

**A Dialogue in the Realm of Afterthought: Review of  
Judy Gammelgaard, *Psychoanalysis After Freud:  
Memory, Mourning and Repetition*. Translated by  
Maria Yassa. London and New York: Routledge, 2022.  
Hardback ISBN 9781032048628 Paperback ISBN  
9781032046716. 148 pages, 11 B/W Illustrations.  
Hardback £130. Paperback £31.99**

Simona Mitroiu

Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, ‘Alexandru Ioan Cuza’ University of Iași  
E-mail: simona.mitroiu@uaic.ro

DOI: 10.51865/JLSL.2022.12

### Abstract

This is a review article of Judy Gammelgaard’s *Psychoanalysis After Freud: Memory, Mourning and Repetition* which engages critically with the author’s main ideas and connects this book with other contemporary scholarship in the field.

**Keywords:** *psychoanalysis, the unconscious, afterthoughts, memory studies, the Uncanny, Judy Gammelgaard*

Sigmund Freud’s oeuvre continues to put forward what Judy Gammelgaard calls in her monograph *Psychoanalysis after Freud: Memory, Mourning, and Repetition* ‘afterthoughts’. Afterthoughts are the natural consequence of the fact that ‘the insights and realisations of the psychoanalytic process occur in afterwardness’ (1). When we think of the ‘unconscious’, our afterthought is to inextricably link the concept to Freud’s name, although he ‘was not the first to use the concept but it was he who theorised the unconscious as accessible to a certain form of exploration but nevertheless as belonging to the unknown and invisible’ (2).

Many advocates of psychoanalysis point out the significant influence of Freud’s work on knowledge by indicating its contextual transformations, whereas critics question the continuous referral to Freud’s theories which they find trivial, and whose correctness they categorise as incidental.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> For Freud’s impact on psychoanalysis see, for instance, Frank J. Sulloway, *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Nathan G. Hale, Jr. *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917–1985* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); John Burnham, ed. *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012); John Forrester, *Dispatches from the Freud Wars: Psychoanalysis and its Passions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) which asks the question whether we can talk about a history of psychoanalysis. For Freud’s lasting impact on areas such as the philosophy of mind, ethics, religion, the nature of the self and subjectivity, see Jonathan Lear,

Judy Gammelgaard, a training analyst in the Danish Psychoanalytic Society and the International Psychoanalytic Association and a Professor Emerita in the Department of Psychology at the University of Copenhagen, belongs to the category of scholars who find Freudian's theories valid and fruitful nowadays. She reads the 'unfinished character' of many of his works as 'an inspiration to further thinking' and she regards herself and her colleagues 'as heirs and followers', which is the light in which she expresses her hope that her monograph will be read (2).

Gammelgaard's previous work combine clinical experience and research on psychoanalysis in a perfectly balanced way. For instance, in her book *Betweenity: A Discussion of the Concept of Borderline* (Routledge, 2010) she developed a theoretical approach to borderline personality disorder and has contributed to conceptual research on the concepts of 'catharsis', 'empathy', 'psychical reality', 'borderline personality disorder' and 'the unconscious'. Her studies also show her deep interest in bringing psychoanalysis into dialogue with literature, art and culture, a line of research that is closely followed in *Psychoanalysis after Freud*, the translation and reworking of her previous volume *Efter Freud – Erindringsforstyrrelser og andre normale mærkværdigheder* (2018).<sup>2</sup>

*Psychoanalysis After Freud: Memory, Mourning and Repetition* comprises 11 chapters dedicated to Freud's texts, some of them being lesser known by the larger public or discussed by experts, such as 'A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis', 'The Sense of Symptoms and the Paths to the Formation of Symptoms', etc. Her selection of a corpus of texts is based on Freud's interest in the 'normal peculiarities of everyday life' (1). She is interested in showing how many of his theories followed close observations of various processes, working-through and multiple reworkings and readaptations, and how they are

---

*Freud* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005). For Freud's influence on literary studies and Mieke Bal's notion of 'psychopoetics', see Ludo Abicht, 'Marx, Freud, and the Writers: A New Attempt at Integration', *Style* 18.3, Special Issue 'Psychopoetics' (Summer 1984): 377-86. Mieke Bal defined 'psychopoetics' in 'Introduction', *Poetics* 13.4-5 (Special Issue 'Psychopoetics-Theory', 1984): i-ii, 279-98 and 'Introduction', *Style* 18.3 (Special Issue 'Psychopoetics at Work', 1984): 239-60.

See also Malcolm Bowie's *Freud, Proust and Lacan: Theory as Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) on Freud's influence on literary studies. For the importance of Freud to trauma studies, see Cathy Caruth's works, especially *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996) and Dominick LaCapra's works, especially *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994) and *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), as well as Eric L. Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1990). For new insights into how important Freud's work is for memory and trauma studies, see Danielle Knafo, 'Freud's Memory Erased', *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 26.2 (2009): 171-90; and her edited book, *Living with Terror, Working with Trauma: A Clinician's Handbook* (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2004). For new work on Freud's life, see Andrew Nagorski, *Saving Freud: The Rescuers Who Brought Him to Freedom* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2022) and Shuli Barzilai's essay in the present issue ('Freud and the Topos of the Wandering Jew', *Word and Text – A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics* 13 (2023): 121-43. For a synthesis of the critiques of Freud, see Paul Robinson, *Freud and His Critics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). For an ample critique of Freud's followers, see Todd Dufresne, *Killing Freud: Twentieth-Century Culture and the Death of Psychoanalysis* (London and New York: Continuum, 2003) and *Against Freud: Critics Talk Back* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007). Dufresne identifies two main reasons for validating and circulating Freud's theories: the habit of association that encourage researchers to cite Freud or "Freudians" like Jacques Lacan', and the 'plague spread throughout the Western world' as 'culture of therapy' (Dufresne, *Killing Freud*, VIII).

<sup>2</sup> For the review of the original version published in 2018, see Maria Yassa, 'Judy Gammelgaard: Efter Freud – Erindringsforstyrrelser og andre normale mærkværdigheder, After Freud – Memory Disturbances and Other Normal Remarkabilities (reviewer's translation of title)', *The Scandinavian Psychoanalytic Review* 42.1-2 (2019): 114-17.

embedded in the uniqueness of each case, subject or object of Freud's interest in the unconscious which he characterized in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as 'inaccessible and incomprehensible' (2). Identifying connections between texts, proposing a reading lens that combines Freud's theories and observations with other writers, philosophers and artists' expressions and reworkings of the same topics, Gammelgaard argues for a dialogue between theories and practice, using the concepts of remembering, mourning and repetition, which are considered the cornerstone of psychoanalysis. The book moves from the analysis of transience and memory to afterthoughts on mourning, symptom and diagnosis, love, and the Uncanny, through an inclusive approach, and by combining theory and clinical practice from which she brings her own examples.

Gammelgaard validates Freud's method of speculation as well as the role of the analyst who becomes part of the research process through the closeness and interest also marked by the 'demons of the unconscious mind' (2). She repeatedly states that the point of departure from Freud's theories and concepts was always an observation escaping immediate grasp, therefore allowing the creation of an afterthought realm, where multiple contradictions and reworkings become both possible and equally valid. The unfinished character of many of Freud's theories also allows speculations in and through an interlinking process, adding personal considerations and contextual strata to this afterthought realm. Furthermore, afterthoughts involve a delay specific to psychoanalytic insight, a memory that can cause retroactive understanding and an escape from the immediacy of life. Gammelgaard traces some features of afterthought by referring to its reflectiveness expressed in reading a text: 'several layers of signification which are not evident at first reading' are revealed (1); its delay can allow grasping and elucidating the 'psychological complexity' of an 'apparently mundane event' (15); it implies 'a form of thinking'; it has the ability 'to summarise the enigmatic and alien, and make it familiar' (23).

The first chapter which discusses Freud's text 'On Transience' introduces the author's method of supplementing Freud's observations with literary expressions from poetry and fiction, without going into many details on why an example or another will be used. However, she does mention that while it is not clear whether the walking tour invoked in Freud's essay actually happened, Freud chose to conceal the identities of his two companions, Rainer Maria Rilke and Lou Andreas-Salomé with whom he conversed on the transience of nature and human beauty (6). Gammelgaard connects her thoughts on the despair caused by the transience of beauty and perfection, its inevitability, the pain and the lack of the ability to mourn via Rilke's and Marcel Proust's literary reworkings of transience, with a specific focus on mourning as depression or melancholia. The impossibility to end the work of mourning, to withdraw love from the person who was the object of love into the ego differentiates between 'normal mourning' and the mourning of the depressive or the melancholic who 'has difficulty in terminating the work of mourning', and it is the grounding aspect of Freud's theory of unresolved mourning (8). Gammelgaard opposes her own afterthought to Freud's speculations and, analyzing Rilke's and Lou's biographies, wonders whether Freud's interpretation of Rilke's impossibility to distinguish between blossoming beauty and transience as 'an expression of his inability to work through mourning' (9) is correct. She brings further Proust's example, who, 'like Rilke, insisted on letting the narrator of *Remembrance of Things Past* live through the emotional turmoil inherent in mourning.' (10) As a 'master of elegy', Rilke never freed himself from 'the lost object', yet in the pain of having lost it, he found an 'impetus for creative work' (10). If for Freud, there were 'two attitudes' to the

phenomenon of transience, Gammelgaard adds a ‘third position’, that of using transience as ‘creative force’ (12). Gammelgaard is right, since, what is, in fact, creative force, if not a direct connection to the way in which artists experience life, by continuously bordering ‘normality’ and expressing their resolution to not lose themselves in despair when facing the transient nature of life?

The chapter entitled ‘A Disturbance of Memory’ uses Freud’s own memories of the Acropolis from a journey he took in the company of his younger brother, Alexander. Athens and the Acropolis were for Freud and his brother ‘the aim of their dreams and hopes’ (16), hence a symbol of their childhood desires. Freud used this voyage as an argument for the complexity and multidimensionality of the psyche, discussing how memories arise, and how they are linked to pieces of reality and displaced in relation to the past. Freud interpreted his surprise and the separation he sensed, seeing the Acropolis as a trigger for the anxiety and guilt which had resulted from challenging and triumphing over his father who had neither the means to travel to the Acropolis, nor the education to imagine this journey. Gammelgaard looks beyond the paternal complex and questions the ‘touch of uncanny’ (19) explained through the suspension or blurring of boundaries that create ‘experiences with a powerful sensory character’ and that are lived as ‘an imbalance in the continuum that links the perception of external reality to the perception of the psychic reality of the internal world’ (20). Freud’s experience was of an epiphanic nature and Gammelgaard endeavours to take her reader into the literary worlds of Romain Rolland, James Joyce, Rilke and Proust as examples of ‘epiphanic experiences’ (21) based on their creative ‘poetics of the return of the lost’ (23). The disruption of the balance between perception and representation creates a path for possible ‘disturbances of memory’ to insert themselves as part of the psychopathology of everyday life and to hint at the ‘original loss’ (23). It would have been interesting to include some (after)thoughts on life as trace and its extension in Jacques Derrida’s *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, which dealt with techniques of archiving and mnemonic inscription, yet Gammelgaard does not deal with how deconstruction can also be regarded as an afterthought to Freud’s work.<sup>3</sup> Neither does she take into account Freud’s essay ‘Screen Memories’ (1899) and his book *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1909), where the notion of ‘screen memory covers up a traumatic event that cannot be approached directly’.<sup>4</sup>

The third chapter deepens the questions of the perceptual system, which receives impressions from the outside and can also be activated from within, of reality testing and remembering, offering a receptive surface and holding lasting traces of the former inscriptions. Gammelgaard connects the delay that characterizes the triggering of memories with the concept of ‘afterwardness’, which is central to her book. Remembering is placed at the center of the psyche, as an internal representation of external events, and defined as ‘the ability to allow oneself to be lastingly changed by events that had taken place at some earlier time’ (27). Clinical work proved that experiences are stored in an internal memory system and they can influence consciousness. Nothing proves the permeability and vulnerability of the psyche more than the traumatic experiences

---

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996). On this notion, see Laurent Milesi, ‘The Remediation of (Post-)Humanities’, *Word and Text – A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics* 10 (2020): 126-42.

<sup>4</sup> Ernst van Alphen, ‘Transforming Trauma into Memory’, in *Arts of Healing: Cultural Narratives of Trauma*, ed. Arleen Ionescu and Maria Margaroni (London and New York: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2020), 100.

connecting the unconscious and the brokenness of its barriers with the void left by the ‘non-representation’ of trauma (31). Post-Freudian research proved that traumatic memories are experienced with the same intensity over and over again.<sup>5</sup> The work of memory and the impact of trauma are highlighted in the next chapter, ‘They Suffer from Reminiscences’, through a discussion of the ‘healing aspect to the work of remembering as well as to that of mourning’ (40), a point which was clarified by Proust, Virginia Woolf and Søren Kierkegaard. Their works are used to illustrate and deepen the understanding of Freud’s observations on those who suffered from painful reminiscence. In particular, Marcel Proust’s work *Remembrance of Things Past*, ‘a cathedral of remembering’ (46), – a novel on whose analysis Gammelgaard’s chapter begins and ends – is used to exemplify the return of impressions as memories and to discuss the differences between memory and recollection, a distinction that was not made by Freud.<sup>6</sup> She underlines the dynamic nature of memory as well as the constant rewritings and transformation of memories in new contexts, yet her examples remain only from the field of literature philosophy. It would have been interesting if Gammelgaard had included a discussion on how contemporary neuroscience highlights that memories are not frozen in time, to demonstrate that memory is not a passive but rather a constructive act.<sup>7</sup> Nowadays, the field of memory studies continues to evolve through the complex analysis of both individual subjects and cultural phenomena. For Freud the hermeneutical approach supplemented the archaeological method of digging through strata of memories, indicating the work of interpretation and the unreliability of memory.

The fifth chapter, ‘Narcissism’, discusses the ‘self’s relation to itself’ (51), beyond the disturbances revealed by psychological literature, therefore as an important and normal aspect of self-esteem. The chapter begins with Kierkegaard’s thoughts on narcissistic despair, and the ‘self-destructive aspect in the mirroring love of self’ and looks closely at Jaques Lacan’s contributions in relation to ‘the imagery dimension of narcissism and of the self’, also pointing to ‘the importance of the other in the emergence of narcissism and of the self’ (52). Narcissistic disturbances are connected to the psychology of shame. Gammelgaard shows how Lacan’s theory of the mirror stage was changed in the contemporary age into ‘mirroring self-affirmation’, related to the “‘selfie’ phenomenon” (52). According to Gammelgaard, people’s inability to free themselves from the constraints of the idealized self-image translates into the inability to see oneself from the outside, as a refraining to use the other’s gaze, directs the desire ‘towards an illusory image of perfection’ (52). Although including comments on the nowadays life and challenges in the form of her afterthoughts, Gammelgaard does not provide her readers with current discussions or data resulted from various debates the case of selfies that she addresses. Since one of the keywords of the monograph is ‘memory’, it would have been worth mentioning that although media studies often describes selfies as an act motivated by vanity, narcissism and fakery, or something which is born from insecurity and conformity,<sup>8</sup> memory studies has brought a different approach to selfies that goes

<sup>5</sup> See for example, Joseph Fernando, *A Psychoanalytic Understanding of Trauma: Post-Traumatic Mental Functioning, the Zero Process, and the Construction of Reality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Lerner, L. Scott’s ‘Mourning and Subjectivity: From Bersani to Proust, Klein, and Freud’, *Diacritics* 37.1 (2007): 41-53 (unacknowledged by Gammelgaard) focuses on similar ideas and connects Proust’s novel to Freud’s memories of the Acropolis.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example: Gilbert Pugh, ‘Freud’s “Problem”: Cognitive Neuroscience and Psychoanalysis Working together on Memory’, *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 83 (2002): 1375-95.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Laurie McNeill, and John David Zuern, ‘On-line Lives 2.0: Introduction’, *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 38.2 (2015): i–xv, and Fleur Gabriel, ‘Sexting, Selfies and Self-Harm:

‘beyond narcissism’ and has developed in connection with ‘the trauma selfie as a cultural practice’ and as an act that might reveal ‘new modes of witnessing stemming from new technologies’.<sup>9</sup> In order to differentiate between what Freud called the narcissistic object choice and the narcissistically self-sufficient person (Freud had identified self-sufficiency in children), Gammelgaard uses Johannes Vermeer’s paintings as examples ‘depicting women resting in their own self-sufficient being’ and radiating a ‘rare intimacy’ (57). Authors such as Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, or Paul Ricoeur are cited to illustrate the fact that at the heart of the ego there will always be ‘an element of alienation, coinciding with the outline of the other’, and that as ‘self-reflective beings, our selves always stand in relation to something within us that is other than the self’ (59). Following Lacan’s concept of ‘narcissistically suicidal aggression’, Gammelgaard shows how these self-destructive behaviours are moved from the Freudian ‘death drive’ towards the narcissistic spectrum.

Symptoms and diagnoses are discussed in the next chapter, clearly underlining the dangers faced when focusing only on diagnoses which ‘are a way of looking resulting from conclusions about processes and phenomena belonging to an invisible and often inexplicable world, be it the internal world of the body or the internal psychic world’ (65), hence a possible ‘façade, held up as a protective shield’ that can make us ‘forget the distance between signifier and signified’ (66). For Freud symptoms required ‘reading and interpretation’, listening to what the patient says. This is how he concluded that psychoanalysis is a ‘talking cure’ (68). Listening to his patients suffering from hysteria, Freud ‘could shed light on the functioning and disturbances of the psyche’, such as ‘obsessional neurosis’ today termed ‘obsessive-compulsive disorder’ (68). Gammelgaard shows that this very term is indicative of the theory of symptom-development slipping out of diagnosis, which was based on observation and description of behaviour; the treatment targeted removal of symptoms and reduction of anxiety, yet Freud observed that ‘nothing is achieved by the removal of one symptom except clearing the path for a new one’ (69). From her own examples of clinical practice with patients suffering from obsessional neurosis, Gammelgaard demonstrates that symptoms and anxieties must be treated as ‘a window through which one glimpses the hidden cause and pleasure’ (74).

The chapter entitled ‘Why War?’ starts the correspondence between Albert Einstein and Freud to discuss Freud’s interest in the intimate relationship between war and death and to analyse the death drive theory, including the call of contemporary psychoanalysts for revisions.<sup>10</sup> Gammelgaard addresses questions of civilization and morality, beginning with Freud’s reflections on the reasons behind wars, Hannah Arendt’s and Theodor W. Adorno’s considerations of banal evil and the absence of self-reflection and moral

---

Young People, Social Media and the Performance of Self-Development’, *Media International Australia* 151 (2014): 104-12.

<sup>9</sup> Kate Douglas, ‘Youth, Trauma and Memorialisation: The Selfie as Witnessing’, *Memory Studies* 13.4 (2020): 396. For an ample analysis of selfies as mediating the access to traumatic global memories, see Jackie Feldman, and Norma Musih, ‘Selfies in Auschwitz: Popular and Contested Representations in a Digital Generation’, *Memory Studies* 16.2 (2023): 403-20.

<sup>10</sup> For a thought-provoking article that analyses the same essays by Freud that this chapter focuses on (‘Thoughts for the Times on War and Death’ (1915), and ‘Why War?’ (1933), see Anthony Sampson, ‘Freud on the State, Violence, and War’, *Diacritics* 35.3 (2005): 78-91. See also the discussion on Freud’s method of treatment for mental-health disorders in his patients suffering from both ‘accident neurosis’ that triggered ‘traumatic hysteria,’ ‘traumatic neurosis,’ and ‘precipitating trauma’ in Arleen Ionescu and Maria Margaroni, ‘Introduction’, in *Arts of Healing: Cultural Narratives of Trauma*, ed. Arleen Ionescu and Maria Margaroni (London and New York: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2020), x.

awareness, and the ‘universe of obligation’ in Zygmund Bauman’s work (85). The questioning of civilization continues with the topic of repression as well as the theories of sexuality and the super ego, branching off into a discussion of guilt as aggression turned inwards, and directed against the ego. Bauman’s term ‘liquid modernity’ and Slavoj Žižek’s ‘obscene superego’ are introduced as an afterthought related to Freud’s super-ego concept and analysis of the discontents of civilizations, as the notion of authority nowadays has a ‘new significance beyond patriarchal configuration’ (95), a power that was transferred from paternal authority to the anonymous mass.

The chapter ‘On Love’ which focuses on three of Freud’s texts on this topic (‘A Special Type of Object Choice Made by Men’ [1910], ‘On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love’ [1912], and ‘The Taboo of Virginity’ [1918]) allows Gammelgaard to use clinical aspects and to reflect on the work and role of the analyst.<sup>11</sup> She discusses the transference of love and highlights the danger of placing the analyst in a central position, observing that ‘the transference is not directed to the analyst personally, but to what the analysis sees in the analyst – not what is evident, but on the contrary, what is hidden’ (111). Gammelgaard underlies the analyst’s silence in abstaining from ‘being loving’ – subject of ‘transference love’ – and ‘speaking from a position of not knowing’ in order to create a dialogue within the framework of ethical imperatives. She adds a thought-provoking note by using Jean Laplanche’s concept of ‘hollow’ – ‘a space where the original, past situation can be recreated’ (111) – here referring to both the analysand’s and the analyst’s recreation of the patterns of love carried since childhood.

Chapter 10, ‘The Uncanny’, engages with Freud’s eponymous essay (1919) that revealed so much about the unconscious, which is the focus of this thematic issue of *Word and Text*. The one hundred-year-anniversary ‘The Uncanny’ was recently celebrated in *Oxford Literary Review*,<sup>12</sup> a fact which is never mentioned by Gammelgaard. In her discussion on Freud’s theory of the uncanny as the return of repressed memories and his reading of E.T.A. Hoffmann’s story ‘The Sandman’, Gammelgaard seems to be more critical. Admitting that ‘The “Uncanny” is exemplary as a classical psychoanalytical reading of a piece of literature’, she considers that Freud’s reading ‘has not stood unquestioned’ (117). Yet when it comes to document her assertions, Gammelgaard limits herself to saying that ‘the essay was read and criticised by psychoanalysts as well as literary scholars’, without mentioning one single name (117). She criticizes the way in which Freud presented the story as an ‘explanation of castration anxiety’ and the accumulation of examples that ‘create more confusion than clarity and leave the reader

<sup>11</sup> For Gammelgaard’s previous work on this topic, see Judy Gammelgaard, ‘Love, Drive and Desire in the Works of Freud, Lacan and Proust’, *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92.4 (2011): 963-83.

<sup>12</sup> A conference on 100 years since the concept of the Uncanny was coined by Freud was held at Sussex University in 2019. *Oxford Literary Review* published several of the papers presented there plus others in an issue entitled ‘“We Ourselves Speak a Language that is Foreign”: One Hundred Years of Freud’s Uncanny’. See the editorial: Nicholas Royle, ‘“We Ourselves Speak a Language that is Foreign”: One Hundred Years of Freud’s Uncanny’, *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): v-vii. For different meanings of the uncanny, including the importance of this concept for psychoanalysis, see in the same issue: Andrew Bennett, ‘Something One Does Not Know One’s Way about in’, 140-4; Peter Boxall, ‘Both Realities Occurring at Once’, 154-8; Josh Cohen, ‘Psychoanalysis Itself’, 167-70; Sarah Jonckheere, ‘Hosting and Ghosting Freud: Derrida as Uncanny Philosopher’, 210-14; Elissa Marder, ‘Un’, 233-6; Eric Prenowitz, ‘Uncanny Cast’, 265-8. For its development in different cultures, see Arleen Ionescu and Lanlan Du, ‘Chinese Versions of the Uncanny’, 205-9 and Judith Still, ‘The Uncanny Indian’, 287-90; Mariam Zia, ‘Negotiating Meaning: The Case of “The Uncanny”, and Ajīb-o Gharīb’, 319-23. For its relevance in our contemporary world, see Laurent Milesi, ‘Freud’s Uncanny in the Posthuman Valley’, 247-51; Pamela Thurschwell, ‘Uncanny Allegory and the Return of the Repressed Garfield Phone’, 291-5.

with the impression that this accumulation of examples has the irrevocable character of repetition.’ (119) Gammelgaard could have benefited from reading, for instance, Nicholas Royle’s monograph entitled *The Uncanny* and David Farrell Krell’s more recent short essay on Hoffmann and Freud, that unpack some of the meanings that she calls confusing.<sup>13</sup> However, if the analysis of Freud’s ideas on the Uncanny does not raise to readers’ expectation, Gammelgaard adds ‘the experience of clinical work with trauma, sexual violations and various other psychological conditions characterised by lack of representation’, which allow her to demonstrate that

When traumatic experiences, because of their overwhelming character, find no space in the psyche, they can neither be forgotten nor re-pressed. The only defence for such an experience is a psychic annihilation, rejection or, in psychoanalytic terms, disavowal of the traumatic experience. (123)

The ‘disavowal of the traumatic experience’ resulting from the impossibility to forget or repress traumatic experiences creates anxiety – an anxiety that includes variations of what Gammelgaard calls ‘repetition of the same’ (123). Therefore, as Gammelgaard notes, the uncanny is not ‘the secret which should have remained hidden but now is revealed, but (...) the homely which has become homeless’ (123), a definition that is extended to the unconscious: ‘not just the homely and the known, but also the unknown, the demonic and the radically uncanny’ (124).

The last chapter, ‘Psychoanalysis at the Frontier’, argues for understanding psychoanalysis and the unconscious as not bound and restricted to psychic suffering, repressed ideas and returning as symptoms, but manifested ‘in the parapraxes of everyday life, in dreams and wherever human imagination is expressed’ (127). Arguing that the most original results of Freud’s theories are created through interactions with other research areas, including human sciences, Gammelgaard questions the idea of sublimation and discusses Freud’s analysis of Leonardo da Vinci and his theory of ‘the longed-for, desired and lost object’ (132). Her thesis is that the concept of ‘sublimation’ is still fruitful nowadays by linking ‘the individual with the collective and the cultural’ and by ‘retaining the idea of the transformative potential of the drive’ (134).

Gammelgaard’s monograph is characterized by stylistic lightness and simplicity, making her afterthoughts reader-friendly and available to a wider audience. The specialist in psychoanalysis, memory and trauma studies, the literary scholar and the critical theorist will often find the lack of references and intersections with other writings on Freud uncanny.

The main strength of this monograph is the open dialogue between psychoanalysis, arts, philosophy, and literature. Nevertheless, the author occasionally fails to construct arguments and explain her choices which appear to be personal and give the reader the impression that are at times loosely interlinked. What is missing is a rationale on how the chapters are structured and especially the way in which the artistic expressions and narratives are used. Despite these shortcomings, the book is a refreshing read, captivating the readers with its discussion on the evolution of psychoanalysis through a continuous dialogue in the realm of afterthought.

---

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); David Farrell Krell, ‘Getting Unscrewed: A Brief, Unhinged Reading of E. T. A. Hoffmann and Sigmund Freud’, *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 229-32.



## Bibliography

- Abicht, Ludo. 'Marx, Freud, and the Writers: A New Attempt at Integration'. *Style* 18.3 (Special Issue 'Psychopoetics', 1984): 377-86.
- Bal, Mieke. 'Introduction'. *Poetics* 13.4-5 (Special Issue 'Psychopoetics-Theory', 1984): i-ii, 279-98.
- Bal, Mieke. 'Introduction'. *Style* 18.3 (Special Issue 'Psychopoetics at Work', 1984): 239-60.
- Barzilai, Shuli. 'Freud and the Topos of the Wandering Jew'. *Word and Text – A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics* 13 (2023): 121-43.
- Bennett, Andrew. 'Something One Does Not Know One's Way about in'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 140-4.
- Boxall, Peter. 'Both Realities Occurring at Once'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 154-8.
- Bowie, Malcolm. *Freud, Proust and Lacan: Theory as Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Burnham, John, ed. *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Cohen, Josh. 'Psychoanalysis Itself'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 167-70.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Douglas, Kate. 'Youth, Trauma and Memorialisation: The Selfie as Witnessing'. *Memory Studies* 13.4 (2020): 384-99.
- Dufresne, Todd. *Killing Freud: Twentieth-Century Culture and the Death of Psychoanalysis*. London and New York: Continuum, 2003.
- Dufresne, Todd. *Against Freud: Critics Talk back*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Feldman, Jackie, and Norma Musih. 'Selfies in Auschwitz: Popular and Contested Representations in a Digital Generation'. *Memory Studies* 16.2 (2023): 403-20.
- Fernando, Joseph. *A Psychoanalytic Understanding of Trauma. Post-Traumatic Mental Functioning, the Zero Process, and the Construction of Reality*. London and New York: Routledge, 2023.
- Gabriel, Fleur. 'Sexting, Selfies and Self-harm: Young People, Social Media and the Performance of Self-development', *Media International Australia* 151 (2014): 104-12.
- Gammelgaard, Judy. 'Love, Drive and Desire in the Works of Freud, Lacan and Proust', *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92.4 (2011): 963-83.
- Ionescu, Arleen and Lanlan Du, 'Chinese Versions of the Uncanny'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 205-9.
- Ionescu, Arleen and Maria Margaroni. 'Introduction'. In *Arts of Healing: Cultural Narratives of Trauma*. Edited by Arleen Ionescu and Maria Margaroni. London and New York: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2020. ix- xxxviii.
- Jonckheere, Sarah. 'Hosting and Ghosting Freud: Derrida as Uncanny Philosopher'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 210-14.
- Knafo, Danielle, ed. *Living with Terror, Working with Trauma: A Clinician's Handbook*. Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2004.
- Knafo, Danielle. 'Freud's Memory Erased'. *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 26.2 (2009): 171-90.
- Krell, David Farrell. 'Getting Unscrewed: A Brief, Unhinged Reading of E. T. A. Hoffmann and Sigmund Freud'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 229-32.
- LaCapra, Dominick. *History and Memory after Auschwitz*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998.

- LaCapra, Dominick. *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Lerner, L. Scott. 'Mourning and Subjectivity: From Bersani to Proust, Klein, and Freud'. *Diacritics* 37.1 (2007): 41-53.
- Marder, Elissa. 'Un'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 233-6.
- McNeill, Laurie, Zuern, John David. 'On-line Lives 2.0: Introduction'. *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 38.2 (2015): i-xv.
- Milesi, Laurent. 'Freud's Uncanny in the Posthuman Valley'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 247-51.
- Milesi, Laurent. 'The Remediation of (Post-)Humanities'. *Word and Text – A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics* 10 (2020): 126-42.
- Nagorski, Andrew. *Saving Freud: The Rescuers Who Brought Him to Freedom*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2022.
- Prenowitz, Eric. 'Uncanny Cast'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 265-8.
- Pugh, Gilbert. 'Freud's "Problem": Cognitive Neuroscience and Psychoanalysis Working Together on Memory'. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 83 (2002): 1375-95.
- Robinson, Paul. *Freud and His Critics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Royle, Nicholas. "'We Ourselves Speak a Language that Is Foreign": One Hundred Years of Freud's Uncanny'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): v-vii.
- Royle, Nicholas. *The Uncanny*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Sampson, Anthony. 'Freud on the State, Violence, and War'. *Diacritics* 35.3 (2005): 78-91.
- Santner, Eric L. *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory and Film in Postwar Germany*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Sullovay, Frank J. *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Still, Judith. 'The Uncanny Indian'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 287-90.
- Thurschwell, Pamela. 'Uncanny Allegory and the Return of the Repressed Garfield Phone'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 291-5.
- Yassa, Maria. 'Judy Gammelgaard: Efter Freud – Erindringsforstyrrelser og andre normale mærkværdigheder', After Freud – Memory Disturbances and Other Normal Remarkabilities (reviewer's translation of title). *The Scandinavian Psychoanalytic Review* 42.1-2 (2019): 114-17.
- van Alphen, Ernst. 'Transforming Trauma into Memory'. In *Arts of Healing: Cultural Narratives of Trauma*. Edited by Arleen Ionescu and Maria Margaroni. London and New York: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2020. 99-111.
- Zia, Mariam. 'Negotiating Meaning: The Case of "The Uncanny" and Ajīb-o Gharīb'. *Oxford Literary Review* 42.2 (2020): 319-23.