

Memoirs of My Nervous Illness

DANIEL PAUL SCHREBER

Translated and edited by

IDA MACALPINE

and

RICHARD A. HUNTER

With a new Introduction by

SAMUEL M. WEBER

*Harvard University Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England
1968*

Denkwürdigkeiten

ein

Nervenkranke

nebst Nachträgen

und einem Anhang über die Frage:

„Unter welchen Voraussetzungen darf eine für geistes-
krank erachtete Person gegen ihren erklärten Willen
in einer Heilanstalt festgehalten werden?“

von

Dr. jur. Daniel Paul Schreber,

Genesende während des Aufenthalts im Irrenhaus in Jena, 1811.



**Deutsche Ausgabe in Leipzig,
1908.**

NOTES ON THE CREATION OF A BI-LINGUAL EDITION OF
SCHREBER'S MEMOIRS OF MY MENTAL ILLNESS/
DENK WÜRDIGKEITEN EINES NERVENKRANKEN

My intro

The bilingual text of Jacques Lacan's introduction to the French translation of Schreber
The map of this text and the map of Schreber's Germany
The bilingual version of Schreber's text
The bilingual of the newly published texts of Schreber
The complete Konkordanz to the McAlpine translation of Schreber's text

Hooray for Dr. Schreber,
Der echte deutscher Aufheber
Did someone say "gehakte Leber"?
Ei Weh! Ei Weh! Ei Weh!

This little song came to me as an inspiration and should be sung to the tune of "Hooray for Captain Spaulding" from the Marx brothers' film, *Animal Crackers*.

I have used the 1988 Harvard paper back edition of Schreber's memoirs for two reasons. It contains the introduction by Samuel Weber and it has the notation of the page numbers from the original 1903 German edition in the margins which numerous scholars use in referring to this text. It is interesting to note that only in the margins of 1955 edition (Dawson) and the 1988 reprint of 1955 edition (Harvard), are the page numbers of the original German edition of Schreber's Memoirs in German. These page numbers of the original 1903 edition are referred to as "*Schreber page numbers*" by McAlpine and Hunter. So these two books in English, the 1955 Dawson and the 1988 reprint (Harvard) have two sets of page numbers. Page 37 of the Dawson/Harvard edition has a table of contents which refer *only to the Schreber page numbers in the margins*, that is, to the original page numbers of the original 1903 German edition. Incidentally, neither of the two recent German editions (1973, 1995) of Schreber's Memoirs (*Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken*) that I used to create this bilingual had these *Schreber page numbers* in the margin..

What I find a little bit strange is that the new Harvard paper back edition of January 2001 of Schreber's memoirs has excluded (one could almost say "foreclosed") the excellent introduction by Samuel Weber as well as those page numbers in the margin, to which most writers, such as Lacan in his Seminar III *On Psychoses* refer.

Another use that these Schreber page numbers have, is that by noticing any gaps in the order of these Schreber page numbers that are in the margins, one can spot the page numbers that were censored by the Schreber family. One might say that this Schreber page number system is the translator's own *Aufschreibsystem*.

The German text that I have used is Daniel Paul Schreber's *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* published by Kadmos Verlag in Berlin, in 1995 which unfortunately did not contain the Appendix, (pages 361-516 of the original book in German) which contain the various official documents from the legal proceedings of Schreber's appeal for release from the sanatorium. For that, I have used the 1973 Focus Verlag edition, entitled *Bürgerliche Wahnwelt um Neunzehnhundert*

I have added at the beginning of this bi-lingual text in English and German, another bi-lingual text which is in English and French. It is the text of Jacques Lacan's introduction to the French translation and edition of Schreber's Memoirs. I thought that this would be informative and fitting, and to show that my reason for producing this text is generated by my interest in Jacques Lacan who has given an entire seminar on the topic of this book, that is, Seminar III, *The Psychoses*, 1955-1956..

In the text itself, I have inserted copies of the five plates which were in the original 1955 English edition published by Dawson, as well as the 'Acknowledgements' and the page with the quote from Goethe.

I have included also, Part III, *The New Texts of Schreber*, already in a bilingual form from the book, *Psychosis and Sexual Identity: Toward a Post-Analytic View of the Schreber Case*; Edited by David B. Allison, Prado de Oliveira, Mark S. Roberts and Allen S. Weiss and published by State University of New York Press, Albany, 1988.

At the very end of this bilingual, I have added a concordance which I hope the reader will find useful. This concordance is the result of Janet Lucas's research (she has put the entire English translation of Schreber's Memoirs on line) and my suggestion to her to sort this file and prepare a concordance of this entire work.

It is also interesting to consider that the original text of Schreber in German was probably published in the old Gothic script, judging from the reproduction of the title page. Compare this to the writings of Freud in German. To the best of knowledge, there is not one work of Freud that was originally published in German in the old Gothic script.

In understanding the significance of this book, I have found that several books and articles in addition to Freud's paper, Psycho-Analytic Notes on An Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides), and Lacan's Seminar III, On Psychoses and his article in his Écrits, On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis, are very helpful. They are:

Dr. Zvi Lothane's *In Defense of Schreber*

Eric Santner's *Schreber's Own Private Germany*

Russell Grigg's From the Mechanism of Psychosis to the Universal Condition of the Symptom: On Foreclosure, from *Key Concepts of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* edited by

Dany Nobus

Dany Nobus's Diagnosis via speech and transference from his book, *Jacques Lacan and the Freudian Practice of Psychoanalysis*.

David B. Allison's *Psychosis and Sexual Identity*

The various articles of Janet Lucas which can be found on the internet at her website, <http://www.yorku.ca/jlucas/>.

This particular project is something that I had wanted to do for over two years, and after having completed a few other projects, I have finally brought this project to a successful end.

The reader will find hundreds of expressions in German that were translated rather strangely by McAlpine into English as well as some paragraphs that appear to be much shorter in English! (some of the paragraphs on pages 139, 165, 185 for instance) And on Schreber page number 487, is only one example where the English translation does not conform to the paragraph breaks in the German text. Here, the English translation *does not* have a paragraph break where one exists in the German original.

And for those of us that are interested in Yiddish, it is an amazing coincidence that on page 302 the expression "Putz oder Schnuck" appears, although they mean something entirely different in the two languages of German and Yiddish.

In the foot-note on page 181, the Greek word for fantasy or imagination, in the McAlpine English translation is rendered as φαντασμα and in the German translation as φαντασμα (Schreber page number 234). I wonder which one was in the original 1903 edition in German.

Having seen quite a few texts of what I would consider to be of lesser importance published in a bilingual form, I am quite surprised that this text has not until now been made available in this more useful form..

Richard G. Klein
August 2005
New York City