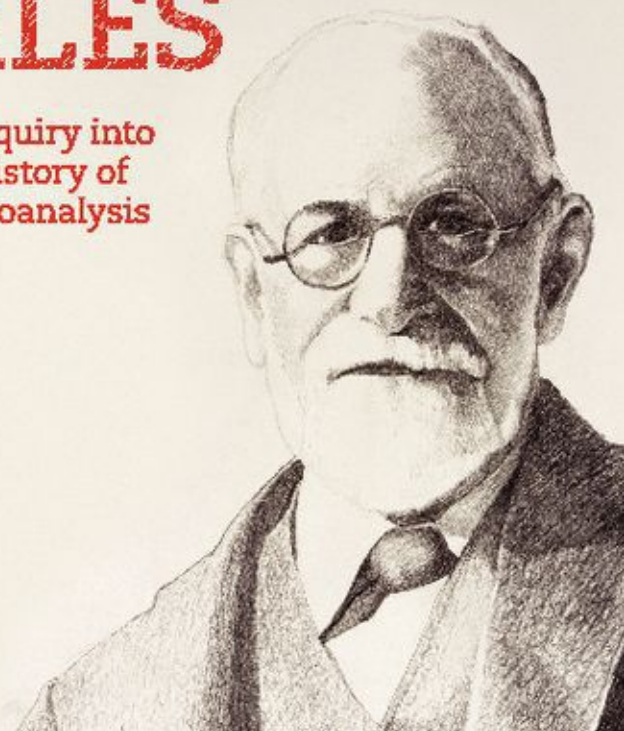


Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen  
and Sonu Shamdasani

# THE Freud FILES

An Inquiry into  
the History of  
Psychoanalysis



---

## THE FREUD FILES

How did psychoanalysis attain its prominent cultural position? How did it eclipse rival psychologies and psychotherapies, such that it became natural to bracket Freud with Copernicus and Darwin? Why did Freud 'triumph' to such a degree that we hardly remember his rivals? This book reconstructs the early controversies around psychoanalysis, and shows that rather than demonstrating its superiority, Freud and his followers rescripted history. This legend-making was not an incidental addition to psychoanalytic theory but formed its core. Letting the primary material speak for itself, this history demonstrates the extraordinary apparatus by which this would-be science of psychoanalysis installed itself in contemporary societies. Beyond psychoanalysis, it opens up the history of the constitution of the modern psychological sciences and psychotherapies, how they furnished the ideas which we have of ourselves, and how these became solidified into indisputable 'facts'.

MIKKEL BORCH-JACOBSEN is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Washington. He is the author of highly influential books on the theory and history of psychoanalysis, and co-author of the best-selling *Le livre noir de la psychanalyse* (*The Black Book of Psychoanalysis*).

SONU SHAMDASANI is Philemon Professor of Jung History at the Centre for the History of Psychological Disciplines at University College London, and is widely regarded as the leading Jung historian at work today. His numerous books have been translated into many languages, and his most recent edited work, C.G. Jung's *The Red Book. Liber Novus* (2009), was awarded the Heritage Award from the New York Book Show for the best book in the last twenty-five years.

Books by both authors have been recipients of the Gradiva Award from the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.



---

The Freud Files: An Inquiry  
into the History of  
Psychoanalysis

Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen  
and  
Sonu Shamdasani

 CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

---

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org  
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521729789

© Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen and Sonu Shamdasani 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written  
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Borch-Jacobsen, Mikkel.

The Freud files : an inquiry into the history of psychoanalysis / Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen  
and Sonu Shamdasani.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-72978-9 (pbk.)

1. Psychoanalysis – History. 2. Freud, Sigmund, 1856–1939. I. Shamdasani, Sonu,  
1962– II. Title.

BF173.B68127 2012

150.19'5209–dc23

2011020724

ISBN 978-0-521-50990-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-72978-9 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or  
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to  
in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such  
websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

---

*For Charlotte and Maggie*

---

## Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page ix</i>
Introduction: the past of an illusion	1
Waiting for Darwin	3
'The powerful, ineradicable Freud legend'	12
Opening the black box	16
Freud wars	24
1 Privatising science	30
'Psychoanalysis is my creation'	33
The politics of self-analysis	39
The politics of replication	54
Freud Inc.	75
The immaculate conception	104
2 The interprefaction of dreams	116
The immaculate induction	119
The manufacture of fantasy	146
Airbrushing Breuer	159
3 Case histories	179
'The famous padded door . . .'	183
Narrating the unconscious	192
The mind reader	199
Free indirect style	204

---

viii • Contents

Who speaks?	208
The pretty postal worker and the unscrupulous gambler	213
The return of the Wolf Man	223
Freud the novelist?	230
4 Policing the past	235
<i>Kürzungsarbeit</i>	237
A biography in search of an author	256
The Jones biography: the definitive form of the legend	267
‘Top secret’	286
Coda: what was psychoanalysis?	300
Notes	308
Bibliography	362
Index of names	397



---

## Acknowledgements

This book began in 1993 as an inquiry into Freud historians and their work. We had become aware of the upheavals that had affected Freud studies since the 1970s, which were completely transforming how one understood psychoanalysis and its origins. Intrigued by the new histories of the Freudian movement, we decided to interview the key players to gather their testimonies in a collective volume. These interviews were transcribed and annotated (we reproduce a few excerpts in the following), but the volume itself remained unfinished, for in the meantime our investigation had changed.<sup>1</sup> Quite quickly, it became apparent that it was not possible to situate ourselves with the neutrality and ironic detachment that we had initially adopted. The stakes were too high, and too much remained to be researched and verified before one could attempt to pass judgment on the endless controversies around psychoanalysis. Instead of describing them from the outside, we became drawn in, and here put forward our own contribution to the history of the Freudian movement.

This book is the product of this engagement, but also an attempt to regain, through historical reflection, some of the distance that we at first maintained towards our object of study. We wanted to study the history of the history of psychoanalysis and to understand better the basic issues of this fascinating and conflictual field – fascinating because of the conflict. We wanted, in the end, to draw consequences from historical criticism for the understanding of this strange movement. For any reckoning with the status of psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy in today's societies at some point requires coming to terms with Freud and his legacy.

We would like to thank all those who accompanied us in this task and above all the historians who agreed to be interviewed. Many became friends (when they were not already) and guides in the minefields of Freud studies: Ernst Falzeder, Didier Gille, Han Israëls, Mark S. Micale, Karin Obholzer, Paul Roazen, François Roustang, Élisabeth Roudinesco, Richard Skues,

Anthony Stadlen, Isabelle Stengers, Frank J. Sulloway, Peter J. Swales. Many others deserve our gratitude for their help, hospitality, advice, support and criticisms: Vincent Barras, Bill Bynum, Henry Cohen, Frederick Crews, Todd Dufresne, Jacques Gasser, Angela Graf-Nold, Henri Grivois, Malcolm 'Mac' Macmillan, Patrick Mahony, George Makari, Michael Neve, Enrique Pardo, Eugene Taylor, Marvin W. Kranz, Fernando Vidal, Juliette Vieljeux and Tom Wallace. We also thank those in the public and private archives that we worked in for their assistance. We would like to thank Philippe Pignarre, editor and friend, for his immediate interest in the project and valuable advice during the final stages of its composition. At Cambridge University Press, we would like to thank Andy Peart for taking on the project, and Hetty Marx for her patience with the endless delays.

The French edition of this work appeared from Éditions du Seuil in 2006. This edition has been revised and rewritten. We would like to thank John Peck for his editorial suggestions and Kelly S. Walsh for providing draft translations of chapter 3, and sections of chapters 2 and 4. His work on chapter 3 was made possible by a grant from the Graduate School of the University of Washington, which is gratefully acknowledged.

Citations from Anna Freud are reproduced with the authorisation of the heirs of Anna Freud © 2000 the estate of Anna Freud, by arrangement with Mark Patterson and Associates. Translations of citations from French and German are our own. In some places, translations from the Standard Edition of Freud's works have been modified. Responsibility for views expressed here is our own.

---

## Introduction: the past of an illusion

The history of the World, I said already, was the Biography of Great Men.

Carlyle (1959 [1841]), 251

Vienna, 1916. Freud decided to canonise himself. In front of the audience which had come to hear the eighteenth of his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, given at the University of Vienna, the founder of psychoanalysis undertook to indicate his place in the history of humanity.

**Sigmund Freud:** But in thus emphasizing the unconscious in mental life we have conjured up the most evil spirits of criticism against psycho-analysis. Do not be surprised at this, and do not suppose that the resistance to us rests only on the understandable difficulty of the unconscious or the relative inaccessibility of the experiences which provide evidence of it. Its source, I think, lies deeper. In the course of centuries the naive self-love of men has had to submit to two major blows at the hands of science. The first was when they learnt that our earth was not the center of the universe but only a tiny fragment of a cosmic system of scarcely imaginable vastness. This is associated in our minds with the name of Copernicus, though something similar had already been asserted by Alexandrian science. The second blow fell when biological research destroyed man's supposedly privileged place

in creation and proved his descent from the animal kingdom and his ineradicable animal nature. This reevaluation has been accomplished in our days by Darwin, Wallace and their predecessors, though not without the most violent contemporary opposition. But human megalomania will have suffered its third and most wounding blow from the psychological research of the present time which seeks to prove to the ego that it is not even master in its own house, but must be content itself with scanty information of what is going on unconsciously in its mind. We psycho-analysts were not the first and not the only ones to utter this call to introspection; but it seems to be our fate to give it its most forcible expression and to support it with empirical material which affects every individual. Hence arises the general revolt against our science, the disregard of all considerations of academic civility and the releasing of the opposition from every restraint of impartial logic.<sup>1</sup>

Copernicus, Darwin, Freud: this genealogy of the de-centred man of modernity is by now so familiar to us that we no longer note its profoundly arbitrary character. This is not because one should necessarily be offended by the evident immodesty of the historical tableau presented by Freud. After all, Kant was not especially humble when he spoke of effecting a ‘Copernican revolution’ in philosophy,<sup>2</sup> and Darwin did not hesitate to predict that his theory would provoke a ‘considerable revolution’<sup>3</sup> in natural history. As Bernard I. Cohen and Roy Porter<sup>4</sup> have shown, the motif of the ‘revolutions’ effected by Copernicus, Galileo and Newton is a commonplace in the history of science since Fontenelle and the *encyclopédistes*, and Freud was certainly not the first, nor will he be the last, to recycle it to his advantage. However, he was by no means the only figure in psychology to do this, which immediately relativises his version of the evolution of the sciences. At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a veritable plethora of candidates vying for the title of the Darwin, Galileo or Newton of psychology. But how did Freud’s audience, and indeed so many others, come to believe in Freud’s entitlement, rather than that of one of his rivals?

### Waiting for Darwin

According to Freud, the originality of psychoanalysis lay in the fact that it had accomplished in psychology the same type of scientific revolution which Copernicus and Darwin had effected in cosmology and biology. However, this ambition was one shared by many psychologists at the end of the nineteenth century, from Wundt to Brentano, from Ebbinghaus to William James.

**Franz Brentano:** We must strive to achieve here what mathematics, physics, chemistry and physiology have already accomplished . . . a nucleus of generally recognized truth to which, through the combined efforts of many forces, new crystals will adhere on all sides. In place of *psychologies* we must seek to create a *psychology*.<sup>5</sup>

From all sides, it was maintained that psychology had to separate itself from theology, philosophy, literature and other disciplines to take its rightful place in the orchestra of the sciences. Armchair speculation would give way to the rigours of the laboratory. When the Swiss psychologist Théodore Flournoy obtained his chair in psychology, he insisted that it be placed in the faculty of sciences.

**Théodore Flournoy:** In placing this chair in the faculty of sciences, rather than in that of letters where all the courses of philosophy are found, the Genevan government has implicitly recognized (perhaps without knowing it) the existence of psychology as a particular science, independent of all philosophical systems, with the same claims as physics, botany, astronomy . . . As for knowing up to what point contemporary psychology does justice to this declaration of the majority, and has truly succeeded in freeing itself from all metaphysical tutelage of any colour, that is another question. For here not less than elsewhere the idea should not be confounded with reality.<sup>6</sup>

Taken together, Brentano's imperative and Flournoy's reservations depict the 'will to science' (Isabelle Stengers)<sup>7</sup> which historically presided over the setting up of the new discipline. 'Scientific' psychology didn't emerge as the fruit of a lucky discovery, a fortuitous

invention, or by some ill-defined process of natural development. It was *desired* by its various promoters, and imagined on the model of the natural sciences. It was envisaged that psychology would complete the scientific revolution through applying the scientific method to all aspects of human life. Until then, knowledge of Man had been scattered between the stories of myth and religion, the speculations of philosophy, the maxims of morality, and the intuitions of art and literature. Psychology would replace these incomplete and partial knowledges by a true science of Man, with laws as universal as physics and methods as certain as those of chemistry.

**Freud:** The intellect and mind are objects for scientific research in exactly the same way as any non-human things. Psycho-analysis has a special right to speak for the scientific *Weltanschauung* at this point . . . Its special contribution to science lies precisely in having extended research to the mental field. And, incidentally, without such a psychology science would be very incomplete.<sup>8</sup>

From the very beginning, the ‘new psychology’ presented itself as an ‘imitation’ of the natural sciences (a sort of scientific version of the ‘imitation of the Ancients’). The philosopher Alasdair McIntyre remarked, ‘pre-Newtonian physicists had . . . the advantage over contemporary experimental psychologists that they did not know that they were waiting for Newton’.<sup>9</sup> By contrast, the new self-styled psychologists inevitably *simulated* the science to come. The most perspicacious asked whether psychology would ever obtain the heights of its models.

**William James to James Sully, 8 July 1890:** It seems to me that psychology is like physics before Galileo’s time – not a single elementary law yet caught glimpse of. A great chance for some future psychologist to make a name greater than Newton’s; but who then will read the books of this generation? Not many I trow.<sup>10</sup>

**James, 1890:** When, then, we talk of ‘psychology as a natural science’ we must not assume that means a sort of psychology that stands at last on a solid ground . . . it is indeed strange to hear people talk

triumphantly of 'the New Psychology' and write 'Histories of Psychology', when into the real elements and forces which the word covers not the first glimpse of clear insight exists . . . This is no science, it is only the hope of science . . . But at present psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo and the laws of motion, of chemistry before Lavoisier and the notion that mass is preserved in all reactions. The Galileo and the Lavoisier of psychology will be famous men indeed when they come, as come they some day surely will.<sup>11</sup>

For James, psychology was only the '*hope* of a science', the preparatory work for its Galileo and Newton, who were yet to come. The Berlin psychologist William Stern was of a similar view. In 1900, in an article to salute the new century, he drew up a largely negative balance sheet of the new discipline. One was far from the unity sought by figures such as Brentano. Aside from an empirical tendency and the use of experimental methods, he saw little in the way of common features. There were many laboratories with researchers working on special problems, together with many textbooks, but they were all characterised by a pervasive particularism. The psychological map of the day, Stern wrote, was as colourful and chequered as that of Germany in the epoch of small states.

**William Stern:** [Psychologists] often speak different languages, and the portraits that they draw up of the psyche are painted with so many different colours and with so many differently accented special strokes that it often becomes difficult to recognize the identity of the represented object . . . In short: there are many new psychologies, but not yet the new psychology.<sup>12</sup>

Already by the turn of the century, there was little consensus in psychology. Thus, for psychologists, the task became one not only of distinguishing the new psychology from what had gone before, but of forwarding their own claims to form the one scientific psychology, over that of their colleagues. Rhetorical analogies to scientific heroes readily lent themselves to such a situation. A number of figures suggested candidates for the role of the new Galileo or Newton of

psychology. Théodore Flournoy placed the laurel on Frederic Myers, one of the founders of psychical research.

**Flournoy:** Nothing permits one to foresee the end that the future reserves to the spiritist doctrine of Myers. If future discoveries will come to confirm his thesis of the empirically verified intervention of the discarnate in the physical or psychological frame of our phenomenal world, then his name will be inscribed in the golden book of the great initiators, and join those of Copernicus and Darwin; he will complete the triad of geniuses having most profoundly revolutionized scientific thought in the cosmological, biological, psychological order.<sup>13</sup>

For Flournoy, who had by then read and reviewed Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, the founding genius of psychology wasn't Freud, but Myers. Likewise, Stanley Hall stated in 1909 that 'the present psychological situation calls out for a new Darwin of the mind'.<sup>14</sup> In 1912, Arnold Gesell proclaimed it was Hall himself who was the 'Darwin of psychology'.<sup>15</sup> Hall later recalled that this 'gave me more inner satisfaction than any compliment ever paid me by the most perfervid friend'.<sup>16</sup> Others nominated Freud.

**C. G. Jung:** Freud could be refuted only by one who has made repeated use of the psychoanalytic method and who really investigates as Freud does . . . He who does not or cannot do this should not pronounce judgment on Freud, else he acts like those notorious men of science who disdained to look through Galileo's telescope.<sup>17</sup>

**Eugen Bleuler to Freud, 19 October 1910:** One compares [your work] with that of Darwin, Copernicus and Semmelweis. I believe too that for psychology your discoveries are equally fundamental as the theories of those men are for other branches of science, no matter whether or not one evaluates the advancements in psychology as highly as those in other sciences.<sup>18</sup>

**David Eder:** The work of Freud in psychology has been compared by one of his disciples to that of Darwin in psychology.<sup>19</sup>

The disciple in question was Ernest Jones, who flattered himself with having been the first to have accorded Freud the title of 'Darwin of



the mind' in his *Papers on Psycho-Analysis* of 1913.<sup>20</sup> In 1918, in the course of a debate with the psychologists William Rivers and Maurice Nicoll, the latter representing Jung, Jones expanded upon this analogy.

**Ernest Jones:** The contrast between this [Jung's] view and Freud's is just the same as that between the positions adopted by Drummond and Wallace, on the one hand, and Darwin and Huxley on the other, regarding the origin of the mind and soul – a matter which in the scientific world was decided half a century ago.<sup>21</sup>

**Frank J. Sulloway:** Jones saw himself in relation to Freud as T. H. Huxley – 'Darwin's bulldog' – had stood to the embattled Darwin a half century earlier.<sup>22</sup>

Thus one sees that the question of who posterity would view as being the founding genius of psychology was hotly debated at precisely the same time when Freud nominated himself. This self-canonisation, which has been taken as self-evident, immediately loses its authority, and appears for what it was: a peremptory attempt by Freud and his followers to act as if posterity had already unilaterally settled the debates between psychoanalysis and other psychologies in their favour, and discarded any other claimants to this position. Some figures vigorously protested.

**William McDougall:** The only authority we have for accepting this [the theory of the social bond presented by Freud in his *Group Psychology*] as the necessary and sole permissible line of speculation, for regarding our explanation of social phenomena as necessarily confined within the limits of the sexual libido, is the authority of Professor Freud and his devoted disciples. I, for one, shall continue to try to avoid the spell of the primal horde-father and to use what intellect I have, untrammelled by arbitrary limitations.<sup>23</sup>

**Alfred Hoche:** To top it all, the [Freudians'] dogmatic arrogance leads them to compare Freud's role with the historical position of Kepler, Copernicus and Semmelweis, and are compelled, according to a comical reasoning, to find the proof in the fact that they all had to battle the resistance of their contemporaries.<sup>24</sup>

**Wilhelm Weygandt:** Freud's teaching has been compared with the puerperal fever theory of Semmelweis, which was initially ridiculed and then brilliantly recognised. If we certainly also revolt against this, it would still be cruel to compare Freud with Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. It is perhaps closer to think of Franz Joseph Gall, whose theories, despite some striking points of view and findings, fell into rejection immediately due to their uncritical exaggeration and utilisation, including good and bad components.<sup>25</sup>

**Freud:** I was either compared to Columbus, Darwin and Kepler, or abused as a general paralytic.<sup>26</sup>

**Adolf Wohlgenuth:** Freud–Darwin! You may as well couple the name of Mr. Potts, of the *Eatonswill Gazette*, with that of Shakespeare or Goethe . . . Both Copernicus' and Darwin's work was violently attacked and herein may be some resemblance to Freud's, but yet what a sea of difference! Who were the attackers of Copernicus and Darwin? The Church, whose vested interests were endangered. Astronomers, as far as they dared in those dark days and were not Church dignitaries, or teachers at clerical universities, received the work of Copernicus and his successors with admiration. Biologists and geologists were almost unanimously enthusiastic about Darwin's work. The chief objectors . . . to Freud's theories, I say, are psychologists *vom Fach* [professional psychologists], that is exactly those people who stand to Freud's work in the same relation as the astronomers to Copernicus, and the biologists and geologists to Darwin's work, and who hailed it with joy and admiration.<sup>27</sup>

So why should we have faith in Freud, rather than in his rivals? Because Freud 'triumphed' to such a degree that we hardly remember names such as Stern, Flournoy, Hall, Myers or McDougall? Because the 'scientific revolution' effected by this new Copernicus banished them to the realms of pseudo-science? This would be to invoke precisely what one is attempting to explain. This would amount to begging the question, conceding everything to the 'victor', whereas we would like to know precisely how he won and why. Was it because Freud's competitors were finally forced to concede defeat? Because a consensus emerged around his theories, despite the 'violent

oppositions' and the 'resistance to psychoanalysis' that he alleged? Or was it, quite simply, because he managed to make everyone forget the controversy itself, and even the existence of many of his rivals?

**Freud:** Neither speculative philosophy, nor descriptive psychology, nor what is called experimental psychology . . . as they are taught in our Universities, is in a position to tell you anything serviceable of the relation between the body and the mind or to provide you with the key to an understanding of possible disturbances of the mental functions.<sup>28</sup>

**Freud:** The theory of psychic life could not be developed, because it was inhibited by a single essential misunderstanding. What does it comprise to-day, as it is taught at college? Apart from those valuable discoveries in the physiology of the senses, a number of classifications and definitions of our mental processes which, thanks to linguistic usage, have become the common property of every educated person. That is clearly not enough to give a view of our psychic life.<sup>29</sup>

'Make the past into a tabula rasa', chanted the French revolutionaries. It is in the nature of revolutions to do away with opponents, whether it be with the swipe of the guillotine or with epistemic breaks, and to rewrite history from the moment of 'year 1' of the new scientific or political order. Freud's parable of the 'three blows' provides a marvellous illustration of this purging of history, right down to its transcription. Indeed, this edifying story has its own interesting genealogy, which is passed over in silence by Freud. As Paul-Laurent Assoun has shown in his *Introduction to Freudian Epistemology*,<sup>30</sup> before being taken up by psychologists, the comparison of humiliations produced by the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions comes from the well-known Darwinian propagandist Ernst Haeckel, who popularised it in several of his works.

**Ernst Haeckel:** The two great fundamental errors are asserted in [the Mosaic hypothesis of creation], namely, first, the *geocentric* error that the earth is the fixed central point of the whole universe, round which the sun, moon, and stars move; and secondly the *anthropocentric* error, that man is the premeditated aim of the creation of the earth, for whose

service alone the rest of nature is said to have been created. The former of these errors was demolished by Copernicus' System of the Universe in the beginning of the 16th century, the latter by Lamarck's Doctrine of Descent in the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>31</sup>

**Haeckel:** Just as the *geocentric conception* of the universe – namely, the false opinion that the earth was the centre of the universe, and that all its other portions revolved around the earth – was overthrown by the system of the universe established by Copernicus and his followers, so the *anthropocentric conception* of the universe – the vain delusion that Man is the centre of terrestrial nature, and that its whole aim is merely to serve him – is overthrown by the application (attempted long since by Lamarck) of the theory of descent to Man.<sup>32</sup>

**Haeckel:** In the same way that Copernicus (1543) gave the mortal blow to the geocentric dogma founded on the Bible, Darwin (1859) did the same to the anthropocentric dogma intimately connected to the first.<sup>33</sup>

This 'genealogical schema' (Assoun) appears to have circulated freely in scientific circles, to the point where it was taken up without attribution by Thomas Huxley,<sup>34</sup> and by the physiologist Emil Du Bois-Reymond in a talk given in 1883 under the title 'Darwin and Copernicus'. This talk caused a sensation, and immediately made Du Bois-Reymond one of the favourite targets of the anti-Darwinians.

**Emil Du Bois-Reymond:** Hardly had I been presented by Haeckel as an adversary of Darwin, I suddenly passed in the eyes of the reactionary organs and the clerics as the most distinguished defender in Germany of the Darwinian doctrine and they formed a circle around me to throw at me rantings full of furious hatred.<sup>35</sup>

Haeckel did not appreciate his position being usurped in such a manner.

**Haeckel:** Fifteen years ago I myself developed the comparison of Darwin and Copernicus, and showed the merit of these two heroes who had destroyed anthropocentrism and geocentrism, in my lecture, *Über die Entstehung und den Stammbaum des Menschengeschlechts* [On the development and family tree of the human race].<sup>36</sup>

**Haeckel:** Darwin became the Copernicus of the organic world, just as I had already expressed in 1868, and as E. Du Bois-Reymond did fifteen years later, repeating my statement.<sup>37</sup>

Seeing Haeckel's sensitivity to questions of intellectual priority, it is not difficult to imagine what would have been his response to Freud's lecture. The latter did not content himself, like Huxley or Du Bois-Reymond, with comparing Darwin to Copernicus. He took over the reasoning and even the terms of Haeckel, simply adding a third stage, which Flourenoy had already done before him: after the critique of geocentrism, of anthropocentrism, that of egocentrism – with no mention of Haeckel or Flourenoy, both of whom he read. Even within psychoanalysis, some were struck by the audacity of Freud's claims.

**Karl Abraham to Freud, 18 March 1917:** The other paper, which you sent me in proof ['A difficulty in the path of psycho-analysis' in which Freud took up the theme of the three blows] gave me special pleasure, not only because of its train of thought but particularly as a personal document . . . Judging from the most recent paper, you might after all be tempted to come to this furthest north-eastern corner of Germany, if I tell you that your colleague Copernicus lived in Allenstein for many years.<sup>38</sup>

**Freud to Abraham, 25 March 1917:** You are right to point out that the enumeration in my last paper is bound to create the impression that I claim my place alongside Copernicus and Darwin. However, I did not want to relinquish an interesting idea just because of that semblance, and therefore at any rate put Schopenhauer in the foreground.<sup>39</sup>

Here we see a commonplace presented as an 'interesting idea' which had simply occurred to Freud, who elides the history of this analogy. The manner in which these debates have been forgotten, leaving Freud as the sole claimant to the prize, is emblematic of the effects of the Freudian legend.

**The Lancet, 11 June 1938:** His [Freud's] teachings have in their time aroused controversy more acute and antagonism more bitter than any since the days of Darwin. Now, in his old age, there are few

psychologists of any school who do not admit their debt to him. Some of the conceptions he formulated clearly for the first time have crept into current philosophy against the stream of wilful incredulity which he himself recognised as man's natural reaction to unbearable truth.<sup>40</sup>

**Stephen Jay Gould:** [A]s Freud observed, our relationship with science must be paradoxical because we are forced to pay an almost intolerable price for each major gain in knowledge and power – the psychological cost of progressive dethronement from the center of things, and increasing marginality in an uncaring universe. Thus physics and astronomy relegated our world to a corner of the cosmos, and biology shifted our status from a simulacrum of God to a naked, upright ape.<sup>41</sup>

### **'The powerful, ineradicable Freud legend'<sup>42</sup>**

The fable of the three blows provides a good example of what the historians Henri Ellenberger and Frank Sulloway have called 'the Freudian legend'. One sees here nearly all of the key elements of the master narrative woven by Freud and his followers: the peremptory declaration of the revolutionary and epochal character of psychoanalysis, the description of the ferocious hostility and irrational 'resistances' which it gave rise to, the insistence on the 'moral courage'<sup>43</sup> which was required to overcome them, the obliteration of rival theories, relegated to a prehistory of the psychoanalytic science, and a lack of acknowledgement of debts and borrowings.

*Legenda* is a story meant to be repeated mechanically, almost unknowingly, like the lives of the saints that were daily recited at matins in the convents of the Middle Ages. Just as the removal of these *legendae* from history facilitated their vast transcultural diffusion, so the legendary de-historicisation of psychoanalysis has allowed it to adapt to all sorts of contexts which on the face of it ought to have been inhospitable to it, and to constantly reinvent itself in a brand-new guise.

Each has his own version of the legend – positivist, existentialist, hermeneutic, Freudo-Marxist, narrativist, cognitivist, structuralist, deconstructivist and now even neuroscientific. These versions are as different as can be, but they have this in common: they all celebrate the exceptionalism of psychoanalysis, removed from context, history and verification. The longevity of psychoanalysis is not incidentally bound up with the manner in which the Freud legend continues to expand and adapt itself to changing intellectual and cultural milieux. In this sense, it is not simply a question of reducing the Freud legend to a fixed narrative, which would simply require a point-by-point refutation, as Sulloway attempted.<sup>44</sup> Rather, the legend has an open structure, capable at any moment of integrating new elements and discarding others whilst maintaining its underlying form, which remains recognisable. The elements can change, particular theories or conceptions of Freud can be abandoned or remodelled to the point where they become completely unrecognisable, but the legend survives.

**James Strachey:** Though it may flatter our vanity to declare that Freud was a human being of a kind like our own, that satisfaction can easily be carried too far. There must have been something very extraordinary in the man who was the first able to recognize a whole field of mental facts which had hitherto been excluded from normal consciousness, the man who first interpreted dreams, who first accepted the facts of infantile sexuality, who first made the distinction between the primary and secondary processes of thinking – the man who first made the unconscious mind real to us.<sup>45</sup>

**Strachey:** [Freud's self-analysis,] like Galileo's telescope, opened the way to a new chapter in human knowledge.<sup>46</sup>

**Jones:** Future generations of psychologists will assuredly wish to know what manner of man it was who, after two thousand of years of vain endeavour had gone by, succeeded in fulfilling the Delphic injunction: know thyself . . . Few, if any, have been able to go as far as he did on the path of self-knowledge and self-mastery – even with the aid of the pioneer torch he provided with his methods and previous exploration,

and even with the invaluable assistance of years of daily personal work with expert mentors. How one man alone could have broken all this new ground, and overcome all difficulties unaided, must ever remain a cause for wonder. It was the nearest to a miracle that human means can compass, one that surely surpasses even the loftiest intellectual achievements in mathematics and pure science. Copernicus and Darwin dared much in facing the unwelcome truths of outer reality, but to face those of inner reality costs something that only the rarest of mortals would unaided be able to give . . . It would not be a great exaggeration if we summed up in one phrase Freud's contribution to knowledge: he discovered the Unconscious.<sup>47</sup>

**Joseph Schwartz:** [The development of the analytic hour by Breuer and Freud was] analogous to Galileo's use of the telescope to explore previously unknown structures in the night sky. Freud and Breuer were the first to permit the human subject to speak for him/herself . . . For the first time, a space had been created where the meanings of subjective experience could be purposefully sought until they were found.<sup>48</sup>

**Ilse Grubrich-Simitis:** It can be asserted with some justification that the book [Breuer and Freud's *Studies on Hysteria*] so to speak ushered in the century of psychotherapy.<sup>49</sup>

**Jacques Lacan:** I have come here [in Vienna] – not unfittingly, I think – to evoke the fact that this chosen city will remain, this time forever more, associated with a revolution in knowledge of Copernican proportions. I am referring to the fact that Vienna is the eternal site of Freud's discovery and that, owing to this discovery, the veritable center of human beings is no longer at the place ascribed to it by an entire humanist tradition.<sup>50</sup>

**Lacan:** Indeed, Freud himself compared his discovery to the so-called Copernican revolution, emphasizing that what was at stake was once again the place man assigns himself at the center of a universe. Is the place that I occupy as subject of the signifier concentric or eccentric in relation to the place I occupy as subject of the signified? That is the question.<sup>51</sup>

**Paul Ricoeur:** In an essay written in 1917 Freud speaks of psychoanalysis as a wound and humiliation to narcissism analogous to the



- [click An Atlas of Radioscopic Catheter Placement for the Electrophysiologist pdf, azw \(kindle\), epub, doc, mobi](#)
- [The Pleasure's All Mine: A History of Perverse Sex here](#)
- [read Marketing Death: Culture and the Making of a Life Insurance Market in China](#)
- [read The Mandala of Being: Discovering the Power of Awareness here](#)
- [download The Bartender's Bible](#)
  
- <http://kamallubana.com/?library/Mikoyan-MiG-21--Famous-Russian-Aircraft-.pdf>
- <http://www.shreesaiexport.com/library/Shots-on-the-Bridge--Police-Violence-and-Cover-Up-in-the-Wake-of-Katrina.pdf>
- <http://sidenoter.com/?ebooks/Make-a-Mind-Controlled-Arduino-Robot--Use-Your-Brain-as-a-Remote.pdf>
- <http://hasanetmekci.com/ebooks/The-Mandala-of-Being--Discovering-the-Power-of-Awareness.pdf>
- <http://redbuffalodesign.com/ebooks/How-the-Body-Knows-Its-Mind.pdf>