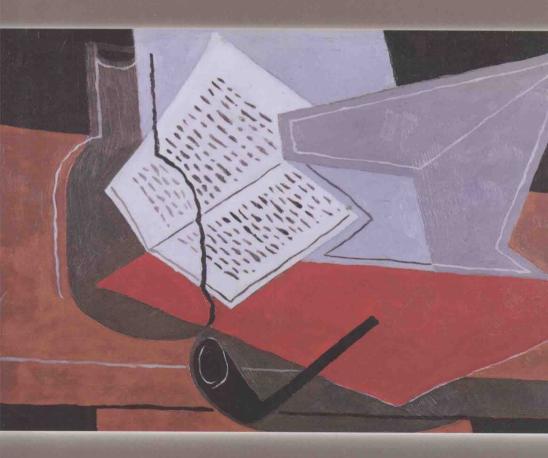
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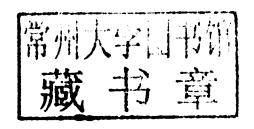
PSYCHOANALYSIS LITERATURE, AND CULTURE

Edited by Laura Marcus and Ankhi Mukherjee



A Concise Companion to Psychoanalysis, Literature, and Culture

Edited by Laura Marcus and Ankhi Mukherjee



WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2014 © 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd

Registered Office

John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A concise companion to psychoanalysis, literature, and culture / edited by Laura Marcus and Ankhi Mukherjee.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4051-8860-9 (cloth)

- 1. Psychoanalysis and literature. 2. Psychoanalysis and culture. I. Marcus, Laura.
- II. Mukherjee, Ankhi.

PN56.P92C666 2014

150.19'5-dc23

2014001165

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Cover image: Juan Gris, Bowl and Book (detail), oil on canvas. © The Art Gallery Collection/Alamy

Set in 10/12.5pt Meridien by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India Printed and bound in Malaysia by Vivar Printing Sdn Bhd

1 2014

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Acknowledgments

We would like to profusely thank our commissioning editors at Wiley Blackwell: Emma Bennett, who championed the book idea, and Ben Thatcher, who guided it to completion. We are grateful to Alys Moody, then a graduate student in the English Faculty at Oxford, for her careful preparation of the essays to requisite style specifications over summer 2013. We are also thankful to Janet Moth for her meticulous copyediting, and to Bridget Jennings and Joanna Pyke for their assistance. In curating a collection of essays on the history, theory, and futures of psychoanalysis, we revisited the formative force of this discourse (and its diverse reckonings) in our scholarly lives. For this, and for the laughter-filled hours of a strong collaboration and friendship, we thank our contributors and each other.

Laura Marcus Ankhi Mukherjee

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Introduction: Psychoanalysis at the Margins

Laura Marcus

The essays in this volume represent the variety of new ways of taking up the legacy of psychoanalytic thought and theory, reaching forward to us from the close of the nineteenth century. The continuities between then and now are revealed in the focus on sexualities, on the form of the case history, on the place of vision and the specular, and on the role of language as manifestation of unconscious processes. There are also marked discontinuities, however, not only from the original texts of psychoanalysis but from many of their later twentieth-century reformulations. Most notable, perhaps, is the near-total absence of any direct discussion of the Oedipal, the "complex" which for Freud founded human identity, sexual organization, and his new science. The Oedipal and Oedipalization were central topics, to take one example, in Maud Ellmann's excellent collection of essays, Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism (1994). Two decades later, our contributors continue to be preoccupied with questions of sexuality and psychic life, but their frameworks are substantially those of queer and postcolonial theory, cultural criticism, translation in its many senses, models of time and temporality, and the human-animal interface.

In Part I of the volume, "Histories," Stephen Frosh offers the fullest account of the place of psychoanalysis in the twentieth century – a

A Concise Companion to Psychoanalysis, Literature, and Culture, First Edition. Edited by Laura Marcus and Ankhi Mukherjee. © 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Published 2014 by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. long twentieth century, since the processes he describes seem to persist into the second decade of the current century. He mentions in passing the neglect of psychoanalytic theory by psychologists and stresses the conjunction of "the slow and rather dull work of clinicians" and "a more flamboyant and speculative use of psychoanalysis as a key to cultural knowledge."

whatever one might think of the validity or efficacy of psychoanalysis, it has come to define a very widespread form of cultural experience and to be indispensable to ways of living in, as well as understanding, that cultural form. ... the human subject reflexively deploys psychoanalytic understanding in the construction of selfhood; psychoanalysis itself is reflexively embodied in the cultural processes to which it has partially given rise.

The other paradox Frosh identifies is the place of rationality in psychoanalytic theory: committed to scientific rationalism while "enacting the irrational otherness it is striving to theorize." He mentions in particular the uneasy relationship between psychoanalysis and telepathy, parapsychology, and so on – the topic which is at the center of Carolyn Burdett's chapter discussed below – but his main focus is on a similarly tense relationship, with reflection on colonial and gender relations. In both cases, what initially looks like a disaster area, shaped by Freud's analysis of the "primitive" on the one hand and the masculinist and heteronormative associations of the explanatory models he developed on the other, contributes to some of the most powerful and influential work in postcolonial and feminist theory.

Andrew Webber's analysis of the "case study" – a term which he points out was not used by Freud – is one of several chapters which bring out the notorious difficulties of Freud translation. The case study is, however, "the foundational mode of representation for psychoanalysis ... a form of study that psychoanalysis adapts from established conventions of medical and other scientific or disciplinary writing, but also adapts to its own purposes." Freud does use the term *Krankengeschichte* which, as Webber points out, "modulates between the historical account of the analysand's illness and that of the treatment of the illness in question." As Webber shows in detail in Freud's discussion of Wilhelm Jensen's novella "Gradiva," the relations between *Fall* (case), and *Anfall*, *Unfall*, *Zufall*, and so forth inevitably get lost in translation.

Burdett, as noted above, addresses the question of the occult and paranormal which "were not the marginal interests of cranks but