prosa: Literarische Elemente seines Stils* (Stuttgart: Metzlersche Buchhandlung, 1968), esp. 192–207.

142. Cf. Sigmund Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, 2.3: 199–205; here 200. Also Robert, *From Oedipus to Moses*, 107–8. Freud himself makes the association with Moses: "Das Motiv, 'das gelobte Land von ferne sehen', ist darin leicht zu erkennen [The motif of "seeing the Promised Land from afar" can easily be recognized here]." Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, 200. A recent study scrutinized Freud's relationship to Italy: Laurence Simmons, *Freud's Italian Journey* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006). Freud identified himself not only with Moses but also with Josef, "ein Außenseiter," as Leon Botstein noted, "der als Hebräer und Sklave nach Ägypten kam." On Freud's Roman dreams, including the lesser known dream of Freud's encounter with a nun at a Roman fountain, which appeared to Freud as a reworking of Herzl's play *Das neue Ghetto*, see Leon Botstein, *Judentum und Modernität: Essays zur Rolle der Juden in der deutschen und österreichischen Kultur 1848 bis 1938* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1991), esp. 98–99.

143. One could think of S. Y. Agnon's 1932 story "*The Kerchief*": "The bird," says the narrator in this story, "spread its wings and flew with me to a city called Rome. I looked down and saw a group of poor men sitting at the gates of the city, and one beggar among them binding his wounds. . . . When I turned my eyes away there grew a great mountain with all kinds of thorns an thistles upon it and evil beasts grazing there, and impure birds and ugly creepy things crawling about it, and a great wind blew all the sudden and flung me onto the mountain . . . but I feared to cry lest the creepy things should enter my mouth and the impure birds should peck at my tongue." S. Y. Agnon, "The Kerchief," trans. I. M. Lask, in *Twenty-one Stories*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (New York: Schocken, 1970), 48.

144. Cf. A. Sulzbach, "Die Romulussage in Talmud und Midrasch," *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* 2, no. 1 (1899): 75–82, esp. 80.

145. Robert, *From Oedipus to Moses*, 107.

146. Heine, *Zum Rabbi von Bacherach* (*"An Edom!"*), in *Sämtliche Schriften*, 1: 271.

147. Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, 199.

148. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 125. For the childhood dream see ibid., 365.

149. Ernst Gombrich, "Freud's Aesthetics," in *Encounter*, ed. Frank Kermode and Melvin J. Lasky, 26 (January 1966): 32. Gombrich, like Freud, came from an assimilated Jewish home. He was born in Vienna in 1909, and in 1936 joined the Aby Warburg Institute in London.

150. Robert de Fiori, "Das neue Rom und das Juden-Ghetto," *Jeschurun* 43 (October 1885): 675. On the journal *Jeschurun* see Mordechai Breuer, *Modernity Within Tradition: The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany*, trans. Elizabeth Petuchowski (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 166–68.

151. De Fiori, "Das neue Rom und das Juden-Ghetto," 675.

152. Ibid., 677. On the historical background and subsequent interpretation of the "risanamento" initiative see L. Scott Lerner, "Narrating over the Ghetto of Rome," *Jewish Social Studies* 8 (Winter–Spring 2002): 1–38. Moses Ezekiel writes in the 1870s: "There was in the Ghetto a little wine shop kept by an old man whom they called Father Abraham. There artichokes were cooked golden brown in a kettle of seething olive oil." Ezekiel, *Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian*, 232.

153. Freud to C. G. Jung, September 19, 1907, in Freud, *Briefe, 1873–1939*, ed. Ernst Freud and Lucie Freud (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1968), 275.

154. Freud to his family, September 21, 1907, Freud, *Briefe, 1873–1939*, 276–7.
155. Freud to Martha Freud, September 25, 1912, Freud, *Briefe, 1873–1939*, 308.
156. Hermann Vogelstein, *Rome* (Jewish Communities Series), trans. Moses Hadas (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1940), 4.
157. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 16.
158. Ibid., 18. One is reminded also of Herder: "Auch hierin ist Rom einzig in seiner Art, ein sonderbares Wesen: man kann u. muß in ihm, wenn mans recht sehen will, sich durch alle Zeiten durchleben [The nature of Rome, also in this respect, is unique and strange: one has to live through all its ages if one truly wants to see it]." Herder to Karl Ludwig von Knebel, December 13, 1788, quoted in Grimm, "'Das Beste in der Erinnerung,'" 160.
159. Georg Simmel, "Rom: Eine ästhetische Analyse," in *Zur Philosophie der Kunst. Philosophische und kunstphilosophische Aufsätze* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1922), 19. On Simmel's *Italienreise*, see Hans Simmel, "Auszüge aus den Lebenserinnerungen," in *Ästhetik und Soziologie um die Jahrhundertwende: Georg Simmel*, ed. Hannes Böhringer and Karlfried Gründer (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), 252.
160. Simmel, "Rom," 20.
161. Cf. ibid., 23.
162. Ibid., 23–24.
163. Ibid., 24
164. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 153.
165. Ibid., 154.
166. Cohen, "Die Liebe veredelt das Tier zum Menschen," in *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 289.
167. Ernst Bloch, "Italien und die Porosität," in *Verfremdungen II: Geographica* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1965), 155, 158.
168. Hermann Vogelstein and Paul Rieger, *Geschichte der Juden in Rom*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Mayer and Müller, 1895–96), 2: 410.
169. Ermanno Loevinson, *Roma Israelitica: Wanderungen eines Juden durch die Kunststätten Roms* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1927), 7.
170. Rose Ausländer, "Rom II," in *Werke*, ed. Helmut Braun (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001), 12: 25.
171. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 126.

CHAPTER 2

1. Michelangelo, *Rime*, ed. Enzo Noè Girardi (Bari, Italy: Laterza, 1960), 55 [G 54]; James M. Saslow, *The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 140; trans. altered.

2. Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990), 214.

3. Cf. Heinrich Heine, *Florentinische Nächte*, *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Klaus Briegleb (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1975), 1: 558–63.

4. See, for instance, Hinrich Seeba, "Die Kinder des Pygmalion: Die Bildlichkeit des Kunstbegriffs bei Heine. Beobachtungen zur Tendenzwende der Ästhetik," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* 50 (1976): 158–202; Robert C. Holub, *Heinrich Heine's Reception of Graecophilia: The Function and Application of the Hellenic Tradition in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1981). Yigal Lossin even goes as far as calling Heine "der erste Neo-Kanaaniter." Cf. Yigal Lossin, *Heinrich Heine: Wer war er wirklich?* (Neu-Isenburg: Melzer, 2006), 27, 383–91.

5. Heine, *Florentinische Nächte*, 587. Likewise, the image of British tourists was less than favorable to Dorothea Schlegel; cf. Heinrich Finke, *Der Briefwechsel Friedrich und Dorothea Schlegels, 1818–1920, während Dorotheas Aufenthalt in Rom* (Munich: Kösel, 1923), 88.

6. Sigmund Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," *Imago: Zeitschrift für die Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften*, ed. Sigmund Freud, Otto Frank, and Hanns Sachs, vol. 3 (1914): 16. Freud to Arnold Zweig, in *Sigmund Freud und Arnold Zweig: Briefwechsel, 1927–1939*, ed. Ernst Freud and Lucie Freud (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1968), 108. See also Freud's letter to his wife, Martha, of September 25, 1912. Sigmund Freud, *Briefe, 1873–1939*, ed. Ernst Freud and Lucie Freud (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1968), 308.

7. Goethe, *Werke*, vol. 49, *Schriften zur Kunst, 1816–1832*, pt. 2 (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1900), 91. Cited after Herbert von Einem, "Goethe und Michelangelo," *Goethe Jahrbuch* 92 (1975), ed. Katl-Heinz Hahn (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1975), 171.

8. Cf. Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 90–142; Sigismund Wiese, *Moses: Drama* (Berlin: Berliner Lesecabinett, 1844). For Rossini's opera see Marcello Conati, "Between Past and Future: The Dramatic World of Rossini in 'Mosè in Egitto' And 'Moise et Pharaon,'" *Nineteenth-Century Music* 4, no. 1 (Summer 1980): 32–48. Another curious example of early Moses literature would be Moritz Rappaport, *Mose: Episches Gedicht* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1842), a poorly written epos dedicated to the great philanthropist Moses Montefiore, "dem Glaubensstreiter und Wahrheitshelden."

9. Arnold J. Band, "The Moses Complex in Modern Jewish Literature," *Judaism* 51, no. 3 (June 2002): 302–14. For Herzl as Moses see Klaus Dethloff, ed., *Theodor Herzl oder der Moses des Fin de siècle* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1986), esp. 54–56. Also the excellent chapter on Sigmund Freud and Theodor Herzl—les deux "homes Moïse" du début de siècle—in Jacques Le Rider, *Modernité viennoise et crises de l'identité* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 273–97.

10. Cf. Bluma Goldstein, *Reinscribing Moses: Heine, Kafka, Freud, and Schoenberg in a European Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 17.

11. Ahad Haam, "Moses," in A. Gelber, ed., *Moses* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1905), 90; Gelber, "Moses der Befreier," ibid., 46.

12. Ahad Haam, "Moses," 102. Also Ahad Haam, *Selected Essays*, ed. Leon Simon (New York: Atheneum, 1981), 327.

13. Hermann Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1929), 64.

14. Maimonides, *The Book of Knowledge: From the Mishna Torah of Maimonides* (treatise 4.2), trans. H. M. Russell and J. Weinberg (Edinburgh: Royal College of Physicians, 1981), 75–76.

15. Y. Avodah Zarah 3:1, 42c. My thanks to Rachel Neis for tracking down this reference for me.

16. Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*, trans. Naomi Goldblum (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press, 1992), esp. 24–25.

17. Cf. Heine, *Romanzero* (Nachwort), *Sämtliche Schriften, 6.1:* 180.

18. Cf. ibid., 184: “Auch schaute die Göttin mitleidig auf mich herab, doch zugleich so trostlos, als wollte sie sagen: siehst du denn nicht, daß ich keine Arme habe und also nicht helfen kann? [And the goddess looked full of pity down on me, but at the same time also inconsolable, as if she wanted to say: Can you not see that I have no arms to help you?].”

19. Cf. André Neher, “The Renaissance of Hebrew in the Twentieth Century,” in *Religion and Literature* 16, no. 1 (Winter 1984): esp. 28. Also, Barbara Mann, “Toward an Understanding of Jewish Imagism,” *Religion and Literature* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1998): 23–45.

20. Shaul Tchernichovski, “Lenokhach Pesel Apollo” (Before a Statue of Apollo), in *Shirim* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1966), 1: 86–87. The verses quoted here are not in order of the poem; the translation of the last two lines follows Barbara Mann, “Visions of Jewish Modernism,” *Modernism/Modernity*, 13, no. 4 (2006): 9. For a complete translation and context see Menachem Ribalow, *The Flowering of Modern Hebrew Literature: A Volume of Literary Evaluation* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1959), 88–122; Eisig Silberschlag, *Saul Tschernichowsky: Poet of Revolt* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968), 97–98.

21. Cf. Martin Buber, “Cheruth: Eine Rede über Jugend und Religion,” in *Der Jude und sein Judentum: Gesammelte Aufsätze und Reden* (Gerlingen: Lambert Schneider, 1993), 126.

22. Neher, “Renaissance of Hebrew,” 28–29.

23. Mann, “Toward an Understanding of Jewish Imagism,” 26. Cf. also Mann, “Visions of Jewish Modernism,” 9–10.

24. Cf. Johann J. Winckelmann, *Beschreibung des Apollon im Belvedere* (1774), ed. Hans Zeller (Zurich: Atlantis Verlag, 1955), 220.

25. Tchernichovski, “Lenokhach Pesel Apollo,” 87.

26. Cf. Yaakov Shavit, *Athens in Jerusalem: Classical Antiquity and Hellenism in the Making of the Modern Secular Jew*, trans. Chaya Naor and Niki Werner (London: Littmann Library, 1997), 148–49.

27. On this subject see the excellent essay by Lydia Goehr, “How to Do More with Words: Two Views of (Musical) Ekphrasis,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 50, no. 4 (October 2010): 389–410.

28. Heraclitus, fragments (DK 22 B 48), *Die Vorsokratiker*, ed. Jaap Mansfeld (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983), 1: 260.

29. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1881), 7: 493–94.

30. Cf. Rilke, “Von einem der die Steine belauscht,” in *Sämtliche Werke: Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1977), 4:347.

31. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 10.241–43, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 241. Cf. Victor I. Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect from Ovid to Hitchcock*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 9.

32. Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2006), 10.

33. Hugo von Hofmannsthal, “Die Frau ohne Schatten,” in *Ausgewählte Werke in zwei Bänden* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1964), 2: 262.

34. Jean-Jacques Rosseau, “Pygmalion: Scéne lyrique,” in *Oeuvres completes*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin *et al.* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1961), 2: 1224. For a detailed interpretations see Hans Sckommodau, *Pygmalion bei Franzosen und Deutschen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1970), esp. 24–28; J. L. Carr, “Pygmalion and the *Philosophes*: The Animated Statue in Eighteenth-Century France,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23, nos. 3–4 (July–December 1960), 239–55; Hermann Schlüter, *Das Pygmalion-Symbol bei Rousseau, Hamann, Schiller: Drei Studien zur Geistesgeschichte der Goethezeit* (Zurich: Juris Verlag, 1968), 11–44; Shierry M. Weber, “The Aesthetics of Rousseau’s Pygmalion,” *MLN* 83, no. 6 (December 1968): 900–918; Louis Marin, “Le moi et les pouvoirs de l’image: Glose sur Pygmalion, scène lyrique (1772) de J.-J. Rousseau,” *MLN* 107, no. 4 (September 1992): 659–72.

35. Levinas, “Art and Its Shadow,” in *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Seán Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 138.

36. Anton Francesco Doni, *I Marmi*, ed. Ezio Chiòrboli (Bari, Italy: Laterza, 1928), 2: 21.

37. *Complete Poetry of Michelangelo*, trans. Saslow, 76 [G 8].

38. See Annegret Dinter, *Der Pygmalion-Stoff in der europäischen Literatur: Rezeptionsgeschichte einer Ovid-Fabel* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1979). For earlier sources of statue love see Lotte Zade, *Der Troubadour Jufre Rudel und das Motiv der Fernliebe in der Weltliteratur* (Greifswald: Universität Greifswald, 1919), 53–55. For the Spanish context and bibliographical references see the excellent study by Irene Gòmez Castellano, "*Masks and Self-Portraits: The Poetic Self in Spanish Rococo Poetry,"* Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2008, esp. 38–85.

39. Cf. Vasari, *Vita di Michelangelo*, ed. Ivo Bomba (Pordenone: Edizioni Studio Tesi, 1993), 52–53. Strozzi's stanza is by now familiar: "La Notte, che tu vedi in sì dolci atti/ Dormir, fu da un Angelo scolpita *In questo sasso; e, perchè dorme, ha vita:* Destala, se no'l credi, e parleratti [Night, which you see in such sweet gestures *Sleeping, was sculpted by an Angel* In this stone; and, because she sleeps, she lives: / Wake her, if you don't believe, and she will talk to you]."

40. See Robert J. Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art* (New York: Gramercy Publishing, 1961), esp. 223–24; Charles de Tolnay, *The Art and Thought of Michelangelo*, trans. Nan Buranelli (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 26–27.

41. Michelangelo, G 152, quoted in Robert J. Clements, *Poetry of Michelangelo* (New York: New York University Press, 1965), 61.

42. Cf. Paul Barolsky, "As in Ovid, So in Renaissance Art," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 451–74. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005), 76. Pater was here attentive to Michelangelo's resurrective desires and repeated self-characterization as a tragic phoenix. See Clements, *Poetry of Michelangelo*, 277 [G 108]: "Nor do I hope, like a phoenix in the sun, / Ever to return").

43. Heine, "Zum Lazarus," *Sämtliche Schriften*, 6.1: 202

44. Heine, *Florentinische Nächte*, 572.

45. Michel Serres, *Statues: Le second livre des fondations* (Paris: Flammarion, 1989), 328.

46. Rilke, "Von einem der die Steine belauscht," 347.

47. Rousseau, "Pygmalion. Scéne lyrique," 1225; cf. Longfellow, *Michael Angelo: A Fragment*, in *The Writings of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 11 Volumes* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1886), 8: 174. On the Pygmalion motif in Longfellow see also Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength: The Reception of Michelangelo in Late Victorian England* (Aldershot Hants, England: Ashgate, 1998), 158–59.

48. Simmel, "Über die Liebe," 68, 74.

49. Heine, "Buch der Lieder," *Sämtliche Schriften*, 1: 15.

50. Serres, *Statues*, 52.

51. Heine, "Der Apollogott," *Romanzero*, *Sämtliche Schriften*, 6.1: 35. Thus, Helmut Mojem rightly notes about the poem: "Die Selbstdarstellung Gottes wird ironisch gebrochen, der Gott eigentlich entgöttert [God's self-representation is fractured in irony, in fact, God himself is un-deified]." Mojem, "Heinrich Heine: Der Apollogott. Eine Interpretation," *Wirkendes Wort: Deutsche Sprache in Forschung und Lehre* 35, no. 5 (September–October 1985): 273. For a recent, most comprehensive study on this subject see Regina Grundmann, *"Rabbi Faibisch, Was auf Hochdeutsch heißt Apollo": Judentum, Dichtertum, Schlemihltum in Heinrich Heines Werk* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2008).

52. Cf. Sigmund Freud, "Das Unheimliche," *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Anna Freud (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1969) (Werke aus den Jahren, 1917–20), 12: 245–47. On the other hand, Freud considers the Pygmalion story itself a harmless fairy tale: "Auch die Belebung der schönen Statue des Pygmalion wird man kaum als unheimlich empfinden [Even the coming-to-life of Pygmalion's beautiful statue will hardly strike us as uncanny]" (ibid., 260). On Freud and the Pygmalean uncanny see Hélène Cixou, "Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud's *Das Unheimliche* (the 'Uncanny')," *New Literary History* 7, no. 3 (Spring 1976): 525–48; Sara Kofman, *Freud and Fiction*, trans. S. Wykes (London: Polity Press, 1991), 119–58.

53. Cf. Heine, "Buch der Lieder," *Sämtliche Schriften, 1*: 16.

54. Marthe Robert, *From Oedipus to Moses: Freud's Jewish Identity* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 143.

55. Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 2, *The Years of Maturity, 1901–1919* (New

York: Basic Books, 1955), 363–69. See also Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for our Time* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 605; Emanuel Rice, *Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 124–27; Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 74–79. It would be futile to give full account of the vast literature surrounding this subject. *American Imago* devoted an entire issue to Freud's Moses (*American Imago* 60 [Spring 2003]) and featured earlier essays by Rudy Bremer, "Freud and Michelangelo's Moses," *American Imago* 33 (Spring 1976): 60–75; and David Wagenknecht, "Recasting Moses: Narrative and Drama in the Dumbshow of Freud's 'Moses of Michelangelo,'" *American Imago* 52 (Winter 1995): 439–61. See also Gerald L. Bruns, "Freud, Structuralism, and 'The Moses of Michelangelo,'" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 33 (Autumn 1974): 13–18; and the classic work by Peter Fuller, *Art and Psychoanalysis* (London: Writers and Readers, 1980). See also the fine study by Francesco Saverio Trincia, *Sigmund Freud e il Mosè di Michelangelo: Tra psicoanalisi e filosofia* (Rome: Donzelli, 2000). Most recently, Mary Bergstein has treated the subject with great elegance and authority: Bergstein, *Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography, and the History of Art* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), esp. 34–114.

56. Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York, Vintage Books, 1967). On the deeper significance of Freud's initial intention to publish the work as a "historical novel" see Pier Cesare Bori, "Una pagina inedita de Freud: La premessa al romanzo storico su Mosè," *L'estasi del Profeta ed altri saggi tra ebraismo e cristianesimo dale origini sino al "Mosè" di Freud* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1989), 237–58; and Bori, "Il *Mosè* di Freud: Per una prima valutazione storico-critica," ibid., 179–222, esp. 197. Also Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses*, 16–18; and Yerushalmi, "Freud on the 'Historical Novel': From the Manuscript Draft (1934) of *Moses and Monotheism*," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 70 (1989): 375–95. Note also the discussion in Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*, 144–67. Assmann explicitly argues for the continuities between Freud's Moses and the earlier tradition of Moses literature, especially Schiller (ibid., 146). Also, Le Rider, *Modernité viennoise*, 279–82. For an early inquiry into Freud's Jewish identity see Ernst Simon, "Freud, the Jew," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 2 (1957): 270–305; and Simon, "Freud und Moses," *Entscheidung zum Judentum: Essays und Vorträge* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980), 196–211.

57. Moshe Gresser, "Sigmund Freud's Jewish Identity: Evidence from His Correspondence," *Modern Judaism* 11, no. 2 (May 1991): 227, 236. Also, Gresser, *Dual Allegiance: Freud as a Modern Jew* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), esp. 163–68.

58. Rice, *Freud and Moses*, 128; David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: D. van Nostrand, 1958), 129.

59. Cf. Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 248, 260. Leo Strauss, "Freud on Moses and Monotheism" (1958), in *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity: Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought*, ed. Kenneth Hart Green (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 295–96. For the theme of masculinity in the Jewish imagination of Moses see also Eric Zakim, "The Dialectics of Nerves and Muscles: Schoenberg's Moses and the New Jew," *Opera Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 455–77.

60. Ilse Grubrich-Simitis, *Freuds Moses-Studie als Tagtraum: Ein biographischer Essay* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2009), 76.

61. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses*, 74–79, esp. 77.

62. ". . . e seguitino gli Ebrei di andare, come fanno ogni sabato, a schiera e maschi e femine, come gli storni, a visitarlo [il Moisè] ed adorarlo, che non cosa umana ma divina adoreranno." Vasari, *Vita di Michelangelo*, 26–27. Linking Vasari's language to the Dante's, Barolsky writes: "Thus the Jews in Vasari's procession are vicious like those Dante beholds in hell." Paul Barolsky, *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and Its Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 95. Cf. also Dante, *Purgatorio* 10.100–103.

63. Cf. Barolsky, *Michelangelo's Nose*, 43–44. Also, Erwin Panofsky, "The Neo-Platonic Movement and Michelangelo," in *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 191–92.

64. Attilio Milano, *Storia degli ebrei in Italia* (Torino: Einaudi, 1963), 238.

65. Ermanno Loevinson, *Roma Israelitica: Wanderungen eines Juden durch die Kunststätten Roms* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1927), 65–66.

66. Cf. ibid., 66: “Die Wirkung der Mosesstatue auf den Beschauer ist eine derartige, daß er nicht das Grabmal eines Papstes, sondern ein solches für den Stifter der jüdischen Religion vor sich zu haben wähnt [The statue of the Moses has such a strong effect on the beholder that it no longer appears as a monument for the pope, but as one for the founder of Judaism itself].” Also, Asciano Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (1553), ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: Studio Per Edizionit Scelte, 1998), 47.

67. Loevinson, *Roma Israelitica*, 67.

68. Ernst Gombrich, “Freud’s Aesthetics,” *Encounter*, ed. Frank Kermode and Melvin J. Lasky, 26 (January 1966): 33.

69. Loevinson, *Roma Israelitica*, 67.

70. See for instance, Stephen Bertman, “The Antisemitic Origin of Michelangelo’s Horned Moses,” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 27, no. 4 (Summer 2009): 95–106.

71. Henry George, “Moses,” *Ost und West* 1, no. 3 (March 1901): 161–76. Originally as *Moses: A Lecture*, delivered at St. Andrew’s Hall, Glasgow, Scotland, December 28, 1884 (New York: Sterling, 1897).

72. Theodor Zlocisti, “Grundakkorde jungjüdischer Kunst,” *Ost und West* 2, no. 4 (April 1902): 227–34.

73. Bernhard Münz, “Moses im Lichte der jüdischen Volksseele,” *Ost und West* 2, no. 1 (January 1902): 10. Münz was also the author of *Marie Eugenie delle Grazie als Dichterin und Denkerin* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1902). Note his discussion of delle Grazie’s *Italische Vignetten*, particularly, her poems on Rome (ibid., 14–20).

74. Henry George et al., *Moses* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1905); Hugo Bergmann, ed., *Worte Mosis* (Minden: Bruns Verlag, 1913).

75. G. Kutna, “Moses in der bildenden Kunst,” *Ost und West* 9, nos. 8–9 (August 1909): 518.

76. Ibid.

77. Josef Carlebach, “Die biblische Gestaltenwelt Michelangelos,” *Menorah* 8–9 (August 1924): 15.

78. Hermann Vogelstein and Paul Rieger, *Geschichte der Juden in Rom*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Mayer and Müller, 1895–96), 2: 122. For the English edition see Hermann Vogelstein, *Rome* (Jewish Community Series), trans. Moses Hadas (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1940). Having escaped Germany in the 1930s, Vogelstein wrote the English version of his book after he had lost his entire library and research files. It may not be pure coincidence that, in the 1890s, Albert Mosse sent his daughter Martha to study with Vogelstein, a longterm friend of the Mosse family, who may have contributed to the family’s Italophilia. See Werner E. Mosse, “Albert Mosse: A Jewish Judge in Imperial Germany,” *LBIYB 28* (1983): 169–84, esp. 177–78. On the other hand, Vogelstein also professed virulent opposition to Zionism in the early years. Vogelstein, “Der Zionismus, eine Gefahr für die gedeihliche Entwicklung des Judentums,” *Mitteilungen des Liberalen Vereins für Angelegenheiten der jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin*, nos. 22–23 (1906): 1–14. Vogelstein and Rieger wrote their history of Italian Jewry in response to a prize contest initiated by the then Vienna-based Moritz Rapoport Foundation in 1890. The award was split between them and Abraham Berliner, a noted Bible scholar at the Berlin Rabbinical Seminary, whose two-volume *Geschichte der Juden in Rom* appeared in 1893. See Abraham Berliner, *Geschichte der Juden in Rom von der ältesten Zeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1893). It is interesting to note that Berliner’s *Geschichte der Juden in Rom* appeared in Hebrew translation as early as 1913: A. Berliner, *Divrei yammei ha-Yehudim be-Roma* (Vilna: Biblioteka, 1913). Berliner’s first “Italian Journey” took six months (February–July 1873) and included extended visits to Trieste, Florence, Rome, Livorno, Pisa, Parma, Bologna, Turin, Milan, and Verona. Armed with a letter from the archbishop of Vienna, Berliner, an Orthodox Jew, was granted access to the Vatican archives and libraries, though there is no record of him visiting the Sistine Chapel. His Italian diaries were published as part of Berliner’s collected works. See Abraham Berliner, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol 1, *Italien* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1913). Interestingly, all proceeds of the book were to be donated to the “Ghettokinder in Rom.” Berliner, who was fluent in Italian, seems to have traveled to Italy frequently in subsequent years and maintained correspondence with many Italian Jewish dignitaries and community leaders. His student, Moritz Stern, was among the first to consult the Vatican’s “secret archives”

for a detailed study on Jewish Catholic relations. See Moritz Stern, *Urkündliche Beiträge über die Stellung der Päpste zu den Juden mit Benutzung des päpstlichen Geheimarchivs zu Rom* (Kiel: H. Fiencke, 1893). See also the correspondence in the Albert Berliner Archive, Jewish National Library, Jerusalem, Arc 4.1662.

79. Kurt Walter Goldschmidt, "Michelangelos Moses in San Pietro in Vincoli (Rom)," *Der Morgen* 2 (May 1936): 66. On Goldschmidt's "conversion" to Zionism, see also Peter M. Baldwin, "Zionist and Non-Zionist Jews in the Last Years before the Nazi Regime," *LBIYB 27* (1982): 87–108, esp. 94.

80. Cf. Isidore Singer and Jacques Kahn, "Daniel Osiris," in *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1901–6), 9: 441.

81. See, for instance, Heinz Mosche Graupe, "Kant und das Judentum," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 13 (1961): 308–33; Christoph Schulte, "Kant in der Philosophie der jüdischen Aufklärung," in *Kant und die Berliner Auflklärung: Akten des IX. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, ed. Volker Gerhardt *et al.* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 204–13.

82. Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," 16–17.

83. See Peter Ucko, "Unprovenanced Material Culture and Freud's Collection of Antiquities," *Journal of Material Culture* 6, no. 3 (2001): 269–322. On the Dying Slave, see Freud to Wilhelm Fliess (December 6, 1896): "I have now adorned my room with plaster casts of Florentine statues." Jeffrey M. Masson, ed., *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887–1904* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 214; also Bergstein, *Mirrors of Memory*, 45. Bergstein rightly observes that "Freud persistently saw his own Jewish origins in the world of classical antiquity." Bergstein, "The Dying Slave at Berggasse 19," *American Imago* 60 (Spring 2003): 12.

84. Cf. Helmut Prang, *Goethe und die Kunst der italienischen Renaissance* (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1967), 249; Gottfried von Einem, "Goethe und Michelangelo," in *Goethe Jahrbuch* 92 (1975): 165–94. For additional sources, see also Gerd Blum, "Michelangelo als neuer Mose: Zur Rezeptionsgeschichte von Michelangelos *Moses*: Vasari, Nietzsche, Freud, Thomas Mann," *Schöner neuer Mensch II* (Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft 53, no. 1), ed. Josef Früchtl (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2008), 100.

85. Dante, *Purgatorio* 10.83–96.

86. Cf. Vasari, *Vita di Michelangelo*, 26. For Strozzi on the *Pietà*, ibid., 16.

87. For a compelling analysis of this Vasarian episode see Peter Armour, "Michelangelo's Moses: A Text in Stone," *Italian Studies* 48 (1993): esp. 38. Freud's postcard to Ferenczi is discussed in Bergstein, *Mirrors of Memory*, 110–14.

88. Cf. Doni, *I marmi*, 2: 20–21.

89. Michelangelo, trans. Saslow, 140 [G 54]. For the speech of Day and Night see ibid., 84 [G 14].

90. Cf. George L. Hersey, *Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009)*, 95; Stoichita, *Pygmalion Effect*, 114.

91. Wilhelm Jensen, *Gradiva: Ein pompeijanisches Phantasiestück*, printed in *Sigmund Freud: Der Wahn und die Träume in W. Jensens "Gradiva" mit dem Text der Erzählung von Wilhelm Jensen*, ed. Bernd Urban (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1973), 60. Also Sigmund Freud, "Der Wahn und die Träume in W. Jensens 'Gradiva,'" in *Gesammelte Werke*, 7: 45–46, 81–82. For an instructive analysis of Freud's Gradiva text, see Sara Kofman, *The Childhood of Art: An Interpretation of Freud's Aesthetics*, trans. Winifred Woodhull (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 173–99; Sander L. Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Idenity in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), esp. 141–57; Sabine Hake, "Saxa loquuntur: Freud's Archaeology of Text," in *Boundary 2* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1993): esp. 158–68.

92. Cf. Jensen, *Gradiva*, 28.

93. Cf. ibid., 31.

94. Peter L. Rudnytsky, "Freud's Pompeian Fantasy," in Sander L. Gilman *et al.* (eds.), *Reading Freud's Reading* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1994), 218.

95. Cf. Jensen, *Gradiva*, 56.

96. Rudnytzky, "Freud's Pompeian Fantasy," 217; Jacques Derrida, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression," trans. Eric Prenowitz, in *Diacritics* 25, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 54: "In his reading of Jensen's

Gradiva, Freud avows being himself haunted." Also Kofman, *Freud and Fiction*, 83–117.

97. On Freud's interpretive "overdetermination" of Moses' index finger see Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 168–69, 173.

98. Jacob Burckhardt, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 10, *Der Cicerone: Eine Anleitung zum Genuß der Kunstwerke Italiens* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1959), 2: 73.

99. Herman Grimm, *Leben Michelangelos* (Vienna: Phaidon Verlag, 1900), 320.

100. Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, vol. 3, *Der Künstler und seine Werke* (Berlin: G. Grote, 1912), 255–56.

101. Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, "Michelangelo und seine Statuen," in *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Hans Zeller and Alfred Zäch (Bern: Benteli Verlag, 1963), 331.

102. Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," 22. Cf. Freud, "Nachtrag zur Arbeit über den Moses des Michelangelo," in *Gesammelte Werke* (Werke aus den Jahren, 1925–31), 14: 322. Also Sander Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin-de-siècle* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 138–39.

103. Cf. Gombrich, "Freud's Aesthetics," 33. For a account of Freud's taste in art see Jack J. Spector, *The Aesthetics of Freud: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).

104. Cf. Rice, *Freud and Moses*, 125–27.

105. Simon, "Freud und Moses," 202.

106. Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," 34.

107. Ibid.

108. Sara Kofman thus speaks of an image "psychically 'truer' than the Biblical version." Kofman, *Childhood of Art*, 94. Likewise, Laurie Schneider Adams speaks of a "personal revision of history" in Freud. Laurie Schneider Adams, *Art and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 158. Resituating Freud in the context of Viennese modernism Abigail Gilman surmises: "The artist is able to bring Moses to life for Freud, but the textual reminiscence must be killed in the process." Abigail Gilman, *Viennese Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 41. Gilman offers an excellent discussion of Freud's writings on Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Moses. See ibid., 24–53.

109. Cf. Carl Justi, *Michelangelo: Neue Beiträge zur Erklärung seiner Werke* (Berlin: Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1909), 208: "die Umwandlung des Gesetzgebers und Überbringers einer göttlichen Lebensordnung in den zornigen, strafenden Richter [the transformation of the legislator and harbinger of a divine order of life into a wrathful, punishing judge]."

110. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica* II, II, q. 179; Dante, *Purgatorio* 27.100–108. See also Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, 3: 288–90.

111. Condivi, *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti*, 47.

112. Vasari, *Vita di Michelangelo*, 26.

113. Hippolyte Taine, *Voyage en Italie*, vol. 1 of *A Rome* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 1990), 48.

114. Karl Borinski, *Die Rätsel Michelangelos: Michelangelo und Dante* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1908), 123.

115. Romain Rolland, *Michelangelo*, trans. Frederick Street (New York: Duffield, 1915), 105–6. The translation is of an expanded version of *Vie de Michel-Ange*, which Rolland published in the series *La maîtres de l'art* in 1913. Rolland's description of the *Moses* is, in fact, absent in the earlier edition. Freud had great admiration for Rolland, as his letter to him of January 29, 1926, suggests: "Lange Jahre, ehe ich Sie sah, hatte ich Sie als Künstler und als Apostel der Menschenliebe geehrt [For many years, even before I met you, I valued you as an artist and as an apostle of love for humanity]." Freud, *Briefe, 1873–1939*, 379. On other Jewish admirers of Rolland see Mark H. Gelber, "Complexities of Jewish Identity: Stefan Zweig and Romain Rolland," *Transversal: Zeitschrift für jüdische Studien* 7 (2006): 27–40.

116. Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, 3: 255.

117. Ibid., 258.

118. Heinse, "Aphorismen: Von der Italienischen Reise," *Sämtliche Werke*, 8.1: 463–64. Even Ferdinand Gregorovius viewed in the Moses the "Gestalt des Hebräertums." Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Der Ghetto und*

die Juden Roms: Mit einem Geleitwort von Leo Baeck (Berlin: Schocken, 1935), 77.

119. Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," 36.

120. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 144.

121. Ibid., 147. Freud, in this respect, rejected the then fashionable "Muskeljudentum," coined by Max Nordau in 1900 and capturing the desire of Zionism to reconnect with the glorious past of Jewish "tiefbrünstige, strammgliedrige, kühnblickende Männer." Nordau, "Muskeljudentum," *Max Nordau's Zionistische Schriften* (Cologne: Jüdischer Verlag, 1909), 380. To put this in context with the language of nationalism see Alon Confino, "Freud, Moses, and Modern Nationhood," in *New Perspectives on Freud's "Moses and Monotheism,"* ed. Ruth Ginsburg and Ilana Pardes (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006), 165–75.

122. The most significant of the veritable flurry of book-length studies on Jewish aniconism to emerge in the last few years include Lionel Kochan, *Beyond the Graven Image: A Jewish View* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Kalman Bland, *The Artless Jew: Mediaeval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Margaret Olin, *The Nation Without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

123. In fact, as Michael Mack has recently argued, Freud sought to offer an alternate version of the German enlightement, reversing the stakes of the "savage Jew" and the "tame Gentile." See Michael Mack, "Freud's Other Enlightenment: Turning the Tables on Kant," *New German Critique 85, special issue* (Winter 2002): 3–31.

124. Peter Armour, "Michelangelo's Moses: A Text in Stone," *Italian Studies* 48 (1993): 18–43, esp. 40.

125. Cf. Heine, "Geständnisse," in *Sämtliche Schriften* 6.1: 480–81. Cf. Thomas Mann, *Das Gesetz*, ed. Käte Hamburger (Berlin: Ullstein Verlag: 1964), 7: "Er selbst hatte Lust zu seines Vaters Blut, wie der Steinmetz Lust hat zu dem ungestalten Block, woraus er feine und hohe Gestalt, seiner Hände Werk, zu metzen gedenkt [He himself desired his father's blood, as a stonecutter desires the unformed rock that he intends to carve into a work of his hands, high and sublime in form]." Note that Barbara Johnson, in *Moses and Multiculturalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2010), 85–86, argues for the specific Pygmalean tone of this passage and, in fact, of Freud's essay altogether.

126. Freud, "Der Moses des Michelangelo," 22–23.

127. Freud to Zweig, December 16, 1934, quoted in Harold P. Blum, "Freud and the Figure of Moses: The Moses of Freud," in *Reading Freud's Reading*, ed. Sander L. Gilman *et al.* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 125. Ominously, Freud's first Moses essay in *Imago* is followed by a study, "Der Homunculus," by Herbert Silberer, *Imago* 3 (1914): 37–79.

128. Scholarly sources on Revere (1812–89) are scarce, as they are on the "Jewish" Risorgimento. I have relied on Amedeo Revere, ed., *Giuseppe Revere: Scritti vari raccolti* (Rome: Casa Editrice Selecta, 1927); Roberto Maria Dainotto, "The Jewish Risorgimento and the Questione Romana," in *The Italian Jewish Experience*, ed. Thomas P. DiNapoli (Stony Brook, NY: Forum Italicum, 2000), 107–15; Gina Formiggini, *Stella d'Italia, Stella di David: Gli ebrei dal Risorgimento alla Resistenza* (Milan: Mursio, 1970), esp. 19–21, 32–33; also Salo W. Baron, "The Revolution of 1848 and Jewish Scholarship: Part I, France, the United States, and Italy," in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 18 (1948–49): esp. 30–50; Salvatore Foà, *Gli Ebrei nel Risorgimento italiano* (Assisi, Italy: Carucci, 1978); Ester Capuzzo, *Gli Ebrei dal Risorgimento alla scelta Sionista* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2004), esp. 44–45, 77–78; Francesca Sofia, "Su assimilazione e autocoscienza ebraica nell' Italia liberale," in *Italia Judaica*, vol. 6, *Gli ebrei nell'Italia unita, 1870–1945* (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1993), 32–47; Elizabeth Schächter, *The Jews of Italy, 1848–1915: Between Tradition and Transformation* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2011), esp. 14–20. On David Levi, who was the author of *La mente di Michelangelo* (1890), see Augusto Comba, "Giuseppe David Levi profeta del Risorgimento," in *Isacco Artom e gli Ebrei italiani dai Risorgimenti al fascismo*, ed. Aldo A. Mola (Foggia: Bastogi, 2002), 109–16.

129. Giuseppe Revere, "Roma," in *Opere complete in parte inedite o rare*, vol. 3: *Versi*, ed. A. Róndani (Roma: Forzani, 1898), 187.

130. Revere, "Dante Alighieri," ibid., 378.

131. Revere, "Michelangiolo," ibid., 14.

132. Revere, "A Michelangelo," ibid., 145.

133. Revere, *Osiride* (proem), *ibid.*, 245–46.

134. Cf. David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgaro Mortara* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 171.
135. Revere, *Osiride*, 252.
136. Cf. Revere, *Persone ed Ombre* ("Al lettore"), *Opere complete* 3: 179–80.
137. Revere, *Osiride* (proem), 262.
138. Ibid., 262–63.
139. Cf. ibid., 265; 279. Motivated by strong Christian sensibilities, Mazzini did indeed frequently refer to Moses as a lawgiver and leader, albeit "with the fatal restriction that a single people were God's elect." Likewise, he used the image of idolatry admonishing his followers not "to transform yourselves from believers into idolaters by accepting any privileged interpreters between yourselves and God." Giuseppe Mazzini, *The Duties of Man and Other Essays*, trans. Ella Noyes *et al.* (London: Dent Dutton, 1966), 46, 319.
140. Ibid., 280–81.
141. Cf. Max Wiener, *Jüdische Religion im Zeitalter der Emanzipation* (Berlin: Philo Verlag, 1933), 147.
142. Cf. Karl Gutzkow, *Der Zauberer von Rom: Roman in neun Büchern* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1858–61), 1: 5.
143. S. L. Steinheim to A. D. Twesten, March 10, 1848, in Salomon Ludwig Steinheim und Johanna Steinheim, *Briefe*, ed. Jutta Dick and Julius H. Schoeps (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 1996), 69; also Steinheim to Assing, September 4, 1848, ibid., 217: "Ich werde mich schwerlich wieder vom gelobten Lande Italien auf längere Zeit trennen [It will be difficult for me to part for a while with the promised land of Italy]." On the life of Salomon Ludwig (Levy) Steinheim see Hans-Joachim Schoeps, "Salomon Ludwig Steinheim: Lebenslauf, Werk, Einordnung," in *Salomon Ludwig Steinheim zum Gedenken*, ed. Hans-Joachim Schoeps (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 3–28.
144. Johanna Steinheim to Ludmilla (Assing), August 15, 1850, Steinheim, *Briefe*, 221–22.
145. Steinheim to Twesten, April 30, 1857, Steinheim, *Briefe*, 80.
146. S. L. Steinheim, "Heimliche Taufe und öffentlicher Kinderraub an Edgar Mortara von der katholischen Geistlichkeit in Bologna verübt, und von Papst Pio IX bestäthigt" (1860?), Salomon Ludwig Steinheim Archiv, MS 30 (Steinheim Institut, Duisburg, Germany); Steinheim, "Giambattista Casti: Die redenden Tiere, übersetzt und nachgedichted" (June 1847), Steinheim Archiv, MS 34. Clearly, Steinheim was versed enough in Italian to read original sources and translate substantial parts into German.
147. Cf. Peter Gradenwitz, "Steinheim als musischer Gesellschafter," in *"Philo des 19. Jahrhunderts": Studien zu Salomon Ludwig Steinheim*, ed. Julius Schoeps *et al.* (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 1993), 213.
148. See Wiener, *Jüdische Religion im Zeitalter der Emanzipation*, 147–65; Julius Guttmann, *Die Philosophie des Judentums* (1933; reprint, Wiesbaden: Fourier, 1985), 337–42; Albert Lewkowitz, *Das Judentum und die geistigen Strömungen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Breslau: Marcus, 1935), 385–91.
149. S. L. Steinheim, "Moses und Michel Angelo," in *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, ed. L[eopold] Lucas, 5 (1902): 57–77. Lucas dates the manuscript to 1857, arguing that it originated in a series of evening conversations in the Villa Unger-Sabatier in Florence (the Steinheim's summer residence), beginning on November 10, 1857. Schoeps dates the finished manuscript of *Streifereien durch Rom und seine Campagna* to 1859. See, Schoeps, "Salomon Ludwig Steinheim: Lebenslauf, Werk, Einordnung," 23, n. 58, and 351. Leopold Lucas, Steinheim's grandnephew, was the rabbi of Glogau, Germany, and one of the founders of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* in 1902. Hoping to defend Judaism against the attacks of Christian theologians, his selection of Steinheim's piece may not be accidental but indeed apologetic. See Christian Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums und protestantische Theologie im wilhelminischen Deutschland: Ein Schrei ins Leere?* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 80.
150. Cf. Steinheim to Assing, March 29, 1850, Steinheim, *Briefe*, 244. Also Hans Otto Horch, "Die Sendung des Doctor Gad: Salomon Ludwig Steinheims Beitrag zur jüdischen Belletristik," in *"Philo des 19. Jahrhunderts,"* ed. Schoeps et al., 159–76, esp. 170–71. For a published excerpt of the novel see *Salomon Ludwig Steinheim zum Gedenken*, ed. Schoeps, 223–27.
151. Steinheim, "Moses und Michelangelo," 66.
152. Salomon Ludwig Steinheim, *Die Offenbarung nach dem Lehrbegriffe der Synagoge*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Leopold Schnauss, 1856), 441, 445.

153. Steinheim, “Moses und Michelangelo,” 66.
154. Ibid., 69–70; Steinheim, *Die Offenbarung nach dem Lehrbegriffe der Synagoge*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1863), 220.
155. Steinheim, “Moses und Michelangelo,” 70.
156. Ibid., 72.
157. Ibid., 71.
158. Ibid., 74.
159. Cf. Ruth Melinkoff, *The Horned Moses in Medieval Art and Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970).
160. Cf. Steinheim, “Moses und Michelangelo,” 75–77.
161. Ibid., 76.
162. Rilke, “Von einem der die Steine belauscht,” 349.
163. Cf. Hermann Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1923), 2: 303.
164. Steinheim, *Die Offenbarung nach dem Lehrbegriffe der Synagoge*, 3: 204–5.
165. Cf. ibid., 3: 205; also 2: 446.
166. Cf. Steinheim, *Die Offenbarung nach dem Lehrbegriffe der Synagoge*, 2: 219.
167. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 261.
168. Ibid. 301.
169. Ibid. 302.
170. Ibid., 296.

CHAPTER 3

1. Michelangelo, *Rime*, ed. Enzo Noè Girardi (Bari, Italy: Laterza, 1960), 50 [G 49]; James M. Saslow, *The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 133 [G 49].

2. Walter Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," in *Illuminationen: Ausgewählte Schriften 1* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977), 116–17.

3. Martin Buber, "Alfred Mombert" (1922), in *Kampf um Israel. Reden und Schriften (1921–1932)* (Berlin: Schocken, 1933), 205.

4. Ibid., 203. On Mombert's Aeon see Max Fischer, "Alfred Mombert (1872–1942)," in *Monatshefte* 44, nos. 4–5 (April–May 1952): 207–11.

5. "Aus der Selbsterfahrung der ewigen Schöpfung stammt die Bewegung des Schöpfergottes auf der Decke der Sistina." Ibid., 204. By contrast, Otto Weininger, who greatly admired the works of Michelangelo and traveled to Rome and Sicily only a few months before his suicide in 1903, interpreted the Sistine creation as the awakening of humanity at the *exclusion* of Judaism: "Und wer es dennoch auch jetzt nicht wüßte, was unjüdisch und was jüdisch ist, der versenke sich in den eben zum Leben erwachenden Adam des Michelangelo . . . , in jenen Menschen, in dem alles noch als Möglichkeit liegt, aber auch alle Möglichkeiten wirklich liegen—mit Ausnahme der einen: Des Judentums [And whoever is still uncertain about what is un-Jewish and what is Jewish should contemplate the awakening Adam of Michelangelo, the man in whom all possibilities are possible—all except one: the possibility of Judaism]." Suspended between beginning and end, the Jew, for Weininger, cannot begin (act) but only "trade." Cf. Otto Weininger, *Taschenbuch und Briefe an einen Freund* (Leipzig: E. P. Tal Verlag, 1919), 62–63. On Weiniger's Jewish self-hatred see Theodor Lessing, *Jüdischer Selbsthaß* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930), 80–100.

6. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 176–77.

7. Ibid., 177–78.

8. Cf. Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 46.

9. Ibid., 243–44.

10. Ibid., 244.

11. What Rosenzweig here anticipates is the notion of the artwork's own time (Eigenzeit). See in particular Hans Georg Gadamer, "Die Wahrheit des Kunstwerks," in *Gesammelte Werke, vol. 3, Neuere Philosophie* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1987), 256. Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 270.

12. Blanchot, *Space of Literature*, 247.

13. Franz Rosenzweig, "Zur Encyclopedia Judaica: Zum zweiten Band mit einer Anmerkung zum Anthropomorphismus," in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1984), 3: 741. The best inquiry into Rosenzweig's understanding of idolatry and art remains Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), esp. 21–25 for this passage.

14. Rosenzweig, "Zur Encyclopedia Judaica," 741.

15. Hermann Cohen, "Innere Beziehungen der Kantischen Philosophie zum Judentum," in *Jüdische Schriften*, vol. 1, *Ethische und religiöse Grundfragen* (Berlin: C. A. Schwetschke, 1924), 295.

16. Hermann Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1929)*, 78.

17. Cf. ibid., 79–80.

18. Cf. Matteo Burioni and Sabine Feser, eds., *Giorgio Vasari. Kunsttheorie und Kunstgeschichte: Eine Einführung in die Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Künstler anhand der Proömien* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 2004), 102–3. Thus, Jacob Burckhardt compares Michelangelo's art to the "weltschaffendes Ich" of philosophy. Burckhardt, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 10, *Der Cicerone: Eine Anleitung zum Genuß der Kunstwerke Italiens* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1959), 2: 78.

19. Franz Rosenzweig, "Einleitung in die Akademieausgabe der jüdische Schriften Hermann Cohens," in Cohen, *Jüdische Schriften*, 1: xliii. Rosenzweig refers here specifically to Cohen's insights on Dante, the Sistine Chapel, and on Michelangelo's *Moses* (as well as on the Jewish subjects of Rembrandt).

20. Hermann Cohen to Louis and Helene Lewandowsky, August 19, 1871, in Cohen, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, ed. Bertha and Bruno Strauß (Berlin: Schocken, 1939), 32.

21. Hermann Cohen to Mathilde Burg, October, 31, 1885, ibid., 53–54.

22. Cohen to Burg, November 25, 1885, ibid., 56. Interestingly, Cohen shared this passion with Sigmund Freud.

23. Cohen, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, 54.

24. Cf. ibid., 76–77. Buber spent the months between September 1905 and June 1906 in Florence, planning to work on his *Habilitationsschrift*, which, in the German academic system, was required to attain the *venia legendi*. The project failed, though Buber was productive in other ways, including the completion of his *Rabbi Nachman* (1906). See Martin Buber, *Briefwechsel aus sieben Jahrzehnten*, vol. 1 (1897–1918), ed. Grete Schaeder (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1972), 41, 233–41. Buber's wife Paula (Winkler), who published under the pseudonym Georg Munk, later fictionalized some of their Italian experiences in her novel *Irregang* (Errant Paths), set in early nineteenth-century Florence. See Georg Munk, *Irregang. Roman* (Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1923). See also Adolf von Grolman, "Georg Munk," in *Das Inselschiff* 7, no. 2 (1926): 81–91.

25. Cf. Cohen to Leo Munk, October 1, 1906; and Cohen to Munk, March 17, 1907, in Cohen, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, 76–77.

26. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 62.

27. The aesthetic dimension of revelation in modern Jewish thought has been most extensively analyzed in Zachary Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation: Aesthetics and Modern Jewish Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), a study whose insights loom large behind the present book. Cohen's aesthetics has received more attention in recent scholarship. See, among others, Hans Ludwig Ollig, *Religion und Freiheitsglaube: Zur Problematik von Hermann Cohens später Religionsphilosophie* (Königstein: Anton Hain, 1979), esp. 172–204; Andrea Poma, *The Critical Philosophy of Hermann Cohen*, trans. John Denton (1988; reprint, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), esp. 131–55; Irene Kajon, *Ebraismo e sistema di filosofia in Hermann Cohen* (Padua: Biblioteca del Archivio di filosofia, 1989), esp. 101–29; William Kluback, *The Legacy of Hermann Cohen* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), esp. 125–61; Gert Mattenklott, "Zur ästhetischen Dimension der 'Religion der Vernunft,'" in *"Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums": Tradition und Ursprungsdenken in Hermann Cohens Spätwerk*, ed. Helmut Holzhey *et al.* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2000), 117–28; Ursula Renz, *Die Rationalität der Kultur: Zur Kulturphilosophie und ihrer transzendentalen Begründung bei Cohen, Natorp und Cassirer* (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 2002). A particularly cogent discussion of Cohen's aesthetics appears throughout the excellent study by Hartwig Wiedebach, *Die Bedeutung der Nationalität für Hermann Cohen* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1997); also Wiedebach, "Aesthetics in Religion: Remarks on Hermann Cohen's Theory of Jewish Existence," in *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 11, no. 1 (2002): 63–73. The most detailed and comprehensive discussion of Cohen's aesthetics remains Ezio Gamba, *La legalità del sentimento puro: L'estetica di Hermann Cohen come modello di una filosofia della cultura* (Milan: Mimesis Edizioni, 2008); and Gamba, *Tu non ti farai un' immagine: Il problema dell raffigurazione del divino nell'estetica di Hermann Cohen* (Trepuzzi, Italy: Publigrafic, 2009). For the art-historical context of Cohen's aesthetics see the recent article by Stephan Nachtsheim, "Zum zeitgenössischen theoretischen Kontext von Herman Cohens Ästhetik," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 62, no. 2 (2010): 142–56. See also the forthcoming study by Daniel H. Weiss, *Paradox and the Prophets: Hermann Cohen and the Indirect Communication of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), which includes a discussion on Cohen's essays on aesthetics and prophecy.

28. Indeed, Cohen's *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*, the third and final part in his systematic philosophy, was quickly considered to be his "most personal book" and perhaps the one destined to become most popular, as Nicolai Hartmann noted in a review for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* 56, no. 183 (July 4, 1912). Reprinted in Helmut Holzhey, ed., *Hermann Cohen. Auslegungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1994), 35. Written in a language untypical of the Marburg school and of his own earlier works, Cohen's *Aesthetics* was

distinguished by an "uncompromised . . . heartfelt articulation," full of *Zartgefühl* and "unprejudiced *Menschenliebe*," a passionate book, as Fritz Heinemann would later write, in which the "thinker Cohen was defeated by Cohen, the human being." Cf. R. Fritzsche, "Hermann Cohen, *Die Zukunft* 83 (1913): 129. F. Heinemann, *Neue Wege der Philosophie* (Leipzig: Quelle and Meyer, 1929), 83; Also, Rosenzweig, "Einleitung," in Cohen, *Jüdische Schriften*, 1: xlv. Possibly, it was Cohen's "personal" and undisciplined approach to aesthetics that irritated the young Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin reading Cohen's book *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung* in the summer of 1914. In contrast to his *Logik der reinen Erkenntnis*, Cohen's interpretation of Kant's "transzendentale Ästhetik" seemed highly "fragwürdig" to Scholem and Benjamin, and it was Benjamin who complained about Cohen's "transzendentale Konfusion" with regard to aesthetics: "Da kann ich auch gleich katholisch werden [In that case I may as well become Catholic]." Cf. Gershom Scholem, *Walter Benjamin: Die Geschichte einer Freundschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975), 78–79.

29. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 186 (*Neuschöpfung*), and ibid., 44–45.

30. Cf. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten" (1901), in *Jüdische Schriften*), 1: 277–78.

31. Ibid., 276, 278.

32. On Cohen's affinities to socialism—albeit without reference to his aesthetics—see Harry van der Linden, *Kantain Ethics and Socialism* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1988), esp. 197–239.

33. Cf. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 186; Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 235: "Die Kunst hat immer nur das Kriterium des Schaffens [Art's sole criterion is creation]."

34. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls* 1: 42.

35. Cf. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 204–5; Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 264. Later, Elias Auerbach, following (unlike Cohen) Spinoza, will reiterate the artistic genius of the prophets. Cf. Auerbach, *Die Prophetie* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1920), 32–35.

36. Cf. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 80: "Die Beständigkeit der Erneuerung an jedem Tag bilded diese Brücke zwischen dem Unendlichen und dem Endlichen, während der Anfang im Dunkel des Mythos liegt [The constancy of renewal at each day creates a bridge between the infinite and the finite, whereas the beginning lies in the dark of myth]."

37. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 283.

38. Hermann Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Ästhetik* (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889).

39. Ibid., 8–9.

40. Cf. ibid., 215–17. Thus the conceptual vicinity of "idea," "feeling," and "regulative principle" in Cohen's first aesthetics. Cf. ibid., 207: "Ideen sind 'erweiterte Kategorien'. Wie die Grundsätze im Stich lassen, da haben die Ideen zu helfen, und zwar als 'regulative Principien' [Ideas are expanded categories. When principles forsake us, ideas, by virtue of being "regulative principles," have to come to the rescue]."

41. Ibid., 215. Cohen employs a notion of *sensus communis*, which is predicated both on common sense and sensibility, thus functioning as both common origin and a striving for commonality or community.

42. Ibid., 147. Cohen, in fact, cites Michelangelo's famous stanza to Vittoria Colonna in which love appears as a forming category: "Auch ich, als mein Modell ward ich geboren *Und wie der Stein vom Meissel, hoff ich täglich Vollendung mir durch deine heil'gen Hände [I too was born as an unfinished thing* And like the stone waits for the chisel / I hope daily to be completed by your holy hands]."

43. Ibid., 221.

44. Cf. ibid., 425–29.

45. Cf. Georg Simmel, "Die ästhetische Bedeutung des Gesichts," in *Brücke und Tür: Essays des Philosophen zur Geschichte, Religion, Kunst, und Gesellschaft*, ed. Michael Landmann (Stuttgart: Koehler Verlag, 1957), 156.

46. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 235. For a nuanced discussion of Cohen's attitude toward the portrait in art see Andrea Poma, "The Portrait in Cohen's Aesthetics," in *Hermann Cohen's Critical Idealism, Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought 10*, ed. Reinier Munk (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005), 283–306, esp. 294–96.

47. Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 104, 167. Cf. also Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*,

esp. 470–72.

48. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 357. On this subject see also Maria Rzepinska, "The Divine Wisdom of Michelangelo in the *Creation of Adam*," *Artibus et Historiae* 15, no. 29 (1994): 181–88.

49. Emil Ludwig, *Michelangelo* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt, 1930), 17.

50. Georg Brandes, *Michelangelo Buonarroti* (Berlin: Erich Reiss Verlag, 1924), 13.

51. Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 229.

52. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 357.

53. Burckhardt, *Cicerone*, 2: 243.

54. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 298.

55. Ibid., 357. Hans Sedlmayr, writing in 1940 (after having joined the NSDAP in Vienna) could still appreciate the "universal" tone of the Sistine Chapel: "These events . . . are not tied to Christian dogma nor to the images of the New Testament, but appear as universally human, revealing themselves in different mythical disguise." Hans Sedlmayr, *Michelangelo: Versuch über die Ursprünge seiner Kunst* (Munich: Piper, 1940), 23.

56. Cohen, in fact, consulted Carl Justi on this matter. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 363. On Cohen's high appreciation of Justi see Robert Arnold Fritzsche, *Hermann Cohen aus persönlicher Erinnerung* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1922), 12.

57. Burckhardt, *Cicerone*, 2: 242.

58. Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo: Sculptor, Painter, Architect* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 30–31.

59. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 415.

60. Ibid., 363.

61. Cf. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 276.

62. Cohen to Mathilde Burg, January 14, 1886, Cohen, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, 58.

63. Cf. Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance*, 3: 369.

64. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 358; 362–63.

65. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 224. Cohen refers here to the artist in general exemplified, however, again by Michelangelo.

66. Cf. Hermann Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 283, 277; also, Cohen, "Das soziale Ideal bei Platon und den Propheten," *Jüdische Schriften*, 1: 312.

67. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 283.

68. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 294.

69. Ibid., 360.

70. Rosenzweig, "Glauben und Wissen," *Gesammelte Schriften*, 3: 588–9. Also Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 361.

71. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 297.

72. Jacob Taubes, *Abendländische Eschatologie* (Munich: Matthes and Seitz, 1999), 9, 15–21.

73. Leo Baeck, *This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Existence*, trans. Albert Friedlander (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1965), 152–53.

74. Ibid., 154.

75. Cf. David Levi, *La mente di Michelangelo* (Milan: Ditta Gaetano Brigola, 1883), 215–17.

76. Ibid., 216.

77. Ibid., 195.

78. Ibid., 217.

79. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 285.

80. Cf. Levi, *La mente di Michelangelo*, 195, 7–8, 32, 54, 62.

81. Ibid., 165.

82. Ibid., 234.

83. Cf. Moses Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem, die letzte Nationalitätenfrage: Briefe und Noten* (Leipzig: M. W. Kaufmann, 1899), xiii. For a lucid analysis of Hess's book see Ken Koltun-Fromm, *Moses Hess and Jewish Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), esp. 14–20. Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Sippur

Yammai," in *Ketavim* (Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1958), 1: 28: "The legend of Garibaldi, the writings of Mazzini, the poetry of Leopardi and Giusti, they all added depth to my shallow Zionism, turning it from an instinctive feeling into a worldview." On Jabotinsky's early affinities to the Risorgimento see Joseph Heller, "Jabotinsky's Use of National Myths in Political Struggles," in *Literary Strategies: Jewish Texts and Contexts*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn, Studies in Contemporary Jewry 12 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 185–201; and Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin-de-Siècle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 132–77.

84. Cf. Levi, *La mente di Michelangelo*, 166, where Levi describes the schism that prevented the Jews from seeking their "true messianism" in Christianity: "Gli Ebrei, che più non potevano riconoscere, nella sêtta uscita dal loro seno, il vero Messianismo, si allontanarono sempre più di lei; la scissione tra la nuova dottrina e l'antica si face più radicale e larga [The Jews, who refused to recognize the true messianism in the sect that sprung from their seed, distanced themselves farther and farther from that sect: the schism between the new doctrine and the old became ever more radical and deep]." Cautious not to offend his Christian readers, Levi never labeled Christianity a "false" messianism but, to the contrary, reclaimed the "true" Christ for prophetic Judaism reborn in the leaders of the Risorgimento—and in the art of Michelangelo. Cf. also ibid., 195–98.

85. Cohen, "Das soziale Ideal bei Platon und den Propheten," 301. Cohen's reading of the *Pietà* is by no means unusual. Alexander Perrig writes: "Im Thema Pietà nahm Michelangelo den kritischen Punkt seines Christentums wahr . . . , nicht so sehr Zeugnisse seines *Glaubens*, als vielmehr Zeugnisse des späten *Ringens* um den Glauben, um die restlose Hinnahme des Widerspruchs [In the theme of the Pietà Michelangelo realized the critical aspect of his Christianity . . . , which was less a testimony to his faith than a wrestling with faith, the struggle with complete acceptance of a contradiction]." Alexander Perrig, *Michelangelo Buonarrotis letzte Pietà-Idee: Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung seines Alterswerks* (Bern: Francke, 1960), 123. For brief discussion of Cohen's "humanization" of Christian art see Ezio Gamba, "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen: Das Problem der künstlerischen Darstellung des Göttlichen in Hermann Cohens Ästhetik," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 62, no. 4 (2010): 356–62.

86. Levi, *La mente di Michelangelo*, 188.

87. Rainer Maria Rilke, "Pietà," in *Sämtliche Werke, vol. 2, Gedichte, Erster Teil, Zweite Hälfte*, ed. Ernst Zinn (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1976), 495.

88. Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere (New York: Modern Library, 2005), 350.

89. Ibid.

90. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 176.

91. Cohen, writing in German, does not distinguish between the nude and the naked as such. But if we follow Kenneth Clark's distinction of the nude as being "a balanced, prosperous, and confident body" and the naked as being "huddled and defenseless," then we may understand why "nakedness" (*Nacktheit*) would be the preferred, though not exclusive, term for Cohen. Cf. Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1956), 3. See also Peter A. Schmid, "Die Vervollkommnung der Sittlichkeit in der Nacktheit: Zur Erzeugung des Menschen in der Kunst," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 62, no. 2 (2010): 176–82.

92. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 236.

93. Ibid., 177. "Refinement" (*Läuterung*) is a term Cohen deliberately borrows from the vocabulary of the Enlightenment.

94. Ibid., 179.

95. Ibid., 177.

96. Cf. ibid., 180, 233.

97. Ibid., 179.

98. Cf. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 184. On Cohen's distinction of religious and aesthetic love see Gabriel Motzkin, "Love and Knowledge in Cohen's 'Religion of Reason,'" in *"Religion der Vernunft,"* ed. Holzhey, 89–104.

99. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 170. In his *Kants Begründung der Ästhetik*, Cohen calls art and religion "gleichen Bluthes" (ibid., 416). "So liebt auch die Kunst Gott, weil ihre Gottheit das Individuum

liebt. Gott und Ich sind die Pole der Kunst, wie der Religion [Thus, art loves God, for its divinity loves the individual. God and I are the poles of art as well as of religion]" (ibid., 417).

100. Cf. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 170–71.

101. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 180.

102. Cf. ibid. 182.

103. Cf. ibid. 185.

104. Ibid. 184. In Cohen's first aesthetics, the conflict between art and religion remained all but unresolved: "Religion kann den Widerspruch der Ebenbildlichkeit nicht auflösen, sie muß an der Transcendenz des Gottes, der von Aussen stößt, festhalten [Religion cannot resolve the contradiction of representation, for it must hold on to the transcendence of God, working from the outside]" (Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Ästhetik*, 417–18). On the other hand, it is art, for Cohen, that helps religion create an "Innerlichkeit des Gottesbewußtseins [internalization of the consciousness of God]" Indeed, religion must, by necessity and "fate," enter sensuality and temporality; it is God's "hartes Schicksal . . . im Endlichen aufzugehen [difficult destiny . . . to be dissolved in the finite]." In this respect, Cohen continues, art is even superior to religion, for it maintains no pretense about truth and complete abstraction: "In dieser Unparteilichkeit, auch dem Göttlichen gegenüber, übertrifft sie [die Kunst] die Religion an Ehrlichkeit [In its impartiality, also over against the divine, art surpasses religion in sincerity]" (ibid., 420). For a discussion of Cohen's notion of love see also Karl Löwith, "Philosophie der Vernunft und Religion der Offenbarung in Hermann Cohens Religionsphilosophie," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge, 1930–1970* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971), esp. 141–47.

105. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 186.

106. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001), 75.

107. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 37. For Cohen's critique of Kant see ibid., 103.

108. Erich Auerbach, *Dante: Poet of the Secular World*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 100.

109. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 323.

110. Ibid., 325.

111. Ibid., 321–22. Satirical, yet not ironic. See Myriam Bienenstock, "Über die Ironie der Kunst: Hermann Cohen und Karl Solger," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 63, no. 1 (2011): 94–99.

112. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 308.

113. Cf. ibid., 2: 270–71.

114. Ibid., 2: 297–98.

115. Cf. ibid., 1: 285.

116. Cf. ibid., 2: 293.

117. Cf. Carl Justi, *Michelangelo: Neue Beiträge zur Erklärung seiner Werke* (Berlin: Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1909), 363–69.

118. Francisco D'Ollanda, *Da pintura antigua*, quoted in Robert J. Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art* (New York: Gramercy Publishing, 1961), 93.

119. Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio della pittura*, quoted in Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art*, 93.

120. Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, 176. On the other hand, it has been argued that the terribleness of the statue resulted from its unintended repositioning at the lower register of the tomb, distorting its original perspective. See Earl E. Rosenthal, "Michelangelo's Moses dal di sotto in su," *Art Bulletin* 46 (December 1964): 544–40.

121. Friedrich Schelling, "Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur," in *Schellings Werke, Auswahl in drei Bänden*, ed. Otto Weiß (Leipzig: Fritz Eckardt Verlag, 1907), 3: 415.

122. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 277. See also Hartwig Wiedebach, "Aesthetics in Religion: remarks on Hermann Cohen's Theory of Jewish Existence," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 11, no. 1 (2002): esp. 67.

123. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 385.

124. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 269, 270. Also, Cohen, "Über den ästhetischen Wert unsrer religiösen Bildung," *Jüdische Schriften*, 1: 219.

125. Herbert Marcuse, *Schriften*, vol. 9, *Konterrevolution und Revolte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), 105.

126. Ibid., 110. On Marcuse's aesthetics see Heinz Paetzold, *Neomarxistische Aesthetik II: Adorno-Marcuse* (Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1974), 102–31. Terry Eagleton draws a direct line from Schiller to Marcuse, concluding that "the test of a truly radical aesthetics will be its ability to operate as a social critique without simultaneously providing the grounds of political ratification." Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995), 119.

127. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 234–35.

128. Ibid., 236.

129. Cf. ibid., 289.

130. Ibid., 248.

131. Ibid., 209.

132. Cf. Franz Rosenzweig, "Anleitung zum jüdischen Denken," *Gesammelte Schriften*, 3, 614.

133. Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. William W. Hallo (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 190.

134. Cf. Rosenzweig, "Anleitung zum jüdischen Denken," 613–14.

135. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1944), 143.

136. Theodor Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 81. Adorno's observation is in regard to an ancient relief in Selinunt, depicting Pegasus emerging from the blood of Medusa.

137. Rosenzweig, "Anleitung zum jüdischen Denken," 611.

138. Felix Weltsch, "Jüdische Kunst," in *Zionismus als Weltanschauung*, ed. Max Brod and Felix Weltsch (Mährisch-Ostrau: R. Färber, 1925), 92.

139. Martin Buber, "Jüdische Künstler," preface to *Jüdische Künstler* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1903), n.p. Trans. altered from *The First Buber: Youthful Zionist Writings of Martin Buber, ed.* Gilya G. Schmidt *(Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999)*, 102.

140. Martin Buber, "Lesser Ury," *Die Welt* 5, no. 14 (March 1901): 12.

141. Martin Buber, "Lesser Ury," in *Jüdische Künstler*, 70. Trans. altered from Schmidt, *First Buber*, 82. Zachary Braiterman rightly connects Buber's reading of Ury to Georg Simmel's formal aspects of sociology. See Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation: Aesthetics and Modern Jewish Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 25.

142. Martin Buber, "Das Gestaltende: Nach einer Ansprache, 1912," *Der Jude und sein Judentum: Gesammelte Aufsätze und Reden* (Gerlingen: Lambert Schneider, 1993), 234.

143. Buber, "Lesser Ury," *Die Welt* 5, no. 14, 12.

144. Buber, "Das Gestaltende," 235.

145. Martin Buber, "Religion als Gegenwart," in *Buber's Way to I and Thou: An Historical Analysis and the First Publication of Martin Buber's Lectures "Religion als Gegegnwart,"* ed. Rivka Horwitz (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1978), 59 (lecture 2, January 22, 1922).

146. Ibid., 61.

147. Ibid.

148. Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft*, 188.

149. Buber, "Das Gestaltende," 239.

150. Ibid., 237.

151. Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man*, trans. Charles Glenn Wallis (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 4–5.

152. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 199.

153. Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 271.

154. Ibid., 215; also 211, 214.

155. Cf. Michelangelo, G 152: "Sì come per levar, donna, si pone / in pietra alpestra e dura *una viva figura*, che là più cresce u' più la pietra scema." Quoted in Robert J. Clements, *The Poetry of Michelangelo* (New York: New York University Press, 1965), 61.

156. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, 76. Pater was here attentive to Michelangelo's resurrective desires and repeated self-characterization as a tragic phoenix. See Clements, *Poetry of Michelangelo*, 277 [G 108]: "Nor do I hope, like a phoenix in the sun, / Ever to return").

157. Steven Schwarzschild, "The Legal Foundations of Jewish Esthetics," in *Mélanges André Neher* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maison-neuve, 1945), 71.

158. See Herbert von Einem, "Unvollendets und Unvollendbares im Werk Michelangelos," in *Das Unvollendete als künstlerische Form. Ein Symposion*, ed. J. A. Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1959), 69–82; Joseph Gantner, "Formen des Unvollendeten in der neueren Kunst," ibid., 47–67; Georg Kauffmann, *Michelangelo und das Problem der Säkularisation* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1972), 26–29; Paul Barolsky, *The Faun in the Garden: Michelangelo and the Poetic Origins Of Renaissance Art (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994)*, 63–65; Creighton E. Gilbert, "What Is Expressed in Michelangelo's *Non-Finito*," in *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 48 (2003): 57–64.

159. David Summers has beautifully synthesized Michelangelo's notion of movement. David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981)*, 71–96, 406–17.

160. Buber, "Alfred Mombert," 202.

161. Cf. Lionel Kochan, *Beyond the Graven Image: A Jewish View* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 133–34. Cf. also Kauffmann, *Michelangelo und das Problem der Säkularisation*, 35: "'Non-finito' wird im Rahmen des durch Leonardo begründeten 'Neuen Naturalismus' ja erst dort möglich, wo das Sein in Bewegung gerät. Das Vollendete ist immer stabil, in diesem Sinne unlebendig. Die Toten bleiben der Zeit enthoben [Within the framework of the "new naturalism" originating in Leonardo, the *non-finito* becomes a possibility only where being is set in motion. The complete is always stable and, in that sense, not alive. The dead are removed from time]."

162. Kochan, *Beyond the Graven Image*, 135.

163. Levinas, "Reality and Its Shadow," in *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Seán Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 137–38.

164. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, ed. Gerhard Lehmann (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1986), 473 [A 439–40]. Also Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, ed. Rudolf Malter (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981), 244 [A 284–87].

165. Heinrich Graetz, *Konstruktion der jüdischen Geschichte: Eine Skizze* (Berlin: Schocken, 1936), 10.

166. Cf. Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1923), 3: 216, 240. Cf. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1989), 23, 186. For a discussion of Horkheimer and Adorno on the *Bilderverbot*, see also Leora Batnitzky, "The Image of Judaism: German-Jewish Intellectuals and the Ban on Images," in *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (2004): esp. 268–70.

167. Cf. Georg W. F. Hegel, *Werke 14: Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik II* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 374–76, 460.

168. Ibid., 461.

169. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 1: 284–87. See also the insightful comments on the faun in Paul Barolsky, *Michelangelo's Nose: A Myth and Its Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), esp. 31–34, and his comment (ibid., 34): "The faun is not a sculpture as such, but the idea of a sculpture, in platonic terms, a truly paradigmatic idea."

170. Vasari, "Preface to the Whole Work," *Lives*, xxx.

171. Hugo Bergmann, "Die Heiligung des Namens (Kiddusch Haschem)," in *Vom Judentum: Ein Sammelbuch*, ed. Verein jüdischer Hochschüler Bar Kochba (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1914); also Bergmann, ed., *Worte Mosis* (Minden: Bruns Verlag, 1913), 48–49. See also Kochan, *Beyond the Graven Image*, 135.

172. Cohen, "Der Stil der Propheten," 1: 283.

173. See Ernst Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 1: 250–55. English in Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, ed. Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 152. On Bloch's notion of "Vorscheinen" see also Hermann Wiegemann, *Utopie als Kategorie der Ästhetik und Poetik* (Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1980), esp. 186–92.

174. Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, 1: 151–52. The myth of Michelangelo's unfinished works needs to

be qualified, of course, for it is very plausible that his penchant for the *non-finito* was all but circumstantial. See on this point Jürgen Schulz, "Michelangelo's Unfinished Works," *Art Bulletin* 57 (September 1975): 366–73.

175. Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, 1: 153.

176. Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 376.

177. Ibid., and Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 419: "Auch die Kunst überwindet nur, indem sie das Leiden gestaltet, nicht indem sie es verneint [Art, too, overcomes only by representing suffering, not by denying it]." On this theme see also Robert Gibbs, *Correlations in Rosenzweig and Levinas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 133–35.

178. Cf. Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 36, 270.

179. Ibid., 214; for the reference to Pygmalion and speech, see 271.

180. Cf. ibid., 269.

181. Rosenzweig, "Jüdische Geschichte im Rahmen der Weltgeschichte," *Gesammelte Schriften* (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1984), 3: 548.

182. Cf. Rosenzweig, *Stern der* Erlösung, 255–56.

183. Sigmund Freud, *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten*, *Gesammelte Werke*, 6: 234.

184. Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 221.

185. Emmanuel Levinas, *In the Time of the Nations*, trans. Michael B. Smith (London: Continuum Books), 47. Thus Levinas considers eschatology "an inexhaustible future of love itself" (ibid.).

186. Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 288.

187. Ibid., 221. For an excellent discussion on love and revelation see Robert Gibbs, *Correlations in Rosenzweig und Levinas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 70–74; and Randi Rashkover, *Revelation and Theopolitics: Barth, Rosenzweig, and the Politics of Praise* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 55–75.

188. Rosenzweig, *Stern der Erlösung*, 271.

189. Cf. Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Ästhetik*, 432.

190. Blanchot, *Space of Literature*, 265.

191. Ibid., 267. Thus, we find the notions of "untiring wakefulness" and "total insomnia" compared to "man's infinite responsibility" in Levinas. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 193; also Levinas, "In Praise of Insomnia," in *God, Death, and Time*, trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 207–12. Needless to say, only few suffering from real insomnia would actually praise it.

192. Cf. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 254.

193. Cohen, "Über den ästhetischen Wert unserer religiösen Bildung," *Jüdische Schriften*, 1: 226.

194. Cf. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 34.

195. Cf. Cohen, *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, 2: 27, 37.

196. Cf. Rosenzweig, "Anleitung zum jüdischen Denken," 617.

197. Georg Simmel, "Michelangelo," in *Philosophische Kultur: Gesammelte Essays* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1923), 162.

Index

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It is no secret that we write, for better or worse, the books we are. Writing about cultural affinities and loves made this writer profoundly aware of the cultural affinities that formed his younger years, from the day, perhaps, of his first time in the opera house, featuring Giuseppe Verdi's *Nabucco*. I recall being mesmerized by the story and by the smoke and lightning filling the stage, but I recall even more vividly my embarrassment at my mother chanting the chorus of the Hebrew Captives all the way home. Today, I understand why, instead of playing outside, I had to report every Monday afternoon to "uncle" Alessandro for Italian conversation and grammar, studying from the most tortuous of all language books, the *New Mussafia*. And even if the progress in the language of Verdi's operas was but moderato, I learned how to ride on the back of a Vespa and to puff a cigarillo. In writing these pages, I unearthed layers of consciousness which gave birth to the layers of this book. And I began to understand that cultural affinities, though always "naïve" and imperfect, need not be looked at with cynicism alone; they can also be signs of self-formation and, as love itself, symbols of life-long work.

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