

Carlo Bonomi

THE CUT AND THE BUILDING OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Vol. I Sigmund Freud and Emma Eckstein

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Introduction

This book is many books at once. It is a book about the body but also about the soul. It treats the history of medicine as well as the topics of religion and morality. It speaks of facts and fantasies

and of women and men. It focuses on the sexual organs and the person of Freud while also examining the role which one of his female patients played in his early theorizing and fathering of psychoanalysis. It is at once a scientific study and a fairy tale. Above all, however, it offers an effort to construct a more integrated narration of the origins of psychoanalysis.

When I first turned to psychoanalysis during the decade of the 1980's, I was puzzled and surprised by the lack of a credible narration regarding the origin of our discipline. The canonic and hagiographic account of its origins was no longer viewed as reliable, while the revisionist accounts, though more historically faithful and intellectually accurate, only aimed to pinpoint and identify fallacies and contradictions rather than trying to understand their hidden logic.

The pulse for a systematic commitment in the field only came later, when the first volume of the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence was published, in French, in 1992. Upon reading the opening volume of their exchanges, I was deeply impacted by a dream which Ferenczi had dreamt. His dream was about self-castration and appeared to carry within itself a condensed representation of Ferenczi's repressed fantasies about Freud's self-analysis. Ferenczi's dream in time served as the starting point of my effort to reinterpret the origins of psychoanalysis.

The first edition of *The Interpretation of Dreams* was for the most part constructed out of Freud's dreams and his analysis and associations to them. It featured an enormous act of self-revelation and disclosure by Freud which served as a hypnotic point of unconscious attraction by others towards him. There is a great deal of irony in the fact that orthodox and traditional psychoanalysis should present the analyst as an anonymous and impenetrable blank screen. Clinging to this fiction was perhaps a necessary reaction formation to combat the experience of being overwhelmed by the sheer number of personal facts which Freud offered and presented us through his dreams in his dreambook, and other writings as well. In any case, I can recall that I felt overwhelmed when I began to detect in Freud's dreams fantasies of an endless reverberation of a single catastrophic event which tapped on a real and actual event of castration. This feeling was

particularly difficult for me to withstand given that psychoanalysts have traditionally viewed “castration” as something exclusively symbolic. No analyst at that time dared to use the term “castration” to refer to a real actual event. Indeed, I can still recall a passage by André Green in which he argued and warned his readers that, at least in psychoanalysis, the issue of *real castration was never what was in question*. While I attempted to keep his precept and warning in mind the metaphoric dimension in time began to break down. With it, many of the crucial passages in Freud’s texts began to take on a meaning which was dramatically literal for me.

In 1992 I decided to pay a visit to Professor Gerhard Fichtner, director of the Institute of History of Medicine at the University of Tübingen and a respected authority on Freud, to discuss my hypothesis, namely, that young Freud might have been impacted and unconsciously influenced in his theorizing by the many cases of real and actual castration he must have come across during his early years as a physician. Professor Fichter was at first perplexed when I presented my thesis to him and responded with silence. He soon stood up from his chair, however, and invited me to “follow” him to the institute’s library. Within a short period of time, and to my amazement, I was being presented by him with various medical books and articles, all in German, on the subject of the castration of women and the circumcision of children during the second half of the 19th century. A totally new medical scenario which had been strikingly neglected by historians of psychoanalysis surfaced before me at that point.

I also undertook researches in Berlin and found that Freud’s pediatric studies in that city in 1886, immediately after his studies in Paris with Charcot, had been misrepresented in various ways. At that point I simply assumed that Freud must have been shocked by the medical practice of attempting to cure masturbation in children through procedures and surgical interventions on the child’s sexual organs which prevailed at the time. André Haynal was informed of my research and invited me to present my ideas at a conference which he was organizing at that time with Ernst Falzeder: *100 hundred years of psychoanalysis*. The conference, which took place in Geneva in

September of 1993, allowed me to present my initial findings in a paper I entitled “Why have we ignored Freud the pediatrician? The relevance of Freud's pediatric training for the origins of psychoanalysis” (Bonomi, 1994a). In it, I presented detailed information which was lacking in the psychoanalytic literature at the time. I was not so much interested in filling a gap but rather in the meaning of the gap itself. I was amazed by the fact that easily available information in this field had been systematically overlooked by psychoanalytic scholars and researchers until then.

The gap itself was moreover overdetermined and tapped into two others important and critical questions. The first was whether Freud had circumcised his sons. Freud's encounter with the practice of medical circumcision in the pediatric world, needless to say, itself functioned to raise questions about his own attitude towards this ancient Hebrew ritual. Since the question of whether Freud had circumcised his sons had yet to be officially established and to gain the consent of psychoanalytic scholars, I wish to briefly present and examine the available evidence on this topic.

The first indication to appear in a published text that Freud had failed to circumcise his male children was presented by Gilman (1993, p. 86). The author, however, did not reveal his sources. In September of 1993, during the Geneva conference, the participants were led to reflect on this intriguing question. The only other participant in attendance who appeared to have been acquainted with this topic at the time was Peter Swales. As it turned out, his source was the same on which Gilman had relied to present his claim, namely, an ephemeral “ocular demonstration” which could not be cited. Apparently, no one at that time had consulted the “*Matrikel*” books of the *Israelitsche Kultusgemeinde* in Vienna. I therefore asked Johannes Reichmayr if he could check these records once back in Austria. It revealed evidence which could be used both to support and deny the claim that Freud had circumcised his sons. I wrote and published a paper soon after in which I included a number of observations which had been offered to me by members of the Jewish community, including the remark that the lack of documentary evidence in the archives in Vienna failed to provide convincing evidence that Freud had not circumcised his boys. It turns out, however that “about half of the Jews born in Vienna at that time were not circumcised” and, further, that it was

always possible for Freud to have arranged to have his male children circumcised in private (Bonomi, 1994b, p. 73, footnote 25).

In that same year an article by Emanuel Rice's entitled *The Jewish heritage of Sigmund Freud* appeared in print. In it, the author reports having attended a lecture by Swales where the Welshman had proposed that none of Freud's three sons had received circumcision. Rice for his part was "quite surprised to hear this rather startling information" and immediately questioned its veracity. In an interview that he conducted with Elliott Philipp in July of 1992, and in response to the question of whether Freud had circumcised his sons, Philipp answered in the affirmative, supporting the argument which Gilman and Swales had presented on the subject.¹

The same question later resurfaced in a book by Franz Maciejewsky (2002, p. 37, p. 327-28 n.13). His sources were once again the same: Gilman's statement and the lack of entries in the communal records in Vienna regarding the circumcision of Freud's male children. Maciejewsky reported that when asked about his sources Gilman answered: "No record, no circumcision." In that same year the archives of the Jewish community in Vienna were also consulted by Eddy de Klerk (2003b, 2008). On that occasion, he not only verified what had already been unearthed about Freud's children but that Herbert Graf, Freud's own Little Hans, had apparently not been circumcised as well (Klerk, 2004, p. 465). Jay Geller (2007, p. 38, p. 230, note 155) consulted these same archives only to find, as had previous scholars, that the name for the *Mohel*, the person who performs the ritual of circumcision, had been left blank for each of Freud's three sons and for Herbert Graf as well.

Twenty years ago I maintained a prudent and neutral position on this delicate issue. During the last two decades, however, the evidence that Freud chose not to have his sons circumcised has not been challenged. I now feel that we can accept it as a fact and that the burden of proof rests with

¹ Rice later obtained additional confirmation from Albrecht Hirschmüller who sent him a transcription of the birth records of Freud's sons taken from the records of the Israelische Cultusgemeinde in Vienna (Rice, 1994, pp. 251-2 and p. 257 n. 25).

those who deny what the archives in Vienna appears to indicate and suggest, namely, that Freud did not circumcise any of his male children.

The other key question was whether Emma Eckstein, Freud's most important female patient during the crucial years when the foundations of psychoanalysis were being laid out by him, had herself been circumcised. There is a passage in a letter Freud wrote to Fliess which suggested as much. Our understanding of the origins of psychoanalysis would obviously benefit greatly from the reconstruction of Freud's analysis of Emma and the emotional and intellectual reaction to the psychic derivatives of the childhood trauma which his female patient had endured as a result of her possible circumcision.

During those early days this mutilating procedure was in fact presented and represented as a "cure" rather than a trauma. The fact has many implications. The most important is that Emma's circumcision and its traumatic aspects could not be voiced or acknowledged either by her or her analyst during her analysis. Despite this, we can nevertheless still recognize through many of her symptoms – her leg paralysis and problems ambulating, her self-cutting and hysterical bleedings - a displacement of the cut on her genitals which she had likely endured. The crucial point then becomes how Emma's trauma, precisely because it had neither been voiced nor acknowledged by him, had impacted Freud? How was this unnamed and unnamable trauma embedded in the foundation of psychoanalysis? This basic and simple question, as far as I know, has never been addressed nor discussed by scholars and historians of psychoanalysis.

The passage which hinted towards Emma having been possibly circumcised was in fact suppressed, along with other vital material, when Freud's letters to Fliess were first published by Marie Bonaparte, Anna Freud, and Ernst Kris (1950); they were published in English under the title *The origins of psychoanalysis* (1954).

Princess Marie Bonaparte, as we know, purchased Freud's letters to Fliess from a book dealer in Vienna in 1936. After resisting Freud's suggestion that she destroy them she also

challenged Anna Freud's censorship of the material. The Princess decided to present Max Schur, Freud's personal physician during his final difficult years, with a copy of the original letters in 1961, entrusting him with the mandate of rescuing the passages which had been cut and repressed from the initial version of the letters published. One may perhaps grasp the unconscious meaning of her mandate towards Freud's former doctor. The princess, it turns out, had herself undergone not one but three similar operations (in her case the excision of the clitoris) in Vienna beginning in 1927, just six months after starting her analysis with Freud (Bertin, 1982, pp. 140, 141, 170, 180-182).

Bonaparte's mandate did not come to full fruition. When Schur published the excerpts in his 1966 article "Some additional 'day residues' of the specimen dream of psychoanalysis", the passage which spoke of Emma Eckstein having possibly experienced circumcision as a child was presented by him as the product of a "fantasy" (p. 114). At the same time all the emotional drama was transferred by him towards another scene, the one touching on the faulty surgical operation which Fliess had performed on Emma's nose during the early phase of her analysis with Freud.

The drama had not yet terminated. *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess* were finally published two decades later, in 1985. They were edited by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, who had been appointed by Kurt Eissler, founder and director of the Freud Archives, as his successor. The appearance of Freud's complete letters to Fliess had been preceded by the publication of Masson's (1984) disruptive study *The Assault on Truth: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory*. Masson followed the pattern which Schur had established, thus pushing the displacement a step further. Masson viewed the faulty surgical operation of Emma's nose as relevant to Freud's abandonment of his seduction theory. Freud, Masson argued, had not only denied Fliess's surgical malpractice but the reality of the traumatic seduction and abuse of children by adults as well. The issue of real or actual trauma was at that time beginning to reenter discourse and social awareness. Masson, however, managed to exasperate all dichotomies which had marked this field since the very beginning. What was the drama which was being staged in his "assault on

the truth”?

Masson repeated the displacement of the real trauma which Emma had suffered as a child (her circumcision) to a fantasy of seduction, transferring all the emotional turmoil from one scene to another. This was precisely what Freud himself had done at the very beginning, when he formulated his seduction theory relying on Emma’s fantasies while accepting them at face value. This replacement followed a well known pattern which is not easy to detect in light of the fact that sexual abuse might itself be experienced as a castration. Psychically the two experiences are so similar that one can be exchanged for or replaced by the other. The more important point, however, is that Masson, while struggling for the acknowledgement of the reality of child abuse, overlooked and even “suppressed” the event of the genital trauma which Emma had endured. By substituting a fiction (the father’s seduction) for a real and actual trauma (Emma’s medical circumcision), Masson in the end managed to avoid the impact and wave which the event of her circumcision would have unquestionably produced upon the psychoanalytic movement. This is a point which Charles Rycroft appears to have realized. In his review of *The Assault on Truth*, Rycroft (1984) wrote:

Rather surprisingly, Masson does not refer to the fact that many child-rearing and surgical procedures involve literal violations of bodily integrity and must inevitably be experienced by small children as assaults, regardless of the conscious or unconscious motives of the parents and surgeons who inflict such traumas on their children. This is a curious omission, since it would be possible to resurrect the traumatic theory of neurosis on the basis of the mishandling of small children.

Masson appears to have been impacted by Rycroft’s remark on his “curious omission” for he soon thereafter began to actively research the topic of female circumcision and clitoridectomy. He then edited and two years later published a collection of English translations of original German and French texts which had been published from 1880 to 1900, publishing it under the title *A Dark Science: Women, Sexuality and Psychiatry in the Nineteenth Century*. The published text illustrates and neatly captures the many “fallacies and contradictions underlying the nineteenth-century

gynaecology and psychiatry” (Masson, 1986, p. 7). It fails, however, to integrate this knowledge with the genesis of psychoanalysis. Masson then decided to abandon the field of psychoanalysis altogether. He had good reasons for doing so. He had become the scapegoat of powerful group dynamics within the psychoanalytic establishment. Ultimately, however, the scandal which Masson had created and which led to his being excommunicated and banished from orthodox psychoanalytic circles was functional to the preservation of a taboo. The excerpt referring to Emma’s possible circumcision was finally published yet no one saw it as a possible trace of an actual or real event.

Circling back to the gap which I identified in my article “Why have we ignored Freud the pediatrician?”, three elements arrived to give form to it: a) the generic impact of the castration of women and girls on Freud as a young medical doctor, b) Freud’s private choice not to have his children circumcised and c) the specific emotional resonance on Freud as analyst of the genital trauma which Emma had endured as a child. These, I add, are the basic and core elements on which this book has been constructed. All three have been powerfully dissociated from the narration of the origins of psychoanalysis.

The gestation period has been very long for reasons which are emotional and intellectual. The theme, moreover, was apt to provoke strong emotional reactions and had to be handled with care. The greatest difficulty was the question of Freud’s self-analysis, which provided the key and helped to identify and map his countertransference. Freud’s own resistances, denials, and displacements also played a vital part. Intellectual connections which today appear to me simple and obvious, were very difficult to establish and required time and energy I was not ready or willing to devote to the task. The task was moreover to be carried out by more than a single person and I had to repeatedly postpone a more active commitment, waiting and hoping for the contributions of others.

As time passed I decided to publish at least my historical research which I did in a book written in Italian, my mother tongue; it was published in 2007 under the title *Sulla soglia della psicoanalisi. Freud e la follia del bambino* [On the threshold of psychoanalysis: Freud and the insanity of the child].

The threshold which I did not dare attempt to step beyond was represented by Freud's dream of Irma's injection. I soon arrived at the conclusion that Freud's most famous dream had itself functioned as a sort of hinge to an essential transformation of the pre-Freudian world, the one where Freud operated as a medical doctor, and the world of psychoanalysis. In 2006 Elisabeth Roudinesco, who kindly honoured me by writing a preface to my book, invited me to deliver a paper at the *Société internationale d'histoire de la psychiatrie et de la psychanalyse*. I decided to take a bold step then and to present a paper entitled "*Du sexe mutilé au culte du phallus*" (From the mutilated genital to the worship of the phallus). The thesis which I presented then was that Emma Eckstein, after experiencing and enduring castration as a child, developed hysterical symptom which were characterized by genital paraesthesias which led her to hallucinate that she had penis. Hermann Nunberg's (1947) claim that "the trauma of the circumcision released forces aimed at overcoming its effects," and that "all of the phantasies, thoughts and habits, served a single purpose: preservation of the phallus" (p. 154), applies to women as well. The fact that Freud had become the depositary of the imaginary penis which Emma fantasized was presented by me as the unconscious true source of Freud's phallogocentric doctrine. In other words, Emma's psychic reaction to her cut not only managed to survive beyond her carnal body, but became a relic which was secretly preserved and worshipped in the psychoanalytic crypt.

I was satisfied with my argument enough at the time to submit the text to the International Journal of Psychoanalysis. Its publication marked the beginning of an endless and continuing odyssey. The reaction of most of my peers and reviewers was initially one of bewilderment. Some simply failed to believe castration as a real and actual event and, further, were unwilling to entertain that women had suffered and endured castration procedures at the hands of male medical doctors.

Others found the topic interesting but wanted more evidence and information. Since I was speaking of something which seemed completely foreign to many, the editor of the journal proposed that I divide the article in two parts, focusing only on the medical context and leaving the question of the possible impact which Emma's castration might have had on Freud. In light of her belief that this was already a rich contribution, I decided to accept her advice and, with her generous assistance, reworked material which I had previously published in various forms. Despite the fact that my paper contained only half the message I wanted to convey, the final product was much improved and the IJP was indeed the best forum for presenting and airing my views then. However, a member of the editorial board objected to my thesis and vetoed its publication, even in its revised form. Since the board member had such a right to veto its publication was successfully blocked. I still today don't know just why the psychoanalytic community had to be protected from a simple paper which treated the history of the castration of women by male doctors.

The conflict within the editorial board lasted for more than a year; eventually the rules were changed and the paper was finally given a green light to appear in the journal. Entitled the "The relevance of castration and circumcision to the origins of psychoanalysis. 1. The medical context" it was published in its issue of June 2009. A widely revised version of it features as the opening chapter of this book. A few weeks after its appearance, I was contacted by a Dutch analyst, Eddy (Adrian) de Klerk, who wrote to say that he had found my article and argument illuminating. He himself had for many years been working on the idea that circumcision had operated as a sort of secret organizer of Freud's entire system of thought. De Klerk also provided me with an important missing piece of the puzzle: the idea that the keyword in the Irma-dream, 'trimethylamin', might be read as a nearly literal transcription of *'brith milah'* (Hebrew for circumcision). We exchanged our views for several months and I learned much from him, greatly benefiting from our exchanges. De Klerk sadly passed away shortly in 2010, before he was able to shape his ideas into a consistent theory.

Initially I simply did not know what to think of De Klerk's striking hypothesis; at the time, it sounded as something remote and alien that had little value for my work and research. Two or three months later, however, strange thoughts began to percolate within me. They had little to do with *'brith milah'*, but were instead organized around the formula "from flesh to stones", a phrase which began to repeat itself in my head as a sort of refrain and mantra. "Flesh and stone" was the title of a book by Richard Sennett (*Flesh and stone. The body and the city in western civilization*). Since I owned a copy, I decided to pull it out of my bookshelf and to go through it systematically. It failed to give answers to my many questions. Nevertheless, the idea of a fundamental analogy between body and architecture began to appeal to me and slowly gave way to the ideas which I attempt to unfold and present here. Not only the building of psychoanalysis began to be illuminated by the building of the Temple which, after its destruction, was replaced by the Book, but Emma Eckstein herself was now featuring as its chief cornerstone, namely as the "stone which the builders rejected" (Psalm 118:22). 'Eckstein' was indeed the word Luther had called upon in his German translation of the Bible to refer to the cornerstone concept – *'akrogoniaios lithos'* in the Septuagint version.

One of the most important insights of this new phase concerned a crucial knot in Freud's Irma dream, the founding dream of psychoanalysis, namely the Greek word *'propylaea,'* which, referring to both an anatomical part of the body (the vaginal labia) and the ceremonial gateway of Greek temples as it does, allows us to affiliate and align the human body with an edifice and to thereby link flesh with stones. The "consecration" of the female vaginal labia had obviously been modelled on the Hebrew ceremony of *milah* in which the visible and tangible male reproductive organ, the penis, is consecrated to God.

At this point I began to systematically think about and to refer to the birth of psychoanalysis in terms of a "foundation" – rather than a discovery, invention, or creation. I also had in mind Ferenczi's use of the term "*Bausteine*", that is to say, a "building block" or "foundation". Ferenczi called upon this term to present his collected works with a title. His use of the word points directly

to an issue which had deeply bothered him for years, to wit, the question of the ultimate ground from which psychoanalysis itself had sprung, the reason behind it all which made its birth necessary, the 'Telos' inscribed within its birth and secretly transmitted through its legacy.

In May 2011 I was invited to inaugurate the newly purchased Ferenczi House in Budapest. In the very office where Ferenczi had dictated his *Clinical Diary* I delivered a lecture entitled "The future of the Irma dream and the overwhelming task of withstanding trauma". It was a short but dense presentation which focused on Freud's specimen dream. My reading of the dream had not only been inspired by Ferenczi but, in particular, by his idea of "traumatic progression" which I turned to in order to help bring to light what I felt as the deeper dynamics at work within the founding dream of psychoanalysis. Freud's traumatic progression involved *an unconscious exploration of Emma Eckstein's mind*, I argued, and the '*brith milah*' inscribed and encoded within the body of the chemical formula (trimethylamin) stood as the transcription of the traumatic circumcision and castration she had suffered and endured as a child. This represented a radical departure from my previous perspective. Now the basic idea was that a piece of Emma Eckstein's mind had been imported, like a foreign body, directly into the founding dream of psychoanalysis.

I decided to submit my paper to the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, as a follow up or second part to the article I had previously published on the "relevance of castration and circumcision" for the origins of psychoanalysis. This second piece was not accepted for publication, however. According to the editors and two reviewers, the main reason was that I had failed to present solid evidence that Emma Eckstein had undergone a castration procedure as a child. Moreover, according at least one of the editorial readers, there was no evidence to support that Freud *had not* circumcised his male children. I wish to quote a comment offered me by one of the reviewers of the journal, the most prestigious in our field: "The author also stated ... that Freud's sons were not circumcised. This seems highly unlikely since Freud's parents were alive and along with Martha, would have been deeply disturbed."

I am deeply grateful to this anonymous psychoanalyst and reviewer for his observation. It helped me to realize that his decision not to circumcise any of his sons was the concrete and factual way in which Freud had symbolically killed his father. I also realized that the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* would never publish my article and thus turned to *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* for its possible publication. The revised text appeared in the June 2013 issue of the Quarterly under the title “Withstanding trauma: The significance of Emma Eckstein’s circumcision for Freud’s Irma dream”. It can be found as chapter 4 of this volume.

Shortly after its publication I received a letter from a New Yorker lawyer who took issue with my description of the *brith milah* scene. She wrote: “I have been attending these ceremonies my whole life and have never witnessed a rabbi ‘applying his lips’ to a child's penis. Nobody I know among my numerous Jewish friends and family has ever witnessed an action of this kind either among the Orthodox or less observant segments.” This cultivated woman, who otherwise liked and enjoyed my text, had a specific interest in the construction of testamentary reality. She nevertheless could not bring herself to accept the image of a rabbi ‘applying his lips’ to a child's penis. She thought that it was ignorant on my part to highlight the fact, a blatant inaccuracy which had undermined the value of my argument and even my credibility as a scholar and interpreter of psychoanalysis.

Her unsolicited e-mail allowed me to realize just how degrading and shameful the orgal scene and image was for her, especially because the mouth is the organ of speech and words are the noblest products of our mind and spirit. I also realized that the fundamental reason for why I had time and time again postponed bringing this book to completion issued in large part from my desire not to offend anyone and from it possibly eliciting angry and hostile responses. At the same time, I was also reminded of the fact that one of the greatest conquests of psychoanalysis concerned oral fantasies of incorporation and consoled myself by thinking that these conquests had all been made possible by the symbolic meaning of that shameful scene. At that point I felt that I simply had to go

forward with the composition of the book and found myself entirely committed to bringing the project to completion.

I say composition because I had accumulated so much material during two decades that the main problem now involved my having to pick and choose from a large amount of material and to organize the argument. English, not my native language, also surfaced as a problem. Luckily a friend and psychoanalytic colleague in the United States, Mario Beira, decided to accompany me in this last part of the journey. I don't think that I would have been able to bring this manuscript to completion without his generous dedication and assistance. Mario not only edited the text chapter by chapter but, in many instances, served as a supervisor, pinpointing all the passages in which my thought remained overly condensed and my inferences too obscures. He has also enriched my argumentations during many junctures and, in particular, in relation to the question of the relevance of Freud's Hebrew heritage for his fathering of psychoanalysis. My observations on this subject and topic have greatly benefitted from Beira's feedback; among other things, he has alerted me to Gerard Haddad's unique and perceptive interpretation of the 'trimethylamin' chemical formula as embodying the Hebrew letter Shin, an interpretation which Beira himself has expanded on and further elaborated in his work.

During the last phase of the project my emotional tone began to be more and more oriented towards the passive and regressive dimension of Freud's unconscious response to the event of Emma's childhood trauma. To recall Freud's own phrasing, I slowly began to accept the inevitable. I imagined that Freud's analysis of Emma had, since the very beginning, stirred memories for him that stretched far back to his early childhood years, including memory of the ceremony of his younger brother's (Alexander) circumcision. These memories, suppressed by Freud, eventually broke through as he stood atop the Acropolis in Athens with Alexander, an event which in 1936, exactly 50 years after his pediatric training, was immortalized by him in his essay "A disturbance of memory on the Acropolis"; it was that text, along with *Moses and Monotheism* (Freud, 1939), that combined to help give shape to Freud's final legacy.

This first volume will be soon followed by a second volume bearing the subtitle “Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi”. The deepest and essential aspects of Freud’s countertransferential reaction to Emma Eckstein’s trauma and symptoms will be identified, examined and explored in this second volume. It begins with Freud’s formulation of his early seduction theory and ends with the Freud-Ferenczi debate on the possibility of disentangling in analysis the original traumatic memories from the synthetic reactions of the Ego.

Volume 1 of this two volume study is divided into three sections: 1) The Medical Context; 2) Withstanding Trauma; and 3) Topography of a Split. Material found in section 1 treats the theme of the castration of women and girls and other practices featuring the manipulation of the female body by male medical doctors. These practices not only came to impact Freud and his theorizing of psychoanalysis but have been largely ignored by historians in our field in their work (chapters 1 and 2). The material found in section 1 offers an important missing piece in the literature which allows us to restore and better understand the historical context, texture and soil upon which the foundation of psychoanalysis was built. Section 2 focuses on Freud’s position against the practice of female castration as a cure for hysteric women. It features a new reading of the specimen dream of psychoanalysis, the dream of Irma’s Injection (chapters 3 and 4). I argue that Emma Eckstein’s childhood trauma (her circumcision) precipitated a psychic reaction in Freud which, despite his effort to defend against it, determined a number of central aspects of his self-analysis and theorizing activity. The third and final section of the book offers the building blocks for a new narration of the foundation of psychoanalysis. It does so by examining Freud’s identification with Emma, his rescue and restoration fantasies, and his elaboration of the themes of punishment for masturbation and castration anxiety. It is argued that Emma’s fantasy of having a penis developed as a consequence of her genital mutilation and that it came to inform the theory of human bisexuality formulated by Fliess and endorsed by Freud. Finally, it is suggested that Freud’s emotional reaction to Emma’s circumcision tapped directly on his conflicts with Judaism, the religion of his ancestors, contributing to Freud’s decision not to have his own male children circumcised (chapters 5 thru 10).

Appreciation is expressed for permission to reprint in whole or in part the following works:

Chapter 1: Bonomi, C. (2009). The relevance of castration and circumcision to the origins of psychoanalysis. 1. The medical context. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 90: 551-580.

Chapter 4: Bonomi, C. (2013). Withstanding Trauma: The significance of Emma Eckstein's Circumcision for Freud's Irma dream. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 82 (3): 689-740.