

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS IN THE ACADEMY?

Zahid Chaudhary

Recently I was teaching Freud's essay 'Thoughts for the Times on War and Death', and its words, though addressing the violence of World War I, seemed to be uncannily relevant to our contemporary moment: the befuddling confusion of living through a historical upheaval, the triumph of libidinal impulses over economic self-interest, the unconscionable results of a social contract in which states visit extreme violence on populations around the world, the preponderance of suffering, and the increase in global death tolls in spite of historical promises of the good life, promises made by the 'world-dominating nations of white race' now engaged in mass destruction. Disillusionment reigns, but Freud cautions against thinking of one's own historical period as exceptional, and such caution is salutary for us now.

Does psychoanalysis have a future in the academy? One hesitates to imagine a future at all in these disillusioned days. The only effectual oracular domain has long been taken over by the soothsayers of high finance, and even they seem reticent. While it is no surprise that globalization did not deliver the brave new world it had promised, it does come as a shock that the revolutionary demands of decolonization and civil rights movements, even in their modulated and anodyne forms such as the neoliberal rhetoric of 'diversity and inclusion' are being so decisively repudiated across the globe by populist right-wing movements. Resentment and discontent seem the order of the day, no matter what your political commitments. Everyone feels objectively vulnerable even as the distribution of vulnerability becomes more acutely differential than ever, not only due to the usual business of making war but also due to the intensification of ecological disasters. If psychoanalysis has a future in the academy, it will be due to its ongoing and incomplete project of understanding how people, individually but also collectively, live in the face of finitude. It is death itself whose ineluctable tug, including its fascination, conditions our motivations. Interest, economic or otherwise, or the preservation of life itself is only a part of the story. As neoliberal rationality gives

more of life over to risk and as, concurrently, climate change continues to underscore finitude for more people the unfinished work of psychoanalysis will become all the more urgent.

ZAHID R. CHAUDHARY is Associate Professor of English at Princeton University, and the author of Afterimage of Empire: Photography in Nineteenth-Century India. He is currently at work on a book entitled Impunity: Notes on a Global Tendency.

Omnia El Shakry

The death of psychoanalysis has been foretold countless times, and yet, like the unresolvable excess of mourning, it persists. Its time is perhaps best understood as that of the unpast, the undead. Likewise, as historians, we inhabit the unpast, a past that we cannot lay to rest, that we revisit in our daily intercourse with the dead in a relationship of transference. What psychic stakes do we hold in our objects of study, what attachments to the past that both enable and delimit our understanding of the present and the recursive space of the future? In our encounter with the dead across time and space, we could be said to inhabit the space of the *barzakh* – a liminal zone, an isthmus conceptualized by the medieval mystic Ibn ‘Arabi as a space between the living and the dead, between waking and sleeping life, and between consciousness and unconsciousness.

More concretely, and less speculatively, we might ask: what, precisely, does the presence of an unconscious mean for writing history? In what ways has psychoanalysis pressed us into rethinking the relationship between the unconscious and temporality? Arguably, it has given us the tools for the most sophisticated theorization of temporality intellectually available to us: contradiction and overdetermination, condensation and displacement, repetition and refinding, discontinuity and rupture. History appears not at all a seamless process as some historicists would have it; rather, the chronos of history is continually interrupted by the topoi of the unconscious. What greater relevance could there be for psychoanalysis than in our time, ‘the Times of War and Death’?

OMNIA EL SHAKRY is Professor of History at the University of California, Davis and is the author of The Arabic Freud: Psychoanalysis and Islam in Modern Egypt and the editor of the multi-volume Gender and Sexuality in Islam.

Stephen Frosh

The place of psychoanalysis in the academy has always been controversial, from Freud’s (1919) paper ‘On the Teaching of Psycho-analysis in Universities’ onwards. Lacan was especially scathing: in Seminar XVII (Lacan, 1991) he made several statements that boiled down to the claim that academic understanding systematically reverses psychoanalytic understanding, for example (p. 41) that the

person working in the realm of the ‘university discourse’ ‘cannot do anything other … than reverse my formula, that is, give it a significance that, it has to be said, is strictly contrary to the truth.’ If this is so, what can we hope for? Well, as I tell students on the MA Psychoanalytic Studies in my institution, we can differentiate ourselves from psychoanalytic trainings around the issue of psychoanalysis being an object of study. Where trainings have as their task to socialize trainees into the structure of psychoanalysis, so that they see the world through its eyes, the academy should be a place for critical evaluation and exploration of what psychoanalysis is about – where it comes from, how it has arisen, what its impact is, what it can and cannot do. But there is something more: even within this conventional way of looking at the academic task, psychoanalysis radicalizes things. It teaches that there are ways of knowing that are not mystical, yet are also not reducible to the usual practices of supposedly rational intellectual scrutiny. We need to be changed by the things we learn, not just use them, as Lacan (1991, p. 201) also said, to gain or award ‘credit points.’ In a period of neoliberal dominance, this is an essential truth.

STEPHEN FROSH is a Professor in the Department of Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck, University of London, and author of many books including Hauntings and Psychoanalysis Outside the Clinic, both published by Palgrave.

Ben Kafka

Does psychoanalysis have a future in the academy? As a practical matter, in NYU’s Department of Media, Culture, and Communication alone, we have over a hundred undergraduates taking courses on the subject every year. Elsewhere in the university there’s a push to start a minor in psychoanalytic studies; we’re also considering an interdisciplinary master’s program. Meanwhile I’ve been consulting with a growing number of graduate students who are choosing to train as analysts rather than pursue academic careers.

It’s the undergraduates who give me the most hope; as long as they keep showing up, the courses will keep being offered. And why wouldn’t they? Sex isn’t going away any time soon; nor anxiety, narcissism, hatred, guilt, the compulsion to repeat, the death drive. Courses come alive when we talk about these topics simply and directly. To be sure, it took me while to figure this out. There were several frustrating years for both me and them as I tried to get them excited about Fliess, the controversial discussions, and Borromean knots. They couldn’t have cared less. Then again, neither did I at that age – I was just better at faking it.

I’m much less optimistic about the future of psychoanalytic theory within the university. A certain mindlessness has overtaken the human sciences. We need only look at *Critical Inquiry*’s ‘most cited’ list, where, over the last few years, Bruno Latour’s ‘Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam?’ has overtaken both Jerome Bruner’s ‘Narrative Construction of Reality’ and Joan Scott’s

‘Evidence of Experience.’ Neither of these articles was explicitly analytic, but they were at least in dialogue with psychoanalysis. Latour just shouts at it. I don’t see this trend reversing any time soon. Then again, Ruth Leys’s ‘The Turn to Affect: A Critique’ has also just joined the list, so maybe not all is lost, at least not yet.

BEN KAFKA is a historian at NYU and a psychoanalyst in private practice. He is currently working on a book entitled The Grand Unified Theory of Unhappiness.

Christopher Lane

‘We have been reading the wrong Freud to children,’ quipped Jacqueline Rose at the start of *The Case of Peter Pan*, her 1984 study of the ‘impossibility of children’s fiction’ (Rose, 1992[1984], p. 12). Today, with psychoanalysis in the academy seeming even more precarious, the concern might be better put as ‘We have been reading the wrong Freud to students.’

The Freud taught to Psychology and Premed undergraduates, at my university and numerous others, is as the figurehead for a clinical perspective that is *least* psychoanalytic. Early ties to neurology are noted, even praised, but later work is faulted as esoteric, speculative, at times self-contradictory. We’re given the Freud of successive phases of sexual development, not of their unreliability and undoing. It’s the equivalent of reading *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* without the work’s multiple footnotes and revisions (see Davidson, 1987).

The Freud taught more often in the humanities, by contrast, and still regularly at my university, is the Freud of those footnotes. Whether addressing the unconscious, the uncanny, or the death drive, this more-difficult and opaque Freud encapsulates what of humanity is most paradoxical and unquantifiable. It is the Freud who comes to see sexual identity as a contradiction in terms; who views gender and sexuality in terms of their asymmetry, failure, and irresolution; and traces racial fantasies and projections to the complex faultlines of group and ethnic identification. It is also, no accident, the Freud who is least optimistic about humanity’s longer-term prospects, including from its attraction to a range of fundamentalisms.

Although the Freud of Psychology and Psychopharmacology Departments is still taught, selectively and heavily abridged, it is the Freud of the humanities who has most to teach us conceptually, clinically, heuristically, and ontologically. Among a litany of other factors, we learn why, as subjects and citizens, we remain at odds with ourselves and each other, by dint of being subjects-in-language swept into a fascinating, passionate, and incurable condition.

CHRISTOPHER LANE teaches literature and intellectual history at Northwestern University. Editor of The Psychoanalysis of Race and co-editor of Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis, he is also the author of six books, most recently Surge of

Piety: Norman Vincent Peale and the Remaking of American Religious Life (*Yale, 2016*).

George Makari

If past is prologue, then psychoanalysis will hang on in the academy, its place in intellectual history most secure, and its applications in an array of humanities intriguing and at times useful. But what if, to quote a recent Nobel laureate, something is going on, and we don't know what it is. Call me Mr. Jones, but that seems more likely than not. Post-modernism has announced that something has ended, without defining what has commenced. The risk, as I see it, is that we are entering a period of anti-humanism, a period where the value of studying inner life is diminished. If so, psychology's import would dramatically decline. Computational models of the brain will increasingly imply we are machines, and dialectically lead – as has happened in the past – to a resurgence of supernatural beliefs. Left behind would be natural notions of the mind, and that means psychoanalysis will be seen as a relic.

In clinical psychology and medicine, psychoanalysis has only one narrow road forward. Either it breaks free of its sectarian and purist chains, and becomes the theoretical basis for a range of psychotherapies, or it dies. That prediction does not require a wizard; it fact, it has nearly happened in the United States. It would be a sad paradox if the model of mind that laid so much emphasis on individual adaptation was itself so controlled by ideologues that it failed to adapt itself.

GEORGE MAKARI is the Director of Weill Cornell's Institute for the History of Psychiatry, and is the author of Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis and Soul Machine: The Invention of the Modern Mind.

Anna M. Parkinson

The question is not so much, 'Is psychoanalysis still relevant?' Rather, it is: 'Which incarnations and permutations will psychoanalysis take us through in the twenty-first century?' This is a question of metamorphosis and malleability, rather than one of suitability and intellectual fashions. Of course, there is no singular 'psychoanalysis,' but rather myriad forms that we peer at variably and at different times through the lens of gender and sexuality, for example, or, historically speaking, as lying on either side of fascism in the twentieth century (and, now, in the face of the twenty-first century's virulent spawn of 'brave new worlds' of authoritarianism and populism). Most keenly, psychoanalysis gifts us with incisive hermeneutic tools, furnishing us with a form of critical reading beyond the tenets of realist representation in any variety of (con)texts, ranging from films and literature to the lived social scenes that we navigate daily. Further, by understanding subjectivity as the hinge between the individual and their life world, psychoanalysis examines nothing less than the consistency of society,

exemplified in Ranjana Khanna's writings on decolonization in the Algerian context, as much as in Adam Phillips's revelation of the extraordinary quotidian detail tightly woven into the fabric of everyday life. Indebted to the critical analysis of the complex relationship between representation and affect in its particular social context, psychoanalysis reveals the myriad attachments constitutive of the web of social scripts we inhabit. As a reading practice, psychoanalysis offers an optic able to shift flexibly between figure and ground, depth and surface, signification and desire. It may destabilize what we think we know all too well; things are seldom what they seem. Psychoanalysis may offer keen tools for thinking through – and learning to tolerate – that which is paradoxical, ambiguous, a-normative, and ambivalent. It does this by producing a pause between reactions of fear and those of aggression; a pause that offers a co-inhabitable zone. Whether portrayed as destructive, iconoclastic, reparative, or as the scourge of humanity (Freud once called it, most likely only half-ironically, 'the plague'), psychoanalysis continues its grand romance with popular culture. It recognizes that which we cannot always know or even name – be it fantasy or nightmare – but that we nonetheless carry with us from yesterday into today, and which structures the horizon of our futures, even as this rapidly recedes before us – demanding rethinking – in the age of the anthropocene.

ANNA M. PARKINSON is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of German, as well as the interim Co-Director of the Critical Theory Cluster, and a member of the Advisory Board for the Holocaust Educational Foundation at Northwestern University. Her first book, An Emotional State: The Politics of Emotion in Postwar West German Culture, was published in 2015 by the University of Michigan Press.

Camille Robcis

For historians, psychoanalysis presents a number of immediate conceptual and methodological challenges. When Freud, at the end of the nineteenth century, invented the concept of the unconscious as the foundation for his new discipline, he deliberately sought to go beyond the nature/culture paradigm. As he had observed, his first patients (primarily hysterics) suffered from symptoms that were neither purely biological/neurological nor entirely socially determined: rather, their origin was psychic. Freud's goal was thus to escape the biological essentialism of much of the psychiatric profession focused on brain localization but also to present an alternative to sociological explanations that assumed that since all behavior was learned, it could also be un-learned. His patients' symptoms, Freud was noticing, were not disappearing simply because they wanted them to. In this sense, Freud invented the 'talking cure' as a way to gain access to this other reality, psychic reality. Thus, in Freud's case studies, empirical truth mattered much less than fantasy. It was less important to determine whether Herr K. had *really* kissed Dora than to understand Dora's retrospective

reconstruction of the scene of seduction – in other words, her own individual fantasy.

As I see it, fantasy is one of the most exciting psychoanalytic concepts that historians can turn to. It forces us to move beyond the empirical and beyond the event, to analyze how fantasy functions – both on the individual and on the collective levels – as the social's precondition, as its 'psychic glue' to use Jacqueline Rose's expression (Rose, 1996, p. 3). Attention to fantasy complicates a straightforward definition of experience as will or determination. With fantasy, identity is never unified or whole, but discontinuous and often contradictory. At the level of the group, fantasy is equally central but perhaps even more difficult to grasp. Historians of fascism, for instance, have tended to reduce it either to a 'failure of rationality' or to a political pathology if they are coming from a liberal perspective, or to a 'false consciousness,' a displacement of a more accurate social reality, if they are informed by a Marxist viewpoint. In either case, what is missing from these accounts is an understanding of the actual *desire* expressed in these mass movements, the collective fantasy of a cleansing violence and a regenerated social body. Only psychoanalysis can elucidate this phenomenon, psychoanalysis not as a fixed grid that can be applied indiscriminately, but rather as a set of questions that constantly push us to think harder.

CAMILLE ROBCIS is Associate Professor of History at Cornell University. She is the author of *The Law of Kinship: Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and the Family in France (2013)* and of several articles on French intellectual, legal, and political history. She is currently working on a history of radical psychiatry in France.

Michael Rothberg

Although I have never seen myself as a psychoanalytic theorist, I always say that I learned to read from the example of Shoshana Felman's brilliant Lacanian-deconstructive interpretation of *The Turn of the Screw*. Not a few colleagues of my generation have told me the same thing. The lesson has stuck with me – just last week I was teaching Freud and Lacan in my introductory class on critical theory and next week we'll be reading James's novella. Influenced subsequently by Marxism, postcolonial theory, and other forms of historicist thought, I have moved far beyond the linguistically-oriented poststructuralism exemplified by Felman – and beyond its recoding as trauma theory by Felman and her colleague Cathy Caruth in the 1990s – but I still value the combination of close reading and speculative thought that characterizes this version of psychoanalytic theory as a form of critique. At a moment when critique itself is under attack, inside as well as outside the humanities, psychoanalysis offers a strong hermeneutic – indeed, I wouldn't hesitate to admit, a hermeneutic of suspicion that we need today to make sense of our world.

Does psychoanalysis have a future in the academy? This question ultimately depends, I would argue, on the larger question of whether the academy itself has a

future in which critical thinking of the sort practiced by the humanities and interpretive social sciences retains a crucial place. The answer to that question is far from obvious, but the ideal of a university where critical theory – including psychoanalysis – can flourish remains worth fighting for.

MICHAEL ROTHBERG is the 1939 Society Samuel Goetz Chair in Holocaust Studies and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization and Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation, and has co-edited The Holocaust: Theoretical Readings.

Barbara Taylor

The relationship between psychoanalysis and history is difficult – occasionally fruitful, often fractious, always complicated. The complications and difficulties come from both sides. By and large historians do not regard subjectivity as a historical force in its own right. The inner lives of historical subjects – their wishes, fears, fantasies: both conscious and unconscious – are epiphenomena, by-products of a variety of factors: socio-cultural, discursive-textual, or, in a more recent development, neurological. This is true even in newish historical fields like the emotions and sexuality, where psychoanalytic ideas might be expected to make inroads but have been pushed back by prevailing paradigms.

Nor is the historical mind itself open to scrutiny. The pasts that historians evoke are, of necessity, imagined pasts, no matter how strongly evidenced; but the imaginings that shape our historical narratives are either unacknowledged or derided in the name of ‘objectivity’ (an interpretive fantasy if ever there was one!).

Psychoanalytic theory is potentially such a valuable resource for historians; it’s frustrating to see it dismissed outright. But its application also raises problems. History shows us subjectivities imagined and articulated in ways that are alien to psychoanalytic thinking. When psychoanalytic concepts are foisted onto these subjectivities, they drain the life from them. This is especially true of the transcendental religious models of selfhood that dominated western discourses of subjectivity until well into the nineteenth century. Scrutinizing these religious models through a psychoanalytic lens can yield real insights (anyone doubting this should look at Lyndal Roper’s 2016 biography of Martin Luther). But a wholesale redescription of religious subjectivities in psychoanalytic terms hollows them out, robbing them of their own rich histories and vocabularies.

If historians have a shared aim, it is to make the worlds of the dead intelligible and meaningful to the living. A psychoanalysis that will assist us in this needs to be adapted to the material under scrutiny, allowing for the strangeness as well as the familiarity of past lives. And presentational issues matter too. History-writing is a literary enterprise that accommodates theoretic illuminations but buckles under

the weight of imported theoretical machinery. Reflecting on this, the historian of psychiatry Peter Barham offers advice which I think wise (remembering of course that ‘forgotten’ ideas are never forgotten, just stored ready for use in our mental backshops):

My sense is that the psychoanalytic imagination works best when it goes about its business in a low-key way, generating metaphors and concepts that arise out of the circumstances it is writing about, rather than imposed onto them. To put it another way, it seems to me that the historian has to learn from psychoanalysis, then forget it, and then reinvent it through his [or her] own art. (Barham, 2009, n.p.)

BARBARA TAYLOR is Professor of Humanities at Queen Mary University of London. Her publications include Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination (2003), On Kindness (with Adam Phillips, 2009) and The Last Asylum (2014).

Jean Walton

While considering this question, I happened to be reading two texts that, when juxtaposed, sharpened my sense of the potential urgency of a reply. In *On Grammatology*, Derrida, almost off-handedly, writes that if psychoanalysis marked his reading of Rousseau, it was because he was writing from ‘*within* the history of psychoanalysis’ and that ‘we operate today [it was 1967] within a certain network of significations marked by psychoanalytic theory, even if we do not master it’ (Derrida, 1974, pp. 160–1). Derrida could take for granted both a ‘we’ and a mode of thinking so habitual that it had become a part of our autonomic functioning. If we couldn’t ‘master’ psychoanalysis as a tool, it was because ‘we’ breathed it like air.

But not everyone was breathing it in the late sixties – nor even today – as I was reminded during a visit by Masha Gessen to our campus. In her new book, she probes the devastation wrought when ‘the academy’ is deprived of ‘the tools and even the language for understanding itself ... If a modern country has no sociologists, psychologists, or philosophers,’ she asks, ‘what can it know about itself? And what can its citizens know about themselves?’ (Gessen, 2017, p. 3). Party line had been that the Soviet people were ‘shaped entirely by their society and the material conditions of their lives’; there was no room for inner conflict, and thus ‘no reason to take up the subject of the psyche’ (pp. 23–4). Though it may have flowered in the early years of the revolution, psychoanalysis was symbolically sent off with the other disciplines of self-knowledge on Lenin’s ‘Philosophers’ Ship,’ banished for at least the next 50 years.

So by the 1960s, what a Derrida could take for granted – the breathable air of a discourse of the psyche – was available, Gessen reminds us, only in infrequent gasps to the Soviet student, sucked in through the academic equivalent of the tiny *fortochkas* cut into Russian windows sealed against the winter cold, that is, those rare scholars who asked questions outside accepted dogma, and documents, like

Freud's case studies, hidden away in restricted library collections accessible only to a few. 'The way to learn,' Gessen writes, 'was to hunt for [*fortochkas*] and then to stick your whole face in them and breathe the fresh air as though one's lungs could be filled up with reserve supplies' (p. 27). Even if things seemed to open up again, in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet era, psychoanalysis had not been able to take hold as a discourse in Russia, thus fatally hampering the efforts of modern day Russians to address the trauma of a history of terror. I have no idea what shape the 'future' of psychoanalysis might take in the academy, except to ask that we not send it away just yet on the Philosophers' Ships that seem, already, to be taking on passengers. Let not the 'future' of psychoanalysis be 'history,' just yet, if by 'history' we mean dead.

JEAN WALTON is Professor of English at the University of Rhode Island where she teaches modernism, film, and gender studies. She is the author of Fair Sex, Savage Dreams: Race, Psychoanalysis, Sexual Difference (Duke University Press, 2001). Her book Mudflat Dreaming: Waterfront Battles and the Squatters who Fought them in 1970s Vancouver (New Star Books) and her co-authored book Buffalo Trace: A Threefold Vibration (Spuyten Duyvil) will appear in 2018.

Eli Zaretsky

Let me address this question by discussing the place of psychoanalysis in our cultural and intellectual life more generally. In the era when psychoanalysis was a central force, roughly between World War I and the 1970s, analysis combined three projects. First, it was a clinical treatment, which in vulgarized forms was pervasive in psychotherapy and at points aspired to take over psychiatry, at least in the United States. Second, it was a theory of culture and politics, inspiring such projects as mass psychology, efforts to understand the psychological roots of war and nationalism, analytic biographies of major figures, a hermeneutics of suspicion applied to mass culture, advertising and film, efforts to understand leadership, morale and charisma, and speculations concerning the nature of history itself. Third, it served as a kind of folk psychology, one that informed and helped shape everyday life, influenced the mass media and the higher arts, and included an ethical dimension centered on the demand for self-reflection. The reason that psychoanalysis became central to western and even non-western cultures is because it combined all three of these projects into what we must call the psychological revolution of the twentieth century. So the first question we need to ask is why this project no longer exists, and how are we to understand the state of psychoanalysis today.

Readers of *Psychoanalysis and History* will probably agree that psychoanalysis today is badly understood and is often in ill repute. Where we may disagree is in the cause. In my view the central factor behind the problems that psychoanalysis faces today is its reduction to a clinical project. One can already observe the struggle of psychoanalysis with its reduction to a clinical ethos and practice during

Freud's lifetime. For example, this was the issue at the center of the conflicts with Ferenczi. When Ferenczi died in 1932, Freud's unkind obituary commented: 'his need to heal and help had become imperious.' Yet Freud went to his death believing that the treatment of neuroses was one of the signal contributions of psychoanalysis. The true shrinking was largely accomplished during the 1950s and 1960s in the United States and Great Britain. No doubt the transition from beleaguered but intellectually vital sub-currents of German and Central European Jewish life to the largely self-satisfied middle-class Protestant liberalism of the Anglo-Saxon world was difficult, and the reduction of psychoanalytic ambitions was one adaptation.

Still, if one looks at the conference program for the American Psychoanalytic Association or similar organizations, one will find that nearly every session is centered on clinical technique. Politics and culture enter in the form of such titles as 'Working with the Third World Survivor of Sexual Abuse.' If one looks at Frederick Crews's distorting but largely successful campaign to diminish Freud's standing, it is completely centered on the question of whether psychoanalysis 'works' as a treatment. The typical defense of psychoanalysis is that 'we have changed so much since Freud.' I once heard Robert Michels, a training analyst at Columbia University, answer Crews by saying that Freud wanted to keep psychoanalysis as his own private baby, and worked to keep it out of the university. In fact, Freud desperately wanted to see psychoanalysis accepted in the university – in Berlin, Jerusalem, New York, and Chicago among other venues – and worked toward that end. When *Secrets of the Soul* was published an analyst wrote a letter to the *New York Times* condemning me of all people for calling psychoanalysis a 'pseudo-science.' Since this was never my view, it took me a while to realize that his real motive was to get his name and address into the paper for referrals.

Some will point to the Lacanian explosion of the sixties and seventies as having preserved the freedom of psychoanalysis from scientism, the medical model, and the 'helping professions.' And it is true that *le champ freudien* does foreground the application of psychoanalysis to culture more than clinical treatment. However, there is a real question as to whether Lacanianism continued the psychoanalytic project or whether it was part of a new project, a new way of understanding subjectivity, closely related to feminism, gay liberation, and identity politics, which is my view. Some too will argue that feminist versions of psychoanalytic thought, which are certainly well ensconced in the university, as well as a feminist-inflected relational analysis, have successfully advanced psychoanalytic thinking and practice. I think it is important here to remember that the original psychoanalytic thinking concerning gender came out of a series of late nineteenth-century anthropological texts – for example, Maine, Morgan, Tarde – that at root were rethinking the place of gender in the evolution of civilization itself. To reduce the enormity of the question of family and gender to the problematic of sexism – important though that is – demonstrates how difficult it will be to keep the early exploratory spirit of psychoanalysis alive.

As to the university itself, psychoanalysis already exists in many European and Latin American universities, although not in the United States, except as Lacanianism. But it is important to be open-eyed about this relationship. In spite of what I said about its reduction to its clinical dimension, psychoanalysis benefited from establishing a foothold for itself outside the university. It was bolder and far more interdisciplinary than it could have been as a university department. In all three of its dimensions – as a clinical practice, as a theory of culture, history, and politics, and as a folk psychology – psychoanalysis is a theory of psychology. But established psychology departments have been universally opposed to it and this will not change. A basic problem is the failure to understand the difference, which goes back at least to Vico, between the natural sciences (such as neuroscience and cognitive psychology) and a scientific approach to our own subjectivity and our own creations, such as literature, culture, and civilization itself. Unlike fields that are based on a natural science model, psychoanalysis cannot be reduced to a university discipline. But this is also true of history, literature, and philosophy; they cannot be reduced to university disciplines either. Then there is the question of the critical character of psychoanalytic thought. The truth is that any form of thinking that does not pamper narcissism or reinforce the idols of the tribe will have an uphill struggle everywhere.

Finally, we have to consider the future of the academy itself. A society that was not able to prevent the election of Trump will not be able to sustain the university as a cradle for difficult ideas, whether old or new. The reduction of knowledge to its instrumental and functional dimension, the reign of quantification and digitalization, the PowerPoint mentality, the subordination of the university curriculum – like everything else – to the department of finance is eliminating all forms of critical thinking from the university, not just psychoanalysis. Still, although the extent of the problem may be alarming, this condition is not new. Any critical thinking has to work against the prejudices and special interests that rule our society. ‘Dare to Struggle,’ the first half of a famous slogan of the sixties, remains as relevant as ever, even if the second half now seems hopelessly utopian.

ELI ZARETSKY is Professor of History at the New School for Social Research and the author of Political Freud and Secrets of the Soul.

References

- Barham, P. (2009) Paper delivered to roundtable discussion of Michael Roper's *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009), at Psychoanalysis and History seminar, Institute of Historical Research, 2 December 2009.
- Davidson, A.I. (1987) How to do the history of psychoanalysis: A reading of Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. *Critical Inquiry* 13(2): 252–77.
- Derrida, J. (1974) *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Freud, S. (1919) On the teaching of psycho-analysis in universities. In S. Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. from the German by J. Strachey. London: Hogarth Press, vol. 17, pp. 169–74.

- Gessen, M. (2017) *The Future is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Lacan, J. (1991) *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book XVII*. New York: Norton, 2007.
- Rose, J. (1992[1984]) *The Case of Peter Pan, or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Rose, J. (1996) *States of Fantasy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.