

of mythology investigated by Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen and, with particular interest to the literary parallels of paranoia, by John Farrell, a professor of literature at Claremont McKenna College. The "complicity between the deceiver and the deceived" is the very essence of the investigation of Borch-Jacobsen into the reality of what may have taken place between Bertha Pappenheim and Josef Breuer (Freud's elder and occasional mentor in Vienna and the man responsible for introducing his young protégé to the Berlin ear-nose-and-throat specialist Wilhelm Fliess).³

When Borch-Jacobsen's book first came out in French — as *Souvenirs d'Anna O. Une mystification centenaire* — it produced a veritable flurry of controversy. The book section of *Le Monde* published a fairly favourable review by Roland Jaccard under the surprised (or provocative?) title: "Freud, mystifi-cateur? Cent ans après la naissance de la psychanalyse, on découvre les falsifications auxquelles le thérapeute eut recours pour imposer sa théorie." André Green, the ancient doyen of French analysts, found a typo in his copy (29, French edition: "elle avait vu un serpent noir s'avancer vers elle pour la mordre" — instead of "lui" and "le") which implied that the intended victim of the nocturnal hallucination whilst nursing her sick father was to be Anna and *not* her father. Green immediately sent off to *Le Monde* a baroque interpretation of Borch-Jacobsen's slip as part of a half-page article of refutation (longer, incidentally, than Jaccard's original review).⁴

3 For an understanding of Freud's cocaine-fueled states of mentation during the formative years of psychoanalysis a reading of his correspondence with the Berlin oto-rhino-laryngologist, Wilhelm Fliess, is mandatory. The unabridged letters were published by

Harvard University Press in 1985 as *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess 1887-1904* in a translated edition supervised by Jeffrey M. Masson.

4 On June 14, 1996 an interview with Nicolas Weill ("Histoire officielle et désinformation") in *Le Monde* allowed Borch-Jacobsen to explain his position and his research and to vent his irritation with the "believers" (as Adolf Grünbaum calls them) of the French school (see Borch-Jacobsen 1996b). This interview and this number of *Le Monde* also covered the more general issue of the proposed Library of Congress Freud exhibition which had been postponed following an open-letter signed by many leading Freud scholars (British, American, Australian, Canadian, were among the nationalities of the signatories) protesting the absence of any material critical of Freud at the exhibition. This open letter had led in its turn to a French Manifesto signed by, among others, Julia Kristeva, Philippe Sollers, Elisabeth Roudinesco, André Green. This Manifesto accused the Library of Congress of bowing to appeals to censorship and declared that the original signatories (which included Adolf Grünbaum, Oliver Sacks, Frank Sulloway, Frederick Crews) were motivated by right-wing "political correctness" [sic!] and were proposing partisan limits to free speech. This was either a nadir in Franco-American understanding, or else another example of Parisian intellectuals obfuscating the truth on the ever-urgent march of progress. Borch-Jacobsen, himself, I should point out, is French! Nonetheless, he indeed signed the original request for *comprehensive* examples of contemporary Freud research at the Library of Congress exhibition. (The present writer was asked to sign this petition but declined on the grounds that the Library of Congress

The Way it Was: The Story of Anna O. and Early Psychoanalysis¹

ROBERT WILCOCKS

The letter "B" regresses to the first letter of the alphabet and the letter "P" regresses to its immediate neighbour. And so, with this elementary piece of encoding, the Austrian socialist and woman's movement pioneer, Bertha Pappenheim, became "Anna O."² This quasi-anonymity, no doubt the fruit of judicious appeal to medical professional confidentiality, produced the original fiction in the procession of "case histories" which were to entrance the readers of psycho-analytic literature. The fiction of the patient's name (a necessity for medical reporting) was but a prelude to the fiction of the patient's case and treatment (a fiction, as we shall see, necessary to the whole enterprise).

As Michael Wood, professor of English at Princeton University, noted in a recent review of John le Carré's latest novel, *The Tailor of Panama*: "of course fictions get about only because someone wants them. There are so many conspiracies in the world that a world without conspiracies seems unreal. "No two bluffs are the same," le Carré writes in *The Night Manager* (1993), "but one component is necessary to all of them, and that is the complicity between the deceiver and the deceived." The world of deception and spying and interpreting and of suspicion that is le Carré's is an appropriate place to enter the labyrinth

1 Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Remembering Anna O. A Century of Mystification*. New York and London: Routledge, 1996. Pp. 125. US \$49.95, paper US \$14.95; John Farrell, *Freud's Paranoid Quest: Psychoanalysis and Modern Suspicion*. New York: New York University Press, 1996. Pp. 280. US \$34.95.

2 This minor point of the simplicity of the patient's encoded nomenclature is worth mentioning given the hyperbolic, and quite unnecessary, inventiveness of some American scholars. Elaine Showalter, in *The Female Malady*, offers the following: "Breuer never explained why he had picked the name 'Anna O.' for Bertha Pappenheim, but the palindromic form of 'Anna' suggests the divided feminine psyche, while the 'O' suggests the letter of the mad Ophelia, the symbolic circle or cipher of feminine sexual mystery" (155). These amusing conceits may delight Elaine Showalter; but they have nothing to do with the case of "Anna O," nor with the mistakes and deliberate deceptions involved in its publication in *Studies on Hysteria*. Of the latter Showalter has nothing to say and her Freudian-friendly section on this case may not even have grasped the deceit of which she (like previous generations) was victim.

Borch-Jacobsen's interest in Freudian matters dates back over twenty years. He published *Le sujet freudien* with Flammarion in 1982, and in 1990 the same publisher produced a work on Jacques Lacan (originally issued in English as a commission from Stanford University Press) which shows the "docteur en philosophie" side of the author: *Lacan. Le maître absolu*. As an exercise in uncovering some of the tendencies — or temptations? — in twentieth-century French philosophy this "introduction générale à la pensée de Lacan destinée au public anglo-saxon" is an admirable piece of work which clearly situates Lacan in the perspective of those students of Alexandre Kojève who attended his pre-War lectures on Hegel. And, in consequence, Borch-Jacobsen accomplishes something not readily understood in North America — the "Hegelianisation" of Freud that was an integral part of Lacan's presentation. The presence of Heidegger, of Sartre, and of Derrida in the Notes adds to our understanding of the circumstances and intents of Lacan's literary productions. What is missing from this book is any sense of Lacan's mischievous engagement with the Surrealists and with the sheer intellectual (and, who knows?, sensual) delight he took in the brilliant punning extravaganzas, or cadenzas, he invented to convince his (largely) academic audience of the subtlety and acuity of his versions of Freudian versions of human behaviour. (These linguistic feats, *legersdelangue* rather than *legersdemain* — though they were, in French, *tours de passe-passe* — have, of course, nothing to do with philosophy or psychoanalysis;⁵ their ability to entertain and even to seduce some intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic would be a worthwhile subject for a doctoral dissertation.)⁶

At this stage, Borch-Jacobsen was writing as a skeptical philosopher and professor of comparative literature (at the University of Washington, Seattle). If his commitment to Freudian interpretations of literature was still visible, it was not intact. Over the years — years of continuing historical research into the reality behind what he now calls *la mythographie* of psychoanalysis — Borch-Jacobsen has come to appreciate the immense chasm between received popular (and even, or perhaps, especially, academic) belief in the origins of psychoanalysis and the facts that with the assistance of many other Freudian scholars (generously acknowledged in his book) he has uncovered.

Remembering Anna O. A Century of Mystification does indeed read, as his

was an American government institution and that he felt that, not being a citizen of the United States, he had no right to intervene in this affair.)

5 Or with *psychiatri*, at any rate. Freud himself noted the punning wit of dreams and was a frequent manipulator of linguistic patterns and etymologies intended to produce additional confirmation of psychoanalytic dogma. The Italian textual critic Sebastiano Timpanaro has decisively refuted these attempts. See Timpanaro 1975, 1976.

6 The American sociologist Sherry Turkle's *Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution* provides a useful (and amusing) guide for such a study.

publishers suggest on the back cover, "like a scholarly thriller." What John le Carré sees as the one component necessary to all bluffs, "the complicity between the deceiver and the deceived," is decisively, ruthlessly, and yet courteously, examined by the author. What Borch-Jacobsen has discovered, however, in his patient correspondence (with Peter Swales, the New York-based independent British Freud scholar, and the French historian of psychoanalysis, Elisabeth Roudinesco, among others) about certain crucial pages of the diary of Princess Marie Bonaparte⁷ is that the first "case history" of palaeo-psychoanalysis was not simply a question of "the deceiver and the deceived" — meaning the fraught theatrical relationship between Anna O. and Dr. Josef Breuer — but, as in a le Carré novel, of a multiplicity of deceptions and betrayals leading ineluctably to the betrayal of himself by himself of Anna O.'s own physician — Josef Breuer. And the chief instigator and purveyor of these deceptions, so Borch-Jacobsen persuasively claims, was Sigmund Freud. (One essential difference between Borch-Jacobsen and Elaine Showalter in the understanding of this highly contrived case history may be demonstrated by this sentence of Showalter's: "Evening after evening, like the sultan with Scheherazade, Breuer made Anna tell him stories" (156); for Borch-Jacobsen, with documented research to hand, the truth was the opposite! "Anna" was the instigator of these stories and the stage-manager of her own rhythm of curative treatment with Breuer.)⁸

If we know anything today about Anna O.'s treatment with Breuer (to which

7 Princess Marie Bonaparte was not only one of Freud's most famous analysts, she was also an inveterate diarist and, more importantly perhaps from a historical perspective, responsible for two events of lasting significance for Freud. She introduced Freud to Max Schur and recommended him as a personal physician. (Freud accepted Schur in this capacity and arranged the terms of a personal contract of euthanasia whereby Schur was to put Freud down in 1939 with a fatal extra shot of morphine; Schur in his last years wrote *Freud Living and Dying*.) Secondly, Princess Marie bought from a Berlin bookseller the autograph originals of Freud's letters to Fliess that had been sold to him by Frau Ida Fliess after her husband's death. To her everlasting credit Princess Marie refused to hand these documents over to Freud who insisted on having them when he discovered her possession of them. At the outbreak of war she oversaw their safe transport (wrapped in waterproof material in case of a submarine attack) from France to London.

8 This may be the place to indicate that one of Borch-Jacobsen's "hobbies" has been to undertake a study of the history of hypnosis and to have an insider's grasp of the profession. As a consequence, Borch-Jacobsen speaks from experience when he details the *problématique* of the "hypnotic contract" and of its virtual necessity in any hypnotically involved treatment. Freud's early treatment certainly involved a hypnotic situation with his hand-pressure on the prostrate patient's forehead; his later case histories may not have involved such an immediate and obvious element of hypnosis, but they certainly involved a deeply-suspicious element of "suggestion" in the anamnesis. As the American philosopher of science, Adolf Grünbaum, points out in *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis* the question of the contamination by suggestion of material for case histories was to remain a preoccupation of Freud as he elaborated his system of psychology.

Freud was never party) it is precisely because of two (not entirely unrelated) literary contrivances: 1) Freud persuaded Breuer to collaborate on a volume to be called *Studies on Hysteria* in which the first case discussed would be that of "Anna O.," where Breuer was to write about "the final cure of hysteria" of his patient, and 2) Freud's extravagant claims to friends, pupils, and former analysts (like Princess Marie Bonaparte) that Breuer, alarmed by his wife's threat of suicide when faced with her husband's apparent infatuation with his patient and terrified by his patient's pseudocycosis (hysterical childbirth), abandoned treatment and patient, and fled to Venice for a "second honeymoon" with his wife, Mathilde, where the daughter, Dora Breuer, was conceived.

As Borch-Jacobsen carefully demonstrates (in this short but exceptionally well-documented book, including material from the Breuer family records), *none* of this is true. Anna O. was *not* a hysterical patient cured by Breuer's innovative treatment; Breuer did not abandon her — on the contrary, he made proper professional arrangements for her transfer to Binswanger's sanatorium; his wife did not threaten suicide; his daughter, Dora Breuer, "was born on March 11, 1882, three months before her alleged conception in Venice" (Borch-Jacobsen 1996a, 32).

What is fascinating in Borch-Jacobsen's account is the meticulous way he goes through the case-notes of Breuer (of 1882) and shows the enormous discrepancies between what Breuer *knew* to be the case and what Breuer eventually, under Freud's probing, claimed was the case. What remains crystal-clear is that whatever Anna O. was suffering from was not in any way cured by Breuer. My colleague, Dr. Pierre Flor-Henry, suggests in his *Cerebral Basis of Psychopathology* that Bertha Pappenheim suffered from "subacute limbic encephalitis" (268-72). Borch-Jacobsen is not a partisan of post-hoc neurological diagnoses and argues instead for a combination of what one may call societal and situational ills (the state of the unmarried daughter in middle-class Vienna in the last quarter of the nineteenth century). He notes, in particular, the visit to Vienna of the renowned Danish stage hypnotist, Carl Hansen, concurrent with Breuer's treatment of Anna O. and of Bertha Pappenheim's (or Anna O.'s) ready imitation of his stage tricks in her treatment with Breuer — this is where the "deceiver" and the "deceived" join in a game that began even before Freud became involved (or was even aware of the case).

That Freud chose Breuer as a respectable cover or *parapluie* for his introduction of "psychoanalysis" as a *uniquely* efficacious method of medical treatment, makes perfect sense; that the patient was not cured nor ever suffered from what Breuer surmised is irrelevant given what Freud was to invent from this unusual moment of professional solidarity. Borch-Jacobsen's book is not only a brief but immensely enjoyable read, it is, more importantly, a book which has to be read by anyone who ever thought that *Studies on Hysteria* began with a factual case history factually described.

As Adolf Grünbaum correctly observed in his pre-publication review of Borch-Jacobsen's book, it is: "The most unsparing point-by-point critical comparison yet of the 1882 and 1895 case histories of Josef Breuer's celebrated patient Anna O., documenting the mendacity of the claim of successful outcome" (printed on the back cover). What Grünbaum does not refer to is the brilliant cunning, or perhaps the insightful serendipity, of Freud's choice as a partner in this first text of psychoanalysis — *Studies on Hysteria* — of one of the most considered physicians in Vienna noted, precisely, for his probity. That Breuer, who was a serious physiologist famous for his very important pioneering work on the semi-circular canals (the source of our sense of balance), could have allowed himself to be cajoled into the knowingly erroneous and mendacious presentation of a case in Freud's compendium on cases of reputed hysteria says much for the latter's mastery of persuasive rhetoric. It is true that in his own "theoretical" sections of *Studies on Hysteria* Breuer warns constantly against the danger of taking metaphor for fact,⁹ nonetheless, Freud (who, himself, so frequently took his own metaphors for fact) succeeded in this seduction of a senior. Borch-Jacobsen's study undoes this case so splendidly that one is left wondering quite what the climate of opinion at the time can have been to have allowed such a disaster to have had such beneficial effects on Freud's invented (and emerging) discipline.

The climate of suspicion and mistrust which inhabits Le Carré's world or *demi-monde* of espionage agents is one that we have irrationally grown accustomed to over the years. Deceit, deception, paranoid distrust of *ourselves* as much as of our contemporaries is an accepted part of late twentieth-century Western life. John Farrell, writing as a professor of literature, sees Freud's writings as exemplars of this fallen state of civilization. The subtitle of his *Freud's Paranoid Quest* is, hence, appropriately: "Psychoanalysis and Modern Suspicion" which reveals the theme of his book. Deception and suspicion are the *leitmotif* of Le Carré's novels. Borch-Jacobsen, homing in accurately on the realities now available of the "Anna O." case (or scenario), has more than amply demonstrated the deceptions at work in the public presentation of this case in *Studies in Hysteria*. Farrell has taken the theme of generalized suspicion — paranoid suspicion — and has elaborated a convincing argument for the quixotic paranoia at the very heart of psychoanalysis.

At the end of his penultimate chapter (chapter 7) Farrell puts aside the broad

9 For instance, consider Breuer's careful comment: "It is only too easy to fall into a habit of thought which assumes that every substantive has a substance behind it — which gradually comes to regard 'consciousness' as standing for some actual thing; and when we have become accustomed to make use metaphorically of spatial relations, as in the term 'sub-conscious,' we find as time goes on that we have actually formed an idea which has lost its metaphorical nature and which we can manipulate easily as though it was real. Our mythology is then complete" (Breuer and Freud 227-28).

brush with which he has painted the history of European literature and ideas from the Renaissance onwards, and issues a warning of the present-day dangers represented by the continuing power of psychoanalysis in our cultural communities and in our therapeutic establishments. He places in juxtaposition two contemporary situations: the prevalence of psychoanalysis in the universities and the real difficulties encountered by the distressed in search of help. Parts of this conclusion bear direct quotation for they give the tenor of the whole book and its *raison d'être*:

As for my decidedly negative assessment of psycho-analysis, its urgent insistence is in part due to the great currency this way of thinking still enjoys among literary critics, my colleagues, who seem to me to have been caught in a great Nabokovian jeu d'esprit in which literary expertise serves only to deepen their enchantment with the Kinbote's grandiose and persecuted fancy. Added to this is my awareness of the impact of psychoanalysis upon people in their everyday lives. They go into analysis when they are most vulnerable, confused, and in need of reassurance. What they get is a system of indoctrination that seeks to detach them from the evident meaning of their experience and asks them to accept the most suspicious, comical, and rebarbative understanding of themselves and their relations with others. (212)

This superb, and courageous, statement is of a double significance. Not only does Farrell question the therapeutic value (or honesty?) of the psychoanalytic session, more importantly¹⁰ he questions the use of psychoanalysis as an adjunct to literary criticism. If I say that this statement has courage, it is simply as a recognition of the difficulties in North American universities of revealing the truth which one has uncovered about a dominant concept — and psychoanalysis as a therapy or (more generally nowadays) as an essential critical tool in the understanding and appreciation of literary texts is a dominant concept — and which revelation risks either the career of the wretched uncoverer or else the "well-found" status of the professorial luminaries.¹¹

10 I do not mean "more importantly" qualitatively but quantitatively: there are far more people in North America engaged in undergraduate and graduate studies in literature than there are in analysis. And most of these university and college students are confronted with lectures or texts (or a combination of both) which take for granted the *bien-fondé* of Freudian psychoanalytic dogma. Frequently, any challenge to the validity of this material is taken as "resistance" to Freudian concepts. As Frank J. Sulloway has commented, this fallacious and bullying type of argumentation was first utilized by Freud himself and then rapidly taken up by his disciples (see 460 *et passim*).

11 In a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* I mentioned Hugh Kenner's correspondence with me of 1994 where that distinguished scholar noted that "Christianity being no longer sacrosanct, no sacrilege is greater than denying the authenticity of Freud" (see Wilcocks 1996). The situation in the Humanities, as far as American university presses are concerned, is now quite outrageous and is tantamount to a "Stalinist" refusal to accept

If it is the case that the bases of psychoanalysis are devoid of valid experiential and experimental data, then the whole circus-tent of the last sixty years or so of psychoanalytic criticism falls to earth. This was a dilemma faced by the renowned English professor at Berkeley, Frederick Crews,¹² when he decided that the Freudian material he had credited (and professionally employed) in his earlier career was literally worthless and founded upon sand.¹³ Crews's great (and cogent) blasts have come towards the end of a distinguished career. Farrell has had the temerity to begin his career with a massive work which shows his wide reading in European literature and which suggests as a possible model for Sigmund Freud and his endeavours, El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha and his exploits.

This is not a joke! And humour, as Freud reputedly reminded us, is no laughing matter. If Freud is Don Quixote, does that make the rest of us windmills? Well ... yes ... as Quixote saw them.¹⁴ Freud himself, as Farrell

scripts (however well-researched and well-founded their theses — and Farrell's is both) that are critical of Freudian views. Whilst I doff my cap to Farrell for his individual courage in offering this typescript to an American university press, and, by extension, to New York University Press, for having accepted his text, I refrain from any anticipatory celebration of a return to "honest scholarship" on his account. When NYUP sent me their review copy of his work it was accompanied by their current catalogue which included a huge number of works solely devoted to "Freudian" interpretations of our present culture. "Honest scholarship" may be on its way, but it is clearly a future project (my fingers are crossed!).

12 See in particular the arguments in *Skeptical Engagements* (1986) or, more recently, and with more psychoanalytic research material to hand, *The Memory Wars: Freud's Legacy in Dispute* (1995). The latter is an interesting and unusual publication in that the publisher has allowed practicing psychoanalysts to respond to Crews's arguments, albeit with Crews's (always cogent) responses to these responses being part of the format.

13 Crews's early discomfiture with psychoanalysis did not come from an awareness, or knowledge, of the sheer amount of lies and deception involved in its elaboration but rather from a rationalist position which simply found the basic credo of psychoanalysis *unbelievable*. His present position, I believe, is not more radical, but rather simply confirmed by the archival evidence that has come to light since his original refusal to continue to adhere to belief in a system of thought that he had found unreasonable. He has now found that this system of belief was not merely unreasonable, but also that it was founded on massive deception from the outset (which takes us back to Borch-Jacobsen's revelations in the first part of this article).

14 But, precisely, Quixote no more saw the windmills for what they were than Freud saw humans for what they were. The English philosopher Galen Strawson has a telling point to make about the kind of universal reductive pessimism of Freud and those who think like him in his recent review of Matt Ridley's *The Origins of Virtue in the Times Literary Supplement*. He writes about the continuing success of what he calls "Huxley's Error" (after T.H. Huxley's 1894 lecture "Evolution and Ethics" which insisted that "ethical progress . . . depends . . . on combating" nature): "There are several possible explanations for this; each may have a part of the truth. First, it seems clear that long study of these

points out, was the first to raise the alarm, or to point the way to the Quixote parallel. Farrell's Chapter 5, "Freudian Satire," is introduced with a quotation from Freud on Cervantes in a letter to his fiancée, Martha Bernays: "Don't you find it very touching to read how a great person, himself an idealist, makes fun of his ideals? Before we were so fortunate as to apprehend the deep truths in our love we were all noble knights passing through the world caught in a dream, misinterpreting the simplest things, magnifying commonplace into something noble and rare, and thereby cutting a sad figure" (96). Freud does not wish to be caught unprepared and so is willing, insistent even, like Baden-Powell's boy-scout, to "be prepared." "Be prepared" in this case means always prepared to find behind any human behavioral characteristic an item of paranoia. Farrell suggests that Cervantes invented "the paranoiac character as an object of literary representation" and adds: "His accomplishment betrays, no doubt, a gift of psychological observation, but it is psychological observation at the service of a satiric purpose. The *Quixote* is a portrait of suspicion directed, with suspicion, at a distinct object of satire, the 'books of chivalry' popular in Cervantes' day" (96). One may question whether Freud was as "satiric" in purpose as Farrell claims; one may also question whether Freud's quest was as knowingly and satirically paranoiac as Farrell claims. (It may have been paranoiac — and arguably *was* — without any saving grace of satire.) Freud's well-documented (and well-known) loathing of, and contempt for, his patients does not argue for a satiric vision of the world in the manner of Cervantes. Cervantes was merely a Jew who wrote knowingly, and satirically, about certain misprisions of his times; Freud was a Jew who was convinced that he wrote about the misprisions of all times.

That nuance is important. I find many instances of sardonic humour in Freud (both in his published works and in his various letters), I do not find a sustained *satiric* view of the world. Farrell's book claims not merely to show the vacuity of psychoanalysis for the purposes of literary criticism and human salvation (which it does in spades), it also claims to demonstrate that Freud's writings are a magisterial satirical view of the world of human activity. I cannot agree with this. Freud may have ironically played with the notion of himself as a latterday Don Quixote¹⁵; it makes little sense to argue that the founder of psychoanalysis

problems can distort one's understanding of human nature: pessimism about human nature may grow and present itself irresistibly as realism, as greater depth of understanding, although it is greater shallowness. This sort of thing also happens to economists, it's a serious problem" (3).

15 Farrell quotes a letter from the young Freud to his fiancée about the destruction of his early papers. Farrell notes that this is from "a twenty-year-old [which] betrays to me nothing more than the typical grandiosity of late adolescence — but Freud never outgrew it" (231). The situation is worse than Farrell imagines. Freud was born in 1856 and, hence, in 1885 (the date of the quoted letter to Martha) was in his thirtieth year!

seriously credited this "satirical" vision of himself or of his fellow-men. Freud's misanthropic nature is not, by any means, to be evaluated as a "satiric" disposition towards mankind. The "heavy" humour that one finds in the letters to Jung or, occasionally, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* or that other popular number of deception, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, is not to be compared with the quality of satire that one finds in Swift or Diderot or Voltaire — Freud may well have appreciated (or *thought* he appreciated) such wits — but Freud was not of them however hard he tried.

Freud fell, knowingly perhaps?, between two stools — science and literature. That his "science" was little more than a Halloween mask (irrespective of his genuine apprentice work in Brücke's laboratory about which Farrell is suspiciously silent) is clearly demonstrated by Farrell (in chapter after chapter), that his literature — conceived to be received within the framework of medical case histories — should have convinced none where it convinced (and still convinces!) many is also clearly demonstrated by Farrell. In fact, after reading Farrell's book one feels the contradictory sentiments of the famous donkey who died from thirst, unable to choose whether to turn to the water to his left or that to his right.

On the one hand, Farrell presents such a massive and splendidly argued case against Freud as a rhetorician of genius who has beguiled us all and who has merely followed in the path of a general culture of "suspicion" that Europe (so Farrell claims)¹⁶ has known from the Renaissance on. On the other hand, this same Farrell can state, as a matter of historical value, that "Freud accomplished one of the decisive gestures of twentieth-century intellectual culture when, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he juxtaposed *Hamlet* with Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* in order to introduce the notion of Oedipal repression" (124).

For those in the know about the origins of this "decisive gesture" Farrell's

16 I am not convinced by Farrell's selection of texts and authors to produce a "general climate of suspicion" in Europe to which Freud was the heir. Many of the authors he notes — Locke and Stendhal among them — were not in any intelligible way "paranoiac" and the clinical value of the term loses its effect by this attempt at cultural generalization. Nor is it true that Rousseau (a genuine paranoiac), who indeed became during the French Revolution and via Robespierre's speeches, "a whole climate of opinion," may be seen as representative of European sensibility for the period of the second half of the eighteenth century and after. Diderot, Hume, and Voltaire (who loathed him) were certainly as representative of enlightened thought and were highly critical of Rousseau's enthusiasms. The intelligent "liberal" criticisms of Rousseau by Benjamin Constant at the turn of the century and the return — *la Restauration* — to monarchy were far more important in determining French (and general European) attitudes than the paranoia of Rousseau. We had to wait for Pol Pot in a devastated Cambodia for a true twentieth-century follower of Rousseau's doctrines, and Freud, whatever his limitations, was not Pol Pot! It is my earnest hope that Farrell will not attempt an essay demonstrating the "satirical" quality of the works of Pol Pot.

phrase reads like special pleading. The cocaine- and Fliess-intoxicated Freud of the 1890's was himself seduced into crediting Fliess's account of infantile sexuality (with its component fantasy structures). Freud's letters to Fliess of October 3, 4, and 15, 1897 are the crucial data we have (see Wilcocks 1994, 183-226). The only way one can credit Farrell's assertion is retroactively: i.e., such was the combination of rhetorical skill in Freud's texts and of secrecy on the part of the psychoanalytic community that many in the Western world became convinced that Freud had indeed found (and explained) the original sin of man. And so, *retroactively*, this grotesque blunder on Freud's part became a shibboleth for the West.

In the chapter specifically devoted to *The Interpretation of Dreams* Farrell makes an attempt to save this text (which he considers Freud's most brilliant) by insisting on its *satirical* intention and disposition. The trouble with this kind of presentation is that it leaves aside the historical reality of what Freud thought the text signified for him and for psychoanalysis throughout his life. One instance (a capital one) will suffice. After his *Traummuster* (or Specimen Dream) of Irma's Injection in Chapter 2 of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and its analysis, Freud concludes (and the italics are his): "*When the work of interpretation has been completed, we perceive that a dream is the fulfillment of a wish*" (1976, 198-99). One must ask in what possible way this is to be construed as a *satirical* statement? Not only does it inform the whole misconceived endeavour of the enterprise of dream interpretation, but it signifies for Freud a *truth* that was not to be relinquished ever. As J. Allan Hobson, the Harvard psychiatrist in charge of their sleep laboratory, reports in *The Dreaming Brain*:

Since this work [*New Introductory Lectures*] thus constitutes [Freud's] last words on the subject of dreams, I have examined the first conference, entitled "Revision of the Theory of Dreams," page by page, in search of substantiation for Freud's claimed revisions. In the three decades since 1900, Freud observed, the dream theory, like psychoanalysis in general, had changed but little. I argue that it had not changed at all" (59).¹⁷ Nor had it! Freud in the penultimate paragraph of "Revision of the Theory of Dreams" (1932-33) wrote to his intended readers (and pretended listeners):

One of the tasks of psychoanalysis, as you know, is to lift the veil of amnesia which hides the earliest years of childhood and to bring to conscious memory the manifestations of early infantile sexual life which are contained in them. Now these first sexual experiences of a child are linked to painful impressions of anxiety, prohibition, disappointment and

17 It is unfortunate that Farrell's work contains no reference to, or awareness of, the patient experiments and observations reported by Hobson in his book. Hobson admits that in his youth he was a Freudian. But his disaffection was caused not by a consideration of the rhetorical satire of Freud but by the neurological and experiential knowledge that Freud was *wrong*!

punishment. We can understand their having been repressed; but, that being so, we cannot understand how it is that they have such free access to dream-life, that they provide the pattern for so many dream-phantasies and that dreams are filled with reproductions of these scenes from childhood and with allusions to them. (1973, 58)¹⁸

It has long been known to neurologists that infantile memories are unlikely to be preserved because the myeline sheathing of the long-term memory pathways has not been established in infancy. Freud's neurological blunder does not make for satire. It has caused great distress for many, as Farrell himself concedes, but it has not produced a work of satire that informs our world.

The English humanist scholar Sir Isaiah Berlin divided thinkers in a celebrated essay into *the Hedgehog* and *the Fox* — the "hedgehogs" aspiring to "one great thing" whilst the "foxes" are content to know "many little things." By Sir Isaiah Berlin's reckoning Freud is without doubt a "hedgehog." His one great thing was the omnipresence in human life of sexuality and, as the origin of this, the omnipresence in a part of the human mind of infantile sexuality still actively asserting its incestuous naughtiness in adults who could not recall the source of their unhappiness. This is not, in itself, a paranoid assumption; but it most surely is, if it is allowed to control a lifelong enterprise of examining human psychology, an obsessive and insistent misprision of the human state.

Freud was a blinkered obsessive of unusual literary skills. He had a paranoid distrust of altruism or of any positive values in human conduct. Farrell is quite right to refer to Freud's researches as a "paranoid quest" and much of his book is to be valued for the clear demonstration of Freud's disastrous effects upon the twentieth century. In spite of my reservations about Farrell's attempt to create an overarching project — the modern, or post-Renaissance, developments of suspicion and satire (with Freud as the ultimate satirist)¹⁹ — I have great admiration for his courage in taking on a contemporary shibboleth (accepted without serious question in many departments of literature) without recourse to the obfuscations of post-modernist discourse (it was in fact a joy to read his lucid appreciations of the prose he quotes); I also admire his honesty in offering in the public forum of *Freud's Paranoid Quest* his reasons for his intelligent refusal to

18 If I say "pretended listeners" it is simply to indicate that these "New Introductory Lectures" were never conceived to be delivered before a live audience, but they were written (ingeniously) as if Freud had before him a collection of *Damen und Herren* whom he would seduce with these "fireside chats."

19 In a sense the attempt to make Freud into the Great Satirist is as mistaken as Richard Webster's overarching attempt to make Freud a would-be Messiah in his *Why Freud Was Wrong: Sin, Science, and Psychoanalysis*. Freud's great and international organizing skills and his tendency to insist on doctrinal allegiance are not the hallmark of a satirist; they are, however, more representative of Webster's thesis — but then the writings and the organizational enterprise of L. Ron Hubbard would equally fit Webster's thesis!

use psychoanalytic theory as a basis for his teaching of literature.

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