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Daniel Burston, *A Forgotten Freudian: The Passion of Karl Stern*, Karnac: London, 2016; xxiv + 256 pp., ISBN 9781782203469, £26.99 (pbk)

Daniel Burston, the distinguished historian of the 'psy disciplines', has authored the most recent title in Karnac's History of Psychoanalysis Series, edited by Peter L. Rudnytsky and Brett Kahr. The series aims at a deliberately inclusive approach to the history of psychoanalysis, whether re-introducing classic texts to new readers, or presenting the best of scholarship, regardless of historical period.

Burston's monograph recovers, assesses, and contextualises the life and work of the Catholic psychoanalyst Karl Stern (1906-75). Although now little remembered, Stern, as Burston shows, was an important public intellectual in the post-war Canadian psychoanalytic and Catholic milieu. Stern's reputation was established by his widely translated spiritual and intellectual autobiography, *The Pillar of Fire* (1951), a narrative crucially shaped by his experience, as a Jew, under the Nazi regime, and the quandaries of his later conversion to Catholicism. Burston traces Stern's intellectual, professional, and personal biography from his origins in a Jewish family in small-town Bavaria, through his professional development in Germany and subsequent flight as a refugee from Nazi Europe, to his eventual flourishing as a Catholic-convert psychiatrist in post-war Canada. Following on from a series of biographically structured chapters, Burston provides a number of closing reflections, covering: Stern's reconciliation of psychoanalysis with Christianity; his conversion to Catholicism; and the potential for reading a latent Catholicism in Lacan's psychoanalysis.

Although much of *A Forgotten Freudian* draws on Stern's published material, Burston's project of recovery and assessment is greatly enhanced by access to the recently opened Karl Stern Archive, housed in the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center in the Gumberg Library at Duquesne University. This archival material allows elaboration of the

details of Stern's life and work, revealing, for instance, private communications from notable figures such as C.S. Lewis, Gregory Zilboorg, Graham Greene, and Robert Lowell (88-9, 136-7). The archival material also helps Burston explore Stern's uncertainties and failings, such as difficulties in dealing with his son Antony's homosexuality, manic depression, and eventual suicide. Burston makes good use also of published sources. He shows carefully how Stern's public pronouncements on Jewishness tended 'to convey the impression that Judaism is inherently or intrinsically racist, while Catholics are only racist in a contingent manner, as a result of faulty education and some unfortunate historical accidents' (206). Stern's investment in an idealized 'invisible Church' was thus a strategy of self-deception toward the Catholic Church's historical (and recent) track record of anti-Semitism.

Alongside its historical and biographical analysis, *A Forgotten Freudian* also brings Stern's ideas into contemporary debates in the philosophy of psychiatry. Stern's detailed rapprochement of psychiatry with Catholicism, *The Third Revolution* (1955), provides much productive ground for careful and nuanced exegesis. Burston's Stern-inspired discussion of the 'Catholic roots and ramifications of Lacan's ideas' (221) is also fascinating, although it does read more as a starting point than a fully developed analysis, and also feels somewhat ancillary to the main argument. From a more personal point of view (as a scholar of R.D. Laing, as well as less celebrated Scottish psychiatrists and psychoanalysts), I would have enjoyed a more extended discussion in Burston's aptly-titled section on 'How to become a forgotten intellectual' (158-160). Just what, more generally, are the factors in the erasure of once significant public intellectuals, and in the revival of scholarly and popular interest in them?

Burston's monograph is very lucidly written – even in the trickier discussions of phenomenology and theology – and has an easy, conversational tone. There are, though, a number of typos, and one paragraph that is mistakenly set out as a displayed quotation (126-

7), which suggests that in-house copy-editing would be of benefit to Karnac's authors. While *A Forgotten Freudian* is probably too specialised a work to find a large undergraduate readership, it deserves a secure niche in the academic market, appealing to both historians and clinicians, as well as to those involved in the theory, history, and practice of pastoral theology. Burston has done an admirable job of recuperating, and assessing sympathetically – but not slavishly – a forgotten yet significant figure in twentieth-century history of psychiatry and religion.

669 words

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