

The Transnational Unconscious

The Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series

Series Editors: **Akira Iriye**, Professor of History at Harvard University, and **Rana Mitter**, University Lecturer in Modern History and Chinese Politics at the University of Oxford

This distinguished series seeks to: develop scholarship on the transnational connections of societies and peoples in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; provide a forum in which work on transnational history from different periods, subjects, and regions of the world can be brought together in fruitful connection; and explore the theoretical and methodological links between transnational and other related approaches such as comparative history and world history.

Editorial Board: **Thomas Bender**, University Professor of the Humanities, Professor of History, and Director of the International Center for Advanced Studies, New York University; **Jane Carruthers**, Professor of History, University of South Africa; **Mariano Plotkin**, Professor, Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires, and member of the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research, Argentina; **Pierre-Yves Saunier**, Researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France and Visiting Professor at the University of Montreal; **Ian Tyrrell**, Professor of History, University of New South Wales

Titles include:

Gregor Benton and Edmund Terence Gomez
THE CHINESE IN BRITAIN, 1800–PRESENT
Economy, Transnationalism and Identity

Glenda Sluga
THE NATION, PSYCHOLOGY, AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, 1870–1919

Joy Damousi, Mariano Ben Plotkin (*editors*)
THE TRANSNATIONAL UNCONSCIOUS
Essays in the History of Psychoanalysis and Transnationalism

Forthcoming titles:

Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier (*editors*)
COMPETING VISIONS OF WORLD ORDER
Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s

Matthias Middell, Michael Geyer, and Michel Espagne
EUROPEAN HISTORY IN AN INTERCONNECTED WORLD

The Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series
Series Standing Order ISBN 978–0–230–50746–3 Hardback
978–0–230–50747–0 Paperback
(*outside North America only*)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and the ISBN quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

The Transnational Unconscious

Essays in the History of Psychoanalysis and Transnationalism

Edited By

Joy Damousi

Professor of History, School of Historical Studies, University of Melbourne

and

Mariano Ben Plotkin

CONICET/Professor of History, Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero

palgrave
macmillan



Editorial matter, selection and Introduction © Joy Damousi and Mariano Ben Plotkin 2009.

Foreword © Akira Iriye and Rana Mitter 2009

All remaining chapters © their respective authors 2009.

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2009 978-0-230-51677-9

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, Saffron House, 6-10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The authors have asserted their rights to be identified as the authors of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2009 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN 978-1-349-35456-6 ISBN 978-0-230-58270-5 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9780230582705

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

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

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The transnational unconscious : essays in the history of psychoanalysis and transnationalism / [edited by] Joy Damousi, Mariano Ben Plotkin.

p. cm. — (Palgrave Macmillan series in transnational history)
Includes index.

1. Psychoanalysis. 2. Transnationalism. I. Damousi, Joy.

II. Plotkin, Mariano Ben, 1961–

BF173.T625 2008

150.19'5—dc22

2008029954

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09

Contents

<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
<i>Foreword</i>	xi
Introduction	1
<i>Joy Damousi and Mariano Ben Plotkin</i>	
Section 1 Psychoanalysis and Transnational Modernism	
1 Three Roads from Vienna: Psychoanalysis, Modernism and Social Welfare	19
<i>Elizabeth Ann Danto</i>	
2 Beyond the Blues: Richard Wright, Psychoanalysis, and the Modern Idea of Culture	43
<i>Eli Zaretsky</i>	
Section 2 Psychoanalysis and Transnational Politics	
3 Primitivity, Animism and Psychoanalysis: European Visions of the Native ‘Soul’ in the Dutch East Indies, 1900–1949	73
<i>Frances Gouda</i>	
4 Fascism Becomes Desire: On Freud, Mussolini and Transnational Politics	97
<i>Federico Finchelstein</i>	
Section 3 The Transnational Diffusion of Psychoanalysis	
5 The Travelling Psychoanalyst: Andrew Peto and Transnational Explorations of Psychoanalysis in Budapest, Sydney and New York	127
<i>Joy Damousi</i>	

- 6 Psychoanalysis, Transnationalism and National Habitus:
A Comparative Approach to the Reception of Psychoanalysis
in Argentina and Brazil (1910s–1940s) 145
Mariano Ben Plotkin

Section 4 Challenging Centre and Periphery

- 7 Paris–London–Buenos Aires: The Adventures of Kleinian
Psychoanalysis between Europe and South America 179
Alejandro Dagfal
- 8 The Lacanian Movement in Argentina and Brazil:
The Periphery Becomes the Center 199
Jane Russo
- 9 Origin Stories, Invention of Genealogies and the Early
Diffusion of Lacanian Psychoanalysis in Argentina
and Spain (1960–1980) 227
Sergio Eduardo Visacovsky

- Index* 257

Notes on Contributors

Alejandro Dagfal is professor at the University of La Plata and researcher at the CONICET, the national research council of Argentina. He has written extensively on the history of Argentine psychology and psychoanalysis during the twentieth century, comparing the reception of Anglo-Saxon and French traditions. His works include “La naissance d’une ‘conduite à la française’: de Ribot à Janet”, *L’Évolution psychiatrique*, 67(3), 591–600, Elsevier, Paris, 2002 and “La naissance d’une psychologie clinique ‘d’inspiration psychanalytique’,” *Psychologie Clinique*, 17, 83–102, L’Harmattan, Paris, 2004.

Joy Damousi is Professor of History in the School of Historical Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her recent areas of publication are on the topics of memory and war, the history of emotions and psychoanalysis, themes she has explored in *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Cambridge, 1999); *Living with the Aftermath: Trauma, Nostalgia and Grief in Post-war Australia* (Cambridge, 2001); *History on the Couch: Essays in history and psychoanalysis* (co-edited with Robert Reynolds, Melbourne University Press, 2003), and *Freud in the Antipodes, a cultural history of psychoanalysis in Australia* (University of New South Wales Press, 2005).

Elizabeth Ann Danto is associate professor and chair of the Foundations of Practice Sequence at Hunter College School of Social Work – City University of New York. She is the author of *Freud’s Free Clinics – Psychoanalysis & Social Justice, 1918–1938* (Columbia University Press, 2005) as well as numerous articles on the social history of psychoanalysis, and social welfare and employment policy.

Federico Finchelstein is a graduate student in History at Cornell University. He is the author of *Fascismo, Liturgia e Imaginario* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 2002) and the editor of *Los alemanes, el Holocausto y la culpa colectiva* (Buenos Aires, Eudeba, 1999). He is now working on the relationship between Fascism and the reception of psychoanalysis in Argentina and Italy.

Frances Gouda is Professor of History and Gender Studies in the Department of Political Science of the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. She is the author of three books: *Poverty and Political Culture: The Rhetoric of Social Welfare in France and the Netherlands, 1815–1854* (1994), *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands-Indies, 1900–1942* (1995), and *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia. US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920–1949* (2002). She is co-editor of *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (1999).

Mariano Ben Plotkin is member of the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Argentina) and researcher at the Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social. He is also a professor at the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero (Buenos Aires). His books include *Mañana es San Perón* (1994; English edition by Scholarly Resources, 2003) and *Freud in the Pampas* (Stanford 2001; Spanish edition 2003). He also edited several volumes on topics related to the history of psychoanalysis and of social sciences.

Jane Russo has a PhD in Social Anthropology from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and works as a professor and researcher at the Institute of Social Medicine of the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ). She has written several articles on the history of the “psy” professions in Brasil, and is the author of two books on the subject “O corpo contra a palavra – o movimento das terapias corporais no campo psicológico dos anos 80” and “O mundo psi no Brasil”. She has also co-organized the books “Duzentos anos de psiquiatria” (with João Ferreira da Silva Filho) and “Psicologização no Brasil: atores e autores” (with Luiz Fernando Duarte and Ana Teresa Venancio).

Sergio Eduardo Visacovsky is Professor of Anthropology at University of Buenos Aires, and Institute for Social and Economic Development (IDES) (Argentina), and a researcher at National Council for Scientific and Technical Research of Argentina (CONICET). He has studied how experiences of political process become social memory, contributing to construction of intellectual, academic and professional fields. His most recent books are: *El Lanús. Memoria y política en la construcción de una tradición psiquiátrica y psicoanalítica en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires, Alianza, 2002), and *Historias y estilos de trabajo de campo de campo en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires, Antropofagia, 2002), edited in collaboration

with Rosana Guber. At present, he is researching on crisis experiences of urban middle classes.

Eli Zaretsky is Professor of History in the Graduate Faculty at the New School University in New York City. His book, *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life* has been translated into 14 languages, and his articles on the history of the family, psychoanalysis, and modern cultural history have appeared in numerous scholarly journals. His latest book, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* was published by Knopf in 2005.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Dr. Darwin Stapleton and the wonderful staff of the Rockefeller Archive Centre, and especially Norine Hotchman, for their support and for fostering a stimulating environment of intellectual exchange. Thanks are also due to Warwick Anderson and Richard Keller, the conveyors of the 'Unconscious Dominions: Comparing Histories of Psychoanalysis, Empire, and Citizenship' workshop held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2005, where we had the opportunity of meeting and discussing the possibility of this project the first time. Michael Strang and Ruth Ireland from Palgrave Macmillan have been very helpful and supportive in bringing this project together. Finally, without the energy and intellectual engagement of our contributors, this volume would not have been possible. We thank them all for their lively scholarship and providing us with this opportunity of a genuine transnational exchange.

Joy Damousi
Mariano Ben Plotkin

Foreword

“The Transnational Unconscious” is an intriguing title for a collection of essays on the history of psychoanalysis. How can the unconscious be transnational? On the surface it might be thought that human consciousness is a deeply personal phenomenon and cannot, therefore, be duplicated between individuals, let alone transferred across national borders. On reflection, however, it becomes clear that the very essence of unconsciousness is something that transcends national and other political divisions. It does not matter in which country one lives when speaking of one’s unconscious desires, dreams, and inhibitions. There may be such a thing as national consciousness, but not national *unconsciousness*. Since psychoanalysis deals with the unconscious, it must by definition be considered a transnational scholarly discipline. To be sure, all fields of scholarship are supposed to be universally verifiable and to know no national boundaries, but the history of such disciplines as economics, political science, sociology, and many others (including, particularly, history) shows that at least in their inception they were all embedded in national frameworks. Psychoanalysis was clearly different.

It is not surprising, therefore, and as several chapters in this book point out, that psychoanalysis, which first developed as a specialized field of science in Vienna at the turn of the last century, should have crossed nations and regions without difficulty and found itself replicated in many parts of the world. The focus in this volume is on the diffusion of psychoanalysis from Europe to Latin America, although some chapters deal with Australia, the Dutch East Indies, and the United States as well. The chapters show how a number of prominent European psychoanalysts were instrumental in founding the discipline in Argentina, Brazil, and other countries, and they examine why this particular discipline has flourished so successfully in South America. Transnationalization is not the same thing as universalization, and the authors explore how local academic and social conditions affected the ways in which psychoanalysis was put into practice in these countries. Indigenization and growth added further to the transnational character of psychoanalysis, showing that it could be adapted to local conditions; in other words, it lent itself admirably to transnationalization.

This leads to an interesting perspective on the history of psychoanalysis. It could be, and was indeed, a liberalizing force politically in the sense that it could free individuals from social and political contexts and constraints. As a study of the unconscious, it speaks to the human side of an individual's life, not to his or her political identity or social status. Such an inherently apolitical position does of course have political significance, particularly in authoritarian countries that demand individual subordination to the state or in hierarchically structured societies that differentiate people on the basis of race, gender, and other distinctions. Sigmund Freud was an ardent advocate of transnational civil society, while in Harlem in the US Richard Wright used Freudian theory as a theory of action for racial equality. In the Dutch colony of Indonesia (as Frances Gouda's chapter here shows), psychoanalysis had the potential to foster anti-imperial liberation, although it also provided justification for perpetuating colonial control by positing a primitive unconscious (presumed to be distinct from the unconsciousness of Europeans) that made the indigenous people unfit for self-governance.

All in all, the chapters in this volume make exciting reading for anyone curious about the transnationalization of scholarship or about the local political uses to which an inherently transnational discipline may be put. By providing specific examples of the ways in which psychoanalysis crossed the oceans, adapted to local cultures, and coped with volatile political conditions, the authors in this volume make a valuable contribution to the study of transnational history.

Akira Iriye
Rana Mitter