



PROJECT MUSE®

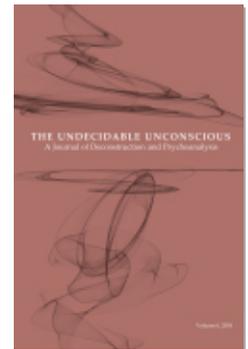
Psychoanalysis to Come: A "Freuderridian" Approach to a
Non-normative Psychoanalysis

Esther Hutfless

The Undecidable Unconscious: A Journal of Deconstruction and Psychoanalysis,
Volume 6, 2019, pp. 1-27 (Article)

Published by University of Nebraska Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/ujd.2019.0000>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/751100>

Psychoanalysis to Come

A “Freuderridian” Approach to a Non-normative Psychoanalysis

ESTHER HUTFLESS

The phrase “psychoanalysis to come” contains both a promise and a risk. The promise is that it will never arrive once and for all, that it will keep itself open; the risk is of never being identical with itself, of losing itself in the hope of immediately finding itself again, of exposing itself to the accusation “This is not psychoanalysis” while engaging time and again with the question “What is psychoanalysis?” With the quasi-parasitic inclusion of Derrida’s “to come” in psychoanalysis, I will propose a “Freuderridian” approach to psychoanalysis. Hélène Cixous coined the term “Freuderridian” for Derrida’s analytical, passionate, and precise reading of Freud. “Freuderridian,” as Cixous puts it, also describes a movement of opening that Derrida inscribes in Freud and in psychoanalysis: a movement of bringing them beyond themselves, beyond their finitude and limitations (Cixous 2007, 159).

It may seem strange or inappropriate to inscribe something foreign to psychoanalysis, this alien figure of the “to come” that derives from Derrida’s deconstruction. Derrida is, in a way, a stranger, a “foreign body” within the field of psychoanalysis (Ellmann 2000, 211; Derrida 2007a, 321)—he is not a psychoanalyst himself, nor has he undergone an analysis (Major 2016, 2). Rather, he speaks as a friend of psychoanalysis: “I like the expression ‘friends of psychoanalysis.’ It evokes the freedom of an alliance, an engagement with no institutional status. The friend maintains

the reserve, withdrawal, or distance necessary for critique, for discussion, for reciprocal questioning, sometimes the most radical of all" (Derrida and Roudinesco 2004, 167). For Derrida, criticism as friendship and friendship as criticism do not mean the destruction or annihilation of psychoanalysis but rather an unconditional "yes" to psychoanalysis, and one that I fully share. This unconditional "yes" must as well be understood as a "yes" to the other and to the foreign and can thus be perceived as a shared ground of psychoanalysis and deconstruction.¹ Through this "yes" to the radical, elusive, and unpredictable foreign other, the "to come" has perhaps always been included in psychoanalysis but is at the same time lost again and again in dogmatic and normative theories and attitudes, which are rightly criticized and often lead to the rejection of psychoanalysis. Within psychoanalysis, and often against Freud's advice, knowledge is preferred to the psychoanalytical method, and *the other* is in danger of disappearing behind a curtain of prejudices and theoretical assumptions (Freud 1912; Reiche 2004, 77).

In order to rediscover the "to come" and to keep it in play and alive, I am arguing for inscribing Derrida's thinking and his approach into psychoanalysis. Derrida is not only a productive and appreciative reader of Freud's work; many of his approaches are able, as I would like to show, to open up psychoanalysis, to enrich it with a deconstructionist, anti-normative and critical attitude. This is why, in talking about what I am calling "psychoanalysis to come," I cannot avoid speaking about democracy as well. But this will only be a short detour. Derrida developed this figure of the "to come" —in French, *l'avenir*—in his reflections on democracy and terror, but it also appears in his discussion of hospitality, of the unconditional gift, of the unconditional university and of the event. Intrinsic to his thinking of "democracy to come" are Freudian concepts, such as the existence of the unconscious and of the interwovenness of libido and the death drive. In short, the "to come" addresses, among other things, the unforeseeable, the "Other who comes without my being able to anticipate their arrival" (Derrida 2002c), and a certain impossibility, an aporetic

structure, something that is to come, although it will never fully arrive (Derrida 2005). This polymorphism of the “to come” that welcomes the radical other, as well as its structure of deferral, makes it a productive figure that opens psychoanalysis to the other and inscribes a permanent transgression and porosity in psychoanalysis.

What I am calling “psychoanalysis to come” is no original invention of mine, not only because with Derrida there can be no “original invention” to which an author can be assigned, but also because “psychoanalysis to come” is already foreshadowed in his lecture “Psychoanalysis Searches the States of Its Soul.” In this lecture, which he presented in 2000 in Paris at the États Généraux de la Psychanalyse, a meeting of mainly psychoanalysts discussing the fate, status, and actuality of psychoanalysis at the turn of the millennium (Canavêz 2017, 426),² Derrida not only deconstructs this idea of the “general” as it was given by the title of this conference and hints toward a “psychoanalysis to come” but also thinks toward a new psychoanalytic reason, a new psychoanalytic enlightenment that calculates with the impossible, with the unconditional, with the coming of the radical other. Here he perceives Freud as political thinker and argues for a psychoanalysis that has something to say and that should contribute to questions concerning sovereignty, cruelty, power, and the political—questions that are urgent for our time (Derrida 2002a).

Between Criticism and Reformulation: The Status of Psychoanalysis Today

Before I follow the traces of the “to come”—the interwovenness of psychoanalysis, democracy, alterity, epistemology, and deconstruction in Derrida’s rereading of Freud—I would like to start somewhere else: with a crisis—a diagnosed, vaguely felt or predicted crisis of psychoanalysis. Where does psychoanalysis stand today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, more than one hundred years after Freud’s revolution? As Derrida states,

Freud's thinking caused a revolution, a revolution that shattered Anglo-European philosophy and thinking.

Nevertheless, as a clinical method and as a theory of culture and society, psychoanalysis has a difficult standing today, as Derrida expresses in his lecture "Let Us Not Forget—Psychoanalysis," delivered 1988 and published 1990: "Psychoanalysis is no longer in fashion, having been excessively in fashion in the 60's and 70's, when it had pushed philosophy far away from the centre, obliging philosophical discourse to reckon with a logic of the unconscious, at the risk of allowing its most basic certainties to be dislodged, at the risk of suffering the expropriation of its ground, its axioms, its norms and its language" (Derrida 1990, 2). He continues:

And today, in the climate of opinion, people are starting to behave as though it was nothing at all, as though nothing had happened, as though taking into account the event of psychoanalysis, a logic of the unconscious, of "unconscious concepts," even, were no longer *de rigueur*, no longer even had a place in something like a history of reason: as if one could calmly continue the good old discourse of the Enlightenment, return to Kant, call us back to the ethical or juridical or political responsibility of the subject by restoring the authority of consciousness, of the ego, of the reflexive cogito, of an "I think" without pain or paradox. (4)

While Derrida explains this loss in the significance of psychoanalysis by an epistemological shift within academic discourses since the 1970s, the historian Dagmar Herzog explains this loss of psychoanalysis's influence within social and scientific discourses as partly caused by psychoanalysis itself: its ignorance or degradation of the sexual revolution and the women's and gay-and-lesbian movements, its authoritarian attitude or expertise in contrast to more democratic consciousness-raising and self-help groups (2017, 58, 72). The criticism of psychoanalysis formulated by the French philosopher and sociologist Didier Eribon points in a similar direction. Eribon criticizes contemporary feminist and queer thinking that still refers to psychoanalysis—very often to

structural psychoanalysis—while expressing his skepticism that psychoanalysis could be reformulated in a non-normative way (Eribon 2017, 123–24; Eribon 2018, 27), as is attempted in many feminist and queer rereadings of Freud and of psychoanalytic thinking. Eribon locates the obstacle for a non-normative psychoanalysis in the fact that there was no nonstructural reformation of psychoanalysis in the recent past (2018, 78).³ He is especially very critical of structural psychoanalysis, which he describes as normative and transcendental, and he criticizes the way psychoanalysis at the same time individualizes and universalizes psychic processes and people's experiences and that psychoanalysis's focus on the family and the individuum leads to an uncritical, ahistorical, and apolitical approach (2018, 25–26). Thus Eribon argues, referring to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, for escaping psychoanalysis, for abandoning it in general (2017, 123–24).

In addition to the normalizing and transcendental character of psychoanalysis, what may as well have caused this crisis of psychoanalysis is, as Herzog notes, that psychoanalysis was and is often qualified as unscientific and therefore rejected (Herzog 2017, 72; Richards 2015). The epistemological shift within academia described by Derrida, which led to the rejection of psychoanalysis and to its degradation as unscientific, today often leads psychoanalysis to attempt to constitute itself as a natural science and to prove its effectiveness by referring to quantitative methods to deal with this crisis. As I will show with reference to Derrida, one can perhaps critically discuss this self-preserving act as self-destructive, and one can also, according to Derrida, perceive it as an act of seeking after alibis. While it was indeed Freud's aim to establish psychoanalysis as a science and to receive recognition from academia, Freud was at the same time very aware that psychoanalysis demands a specific epistemology. In general, there are scandalous epistemological implications to Freud's approach: psychoanalysis suspends all ideas of a pure objectivity by the assumption of an unconscious. The notion of the unconscious introduces otherness, difference, and heterogeneity into the ego, which can no longer be perceived

as self-conscious and unified (O'Connor 2010, 54). Freud, as René Major puts it, “diverts and subverts” metaphysical concepts and oppositions, for example those between mind and body, subject and object, thought and passion, rational and irrational, pleasure and unpleasure, love and hate, conscious and unconscious (Major 2001, 298; Major 2016, 8; Flax 2013, 52). The unconscious is not perceived as the opposite or the outside of consciousness; the unconscious dwells at the heart of consciousness (Major 2001, 298). Freud’s concept of *Nachträglichkeit*—“afterwardness” or “deferred action”—calls into question metaphysical and positivist concepts of presence or truth derived from a primal and original experience or perception (Major 2016, 7–8); Freud instead emphasizes the significance of psychic truth rather than empirical truth.

Freud understands unconscious formations as both overdetermined and retroactively constructed, such that no exclusive, ultimate meaning or truth can be uncovered. These aspects of Freudian thinking put into question traditional conceptions of reason and came to be important for Derrida’s thought (Major 2001, 298; Derrida and Roudinesco 2004, 170). Moreover, all of these aspects of Freud’s thinking have implications for politics, ethics, morality and science, because the unconscious is always at play and, as Derrida puts it, psychoanalysis may help us to do justice to the unconscious in the sphere of the political and to take into account that there is more than one notion of reason (Derrida 1990).

In contrast, however, psychoanalysis at the same time often works with normative concepts that are used to pathologize and to evaluate analysands, their personalities, sexualities, and behaviors—concepts such as the Oedipus complex and its different outcomes, notions of a certain form of mature and adult sexuality, primitive versus mature mechanisms of defense or personality organization, and the unity and identity of a person as opposed to its fragmentation and fluidity, and so forth. Classical discourses of truth are in this way reinstalled, and clinicians may perceive themselves as arbiters of knowledge in the social and

cultural fields. This ambivalence between deconstructive aspects on the one hand and normative aspects on the other is already present in Freud's work (Van Haute and Westerink 2017). Nevertheless, Freud was aware that the discovery of the unconscious had consequences for psychoanalytic knowledge itself. As both a metatheory of the psyche and its functioning as well and as a clinical method, Freud distinguishes psychoanalysis from the epistemologies of other sciences, without making psychoanalysis unscientific. In "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis" (1912) he writes:

One of the claims of psycho-analysis to distinction is, no doubt, that in its execution research and treatment coincide; nevertheless, after a certain point, the technique required for the one opposes that required for the other. It is not a good thing to work on a case scientifically while treatment is still proceeding—to piece together its structure, to try to foretell its further progress, and to get a picture from time to time of the current state of affairs, as scientific interest would demand. Cases which are devoted from the first to scientific purposes and are treated accordingly suffer in their outcome; while the most successful cases are those in which one proceeds, as it were, without any purpose in view, allows oneself to be taken by surprise by any new turn in them, and always meets them with an open mind, free from any presuppositions. The correct behavior for an analyst lies in swinging over according to need from the one mental attitude to the other, in avoiding speculation or brooding over cases while they are in analysis, and in submitting the material obtained to a synthetic process of thought only after the analysis is concluded. (1912, 114)

This recommendation argues for the suspension or deferral of theoretical assumptions within the analytic setting, enabling an encounter with the other, a contact between one unconscious and another unconscious (115–16), enabling the arrival of the unex-

pected, the not-yet-known. Freud strengthens the primacy of the psychoanalytic method over existing knowledge, be it knowledge of etiology, knowledge of the improvement and change of one's psychic constitution, or practical knowledge of how to intervene, what to interpret, and so forth. Heinrich Deserno (2016) argues that, according to Freud, neither a specific knowledge nor a specific psychoanalytic technique should be ritualized.

A radical return to this Freudian principle of the deferral of knowledge and the focus on the method could open psychoanalysis again and avoid stereotyped and normative interpretations (as they are criticized, e.g., by Eribon). To focus on this aspect more deeply, I would like to think psychoanalysis together with Derrida's figure of the "to come."

L'avenir and the Invention of the Other

The other and the question of alterity appear in various ways throughout Derrida's work. Here I would like to pick up and pursue one of the traces of the other: the other who is to come and who has to be invented continuously anew. This *invention of the other to come* can be productively linked to an ethical perspective of psychoanalysis and to the unconditional "yes" to the other.

Derrida's expression "invention of the other" operates with a double genitive that seems to suggest a splitting between object and subject, inside and outside, active and passive. "Invention of the other" could mean that something is the other's invention, or that the other is invented by someone or something else. It implies a relation of dependence, cause, and ownership: "What is an invention? And what does invention signify when it must be *of the other*? The invention of the other would imply that the other remains still *me, in me, of me*, at best, *for me* (projection, assimilation, interiorization, introjection, analogic appresentation, at best, phenomenality)? Or else that my invention of the other remains the invention of me by the other who finds me, discovers me, institutes or constitutes me? By coming from her (or him), the in-

vention of the other would then return to him (or her)” (Derrida 2007c, xiii).

Derrida carefully and precisely deconstructs this opposition between the subjective and objective genitive in a next step (Derrida 2007b, 29–32; Seeger 2010, 394–96). Playing with its etymology, Derrida makes both roots of the word “invention” (*in-venire*) productive for his thinking of the other: the “creation of something new” as well as the “to come” (Derrida 2007b, 30–31; Dooley and Kavanagh 2014, 109).

Derrida uses the term “invention” explicitly in order not to define the other beforehand: the other is not to be created, and every perception of a foreseeable other that would expect the other to be or appear in a certain place is suspended. The other is never simply given to us but must be invented again and again: “What is an invention? What does it do? It *finds* something for the first time. And the ambiguity lies in the word ‘find.’ To find is to invent when the experience of finding takes place for the first time” (2007b, 23). For Derrida, the invention of the other goes hand in hand with the fact that the other always appears for the first time, which also means that each appearance of the other is singular and unique. Even the repeated coming of the other remains an *event* of uniqueness, one in which, as Derrida writes, archaeology and eschatology are linked. The invention of the other means that the other never appears as the same and in the same way; hence the relation to the other always is structured by *différance*:

What does it make us think? What else? Whom else? What do we still have to invent in regard to the coming, the *venire*? What does it mean, *to come*? To come a first time? Every invention supposes that something or someone comes a *first time*, something or someone comes to someone, to someone else. But for an invention to be an invention, in other words, *unique* (even if the uniqueness has to be repeatable), it is also necessary for this first time to be a last time: archaeology and eschatology acknowledge each other here in the irony of the *one and only* instant. (2007b, 6)

The invention of the other is perceived as an *event* that disturbs and disrupts norms, conventions, and rules; it is not ordered, authorized, or dictated. For Derrida there is no invention without a break or transgression of the existing and the order of the same (2007b, 1, 21). This is why he connects his thinking of the “invention” with his specific perception of the “to come” as *l’avenir*:

In general, I try to distinguish between what one calls the future and “l’avenir.” The future is that which—tomorrow, later, next century—will be. There is a future which is predictable, programmed, scheduled, foreseeable. But there is a future, *l’avenir* (to come) which refers to someone who comes whose arrival is totally unexpected. For me that is the real future: that which is totally unpredictable. The Other who comes without my being able to anticipate their arrival. So, if there is a real future beyond this other known future, it is “l’avenir” in that it’s the coming of the Other, when I am completely unable to foresee their arrival.
(Derrida 2002c)

In this way Derrida critically questions every notion of the other that can be captured or foreseen, because “the other is what is never inventable and will never have waited for your invention. The call of the other is a call to come, and that happens only in multiple voices” (2007b, 47).

As we have seen, Derrida does not use the double genitive of “invention of the other” to refer to two and only two distinct meanings. The double genitive always already inscribes an opening that emerges in the oscillation, in the undecidability, in the space between the two meanings: there is a rest, something that exceeds distinct signification. It is *différance* we see at work in this, and this points to the “uninventability” of the other. This means that the other always remains to come, that the other can never be grasped. This encounter with the other, which must be invented time and again but remains at the same time un-inventable, is a constitutional moment for a non-normative psychoanalysis, be-

cause norms are always already confounded and abrogated by the other to come.

The Never-Arriving: Derrida's "Democracy to Come"

In addition to the "to come" of the radical other, I want to focus on another "to come"—"democracy to come"—which Derrida best elaborates in *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (2005). Here the "to come" of democracy is linked to what Derrida calls "autoimmunity" (2005, 36–41), in which Freud's theory of the death drive and its amalgamation with libido is present. Derrida understands autoimmunity as a form of self-preservation inherent to democracy, and one that, in its radical form, leads to self-destruction. Generally, autoimmunity describes a physiological process whereby an organism fails to recognize parts of its own structure as belonging to itself and therefore fights these parts as foreign. For democracy this means that aspects which are vital and constitutive for democracy are perceived as a threat that must be fought against. This antagonism at the heart of democracy—the struggle between libido and death drive, one could add—arises from contradictions intrinsic to democracy. Within democracy there is a need for a certain form of sovereignty to fulfill its ruling function and to preserve itself. In protecting itself and in trying to preserve its sovereignty, democracy suffers from an autoimmune self-destruction; it destroys itself by "closing off, unifying and essentializing the multiplicity that enables the formation of democracy in the first place" (Matthews 2013). Taking up another analogy to a physical body, democracy lives through others, through a plurality of beings in contact with one another. The other guarantees the existence of the same; without the other—without a plurality—democracy cannot exist. What Derrida carves out is that absolute immunity and security are impossible. In the moment when security and protection are to be gained, destruction begins: "Autoimmunity, paradoxically, gives democracy life and play, it nurtures an openness to what is 'to come,'

to the possibility of infinite recasting, reworking and reiteration" (Matthews 2013). Autoimmunity can lead to processes of opening and becoming as well as those of closure and destruction.

By means of this contradictory and aporetic structure within democracy, democracy remains an impossibility; it is always deferred: "The perfect democracy, a full and living democracy, does not exist; not only has it never existed, not only does it not presently exist, but, indefinitely deferred, it will always remain to come, it will never be present in the present, will never present itself, will never come, will remain always to come, like the impossible itself" (Derrida 2005, 73). It is because democracy can never fully arrive that therefore Derrida speaks of "democracy to come." The "to come" does not refer to a possibility, something that may become present at some future point in time; it is not an idea that might realize itself. A democracy to come refers to the unforeseeable, to the event. The "to come" inscribes a radical openness into democracy, an openness and futurity that is not naively optimistic in terms of a belief in progress. In addition, the "to come" further points toward a critical, vital, and anti-ideological perspective intrinsic to democracy.

It is this anti-ideological and critical perspective that I would like to make productive for psychoanalysis in a further step. In connection with democracy, the "to come" not only refers to a democracy that always remains precarious but is also, as Derrida points out, directed against the attacks on democracy, against its enemies: "The expression 'democracy to come' does indeed translate or call for a militant and interminable political critique. A weapon aimed at the enemies of democracy, it protests against all naïveté and every political abuse, every rhetoric that would present as a present or existing democracy, as a de facto democracy, what remains inadequate to the democratic demand" (2005, 86). For Derrida, "to come" is therefore not a fatalistic perception. "Democracy to come" implies a promise that affects the present, although its fulfillment cannot be expected. It needs ongoing work and engagement, the ongoing work to equilibrate the contradictory autoimmune drives intrinsic to democracy.

Without autoimmunity and the death drive there will be no democracy, no psychoanalysis, and no living being. For Freud, as Derrida puts it in “Psychoanalysis Searches the States of Its Soul,” it makes “no sense in wanting to rid oneself of the destructive drives, without which life itself would cease” (2002a, 274). And in *Rogues*, Derrida states: “To put it a bit sententiously in the interest of time, without autoimmunity there would be neither psychoanalysis nor what psychoanalysis calls the ‘unconscious.’ Not to mention, therefore, the ‘death drive,’ the cruelty of ‘primary sadism and masochism’—or even what we just as complacently call ‘consciousness’” (2005, 55). Autoimmunity and the amalgamation of libido with the death drive are integral parts of psychic functioning, of the constitution of the unconscious and therefore they are constitutional for psychoanalysis too.

From the “Resistance of Psychoanalysis” to a Psychoanalysis “Without Alibi”

Similar to democracy in the lecture “Psychoanalysis Searches the States of Its Soul,” Derrida describes autoimmunity at work within psychoanalysis itself, referring to a new psychoanalytic reason, or one “to come” (2002a, 276–77). He discusses psychoanalysis here mainly together with political, institutional, and epistemological questions, but I would like to add clinical implications to these discussions.

In this lecture, Derrida considers autoimmunity together with the psychoanalytic concept of resistance: “resistance to psychoanalysis in the world and resistance to the world within psychoanalysis that also resists itself, that folds back on itself to resist itself, if I can say that, to inhibit itself, in a quasi-autoimmune fashion” (2002a, 242). Here Derrida describes a reciprocal resistance—a reciprocal abstinence between the world, politics, and psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis, as Derrida puts it, has not yet and does not analyze or deconstruct the positivist and metaphysical axioms of itself, of ethics, of politics, of law, and so forth; it does not intervene or engage in questions concerning the

political, cruelty, the death penalty, sovereignty, and many other urgent questions of our time: "When faced with this resistance, psychoanalysis, no doubt, in the statutory forms of its community, in the greatest authority of its discourse, in its most visible institutions, resists doubly. . . . It doesn't like what it sees, but it doesn't tackle it, doesn't analyze it. And this resistance is also a self-resistance" (244). In this resistance to itself, autoimmunity is at work: psychoanalysis constitutes and preserves itself in institutions and discourses, but at the same time it is in danger of losing itself because it does not follow its own radical implications in relation to itself as a science and in relation to the world. For Derrida this resistance *to* and *of* psychoanalysis can be perceived in terms of a political relation. One might call it a misunderstood abstinence: "That is why, paradoxically, the less integration there is between the psychoanalytic and ethico-political discourses, the easier it is for integration and appropriation to occur between the apparatuses, the easier it is for psychoanalysis to be manipulated by political and police authorities, for psychoanalytic power to be abused, and so forth" (Derrida 2007a, 330). At the moment when psychoanalysis tries to gain a sovereign position with the aim of protecting itself, it also establishes, Derrida argues, a commitment to cruelty.

In Derrida's understanding, it is not this political abstinence that guarantees its sovereignty; psychoanalysis can only preserve its sovereignty by becoming political. Becoming political does not mean becoming ideological or supporting a political party; it means that psychoanalysis should not exclude itself from the world. In an analysis of its own resistance to the world there may also be the possibility for psychoanalysis to think the relation between the individual and society in another, reciprocal way. Psychoanalysis usually tends to individualize social structures and understands conflicts and psychic distress mainly in the private, oedipal context, which in turn presents itself as an apolitical universal structure. It is important and unique to the approach of psychoanalysis that it focuses on intrapsychic, unconscious dynamics instead of analyzing only apparently

external (e.g., economic or social structures), because this would not do justice to the complexity of the subject in the world and thus also to the world itself. Yet a certain “one-sidedness,” a certain individualized and oedipalized point of view, leads to a depoliticized and ahistorical perspective within psychoanalysis, as it is criticized by Eribon and many others.

Of course, for psychoanalysis, becoming political threatens psychoanalysis, as it may be exposed to persecution. But not becoming political means that psychoanalysis disappears, loses its sovereignty. In this way the analytic field threatens to self-destruct in an autoimmune fashion. Similar to democracy, psychoanalysis is always at risk and always has to risk itself: “Thus, at the heart of the psychoanalytic movement which identifies a resistance *to* analysis, there is likewise a resistance *of* psychoanalysis, . . . an autoimmune resistance which allows its own subversive powers to slip through its fingers. And we may add: it resists its own capacity to disrupt the normalizing flux, which psychoanalysis risks joining each time it turns its back on the irreducible dimension of analytical experience, which can present itself as a resistance *to* analysis” (Canavêz and Miranda 2011, 158). This resistance *of* analysis goes hand in hand with the *rejection of*, or the *resistance to*, the radical other and thus also describes an ethical dimension.

Because its strengths and its deconstructive power lie in the irreducible, radical, and open psychoanalytic experience—and, as one can add with Reiche and Deserno, in the specific method of psychoanalysis, rather than in dogmatic theories or ritualized technique (Reiche 2004, 77; Deserno 2016)—Derrida speaks of psychoanalysis “without alibi” (2002a, 245): “But ‘psychoanalysis’ would be the name of that which, without theological or other alibi, would be turned toward what is most proper to psychical cruelty. Psychoanalysis, for me, if I may be permitted yet another confidential remark, would be another name for the ‘without alibi.’ The confession of a ‘without alibi.’ If that were possible” (240). For Derrida, Freudian psychoanalysis courageously deals with psychic cruelty and suffering, developing a reason “without

alibi." This reason without alibi does not legitimize itself by referring to a higher authority, to morality or to respected regimes of knowledge. There is no safe ground on which this knowledge could operate; its terrain is the exposed relation to the other and the risky bond with the unknown.

Of course, psychoanalysis often uses alibis, if it resorts to a neutral political or scientific position, if it refers to dogmatic etiological theories, or to theories and assumptions concerning the development of the psyche, ego, sexuality, and so forth in order not to expose itself to the other without safeguarding itself. This is the moment when psychoanalysis resists both the other and itself.⁴ The fictional and precarious character of its knowledge makes psychoanalysis vulnerable to attacks that question the significance of its theory and its practice. Following Jane Flax, it is erroneous for psychoanalysis endlessly to claim and to fight for its scientific status: "Instead, we should question the beliefs behind the assumption that this is a crucial matter. What could this status mean, and what would it add to the content or usefulness of psychoanalytic theory?" (2013, 54). Instead of endlessly insisting on its properly scientific character, without questioning the constitution and power relations of this notion of science, psychoanalysis could contribute much more to a critical understanding of science and of epistemology, to human development and to processes of subjectivation, if it does not neglect the specific nature of its knowledge. Instead of applying the medical model of science to psychoanalysis, Flax argues, new psychoanalytic colleges and institutions should be established that acknowledge difference, disorder, and complexity and do not perceive themselves in the position of wistful political innocence (58).⁵

Derrida's notion of a "without alibi" can already be found in Freud. The Freudian reason without alibi tries for an understanding of psychic phenomena with the help of theoretical fictions (Bischof 2004, 332). Indeed, Freud uses the term "fiction" or "mythology" for his theories, as, for example, when in the *Interpretation of Dreams* he speaks about the "fiction of a primitive psychological apparatus whose activities are regulated by an effort to avoid an

accumulation of excitation and to maintain itself so far as possible without excitation" (1900, 598). In "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning" (1911), when he speaks about the division between pleasure principle and reality principle as fiction, Freud explicitly makes use of the German word *Fiktion* (219). And in "Why War?" (1933) he speaks of "our mythological theory of instincts" (212). Following Derrida, we can appreciate how Freud inscribes this kind of "theoretical fiction" strategically in negotiating knowledge while at the same time remaining aware that this is a strategic move and taking ethical responsibility for such a theoretical, fictional performative (Bischof 2004, 332). Elisabeth Roudinesco states that Freud invented his fictional metapsychology to bring psychoanalysis close to natural science (Derrida and Roudinesco 2004, 172). With his metapsychological concepts he invented what can be called a "performative natural science-fiction"—a theory between the natural sciences and speculative reflection. Derrida criticizes the use of metapsychological concepts in terms of an established or ultimate truth in the further development of psychoanalytic approaches that ignore the fictional roots in Freud's theories. He describes this kind of psychoanalytic reason that is aware of its use of fiction as "reason without alibi." For Derrida this knowledge without alibi is aware of both the "necessity of the stratagem in the *positing* of truth" and "the debt of all theoretical (but also all juridical, ethical, and political) *positing*, to a performative power structured by *fiction*" (2004, 173).

Toward a Psychoanalysis "To Come"

Psychoanalysis as reason or knowledge without alibi points toward a psychoanalysis to come because it refers to what lies beyond every safe ground, exposing itself to the unpredictable, the impossible, the event, *l'avenir*. This psychoanalysis without alibi, or psychoanalysis "to come," has political, epistemological, ethical, and clinical implications. On the political level it calls for a mode of sovereignty that is not trapped in the reciprocal resis-

tance between psychoanalysis and the political; it calls for a sovereignty that risks itself. Epistemologically, the “without alibi” refers to a commitment to theory as fiction, a Freudian approach that is very close to poststructuralist approaches that are by no means arbitrary or pointless; rather they are aware of the productive power relations under which knowledge and theory are produced. The fictional and productive character of this knowledge is not masked or denied, as it is, for example, in all those forms of *fake news* today; instead, it is confessed in the awareness that it does not represent an ultimate truth but is always only an approach that necessarily fails.

From an ethical and clinical perspective, the “without alibi” refers to an attitude of radical openness toward the other without any presupposition and without encountering the other by referring to the supposedly safe ground of a theory. The “without alibi” radically suspends and deconstructs any normative tendencies within psychoanalysis and thus directs us toward a psychoanalysis to come, a psychoanalysis that has to invent itself continuously anew in every encounter with the other. As is true for the event, for psychoanalysis, too, we will only know afterward whether it will have happened. Similar to Derrida’s perception of “democracy to come,” the “to come” of psychoanalysis—its deferral—critically questions all pretensions of a present, genuine, true, and proper psychoanalysis.

Furthermore, the “without alibi” deconstructs the psychoanalytic aim to uncover an original truth in the speech of the subject and the assumption that full understanding and concluding interpretations are possible (cf. O’Connor 2010, 47–48). “Analysts,” as Flax puts it, “err and risk destroying analysis when they try to exercise order or control by marking one aspect as the true, foundational, or curative one” (2013, 57). Analysts should exploit the ambiguities and multiplicities, rather than standardizing and normalizing meanings and theoretical concepts (57). Following Derrida, we must not view the unconscious as container of a displaced or hidden truth or meaning that can be detected or discovered, but rather as woven

of traces and differences of the forces of the drives, of the multiple meanings of memories and experiences, of the stasis of the body, of phantasies, facilitations, temporalities. With the notion of *différance*, Derrida conceptualizes time, presence, meaning, and change in a way that radically differs from structuralist perceptions (Clemenz 1998, 53–54). *Différance* has the potential to inscribe something new—or something old, because *différance* is quite close to Freudian concepts such as energies, facilitations, and *Nachträglichkeit*—into psychoanalytic thinking. While Lacan conceives the unconscious as structured like a language, organized according to *one* transcendental signifier (the Phallus), the relation between language/text and the unconscious can be thought in a different way according to Derrida. *Différance* can be perceived, as an operation of force within the unconscious, as well as within the text and within language:

There is then no unconscious truth to rediscover because it would be written elsewhere. There is no text written and present elsewhere which would then be subjected, without being changed in the process, to an operation and a temporalization . . . which would be external to it, floating on its surface. There is no present text in general, and there is not even a past present text, a text which is past as having been present. . . . The unconscious text is already woven of pure traces, differences in which meaning and force are united; a text nowhere present, consisting of archives which are *always already* transcriptions. Originary prints. Everything begins with reproduction. Always already: repositories of a meaning which was never present, whose signified presence is always reconstituted by deferment, *nachträglich*, belatedly, *supplementarily*: for *nachträglich* also means supplementary. (Derrida 1972, 92)

In order to respond to *différance* within the unconscious, a *psychoanalysis to come* is required. Psychoanalysis to come does not make psychoanalysis arbitrary or meaningless; rather, it allows for thinking multiplicities, contradictions, fluctuations, and

change, for a productive approach to thinking about, touching, and approximating psychoanalytically queer and fluid subjects, sexualities, and desires. Derrida's "psychoanalysis without alibi" or "new psychoanalytic reason" exposes itself to the impossible: "But what may, perhaps, become a task, tomorrow, for psychoanalysis, for a new psychoanalytic reason, for a new psychoanalytic Enlightenment, is a revolution that, like all revolutions, will come to terms with the impossible, negotiate with the non-negotiable that has remained non-negotiable, calculate with the unconditional as such, with the inflexible unconditionality of the unconditional" (Derrida 2002a, 276–77). For this revolution of psychoanalytic reason, Derrida stresses the importance of the *im-possible* and the unconditional that interrupts, dislocates, and deconstructs the unifying tendencies of the whole corpus of psychoanalytic theory and practice as well as its institutions, norms, and conventions. Instead of using alibis, referring to laws and norms Derrida speaks of a free responsibility of psychoanalysis that "will never be deduced from a simple act of knowledge" (278). Elsewhere he states: "If there are responsibilities to be taken and decisions to be made, responsibilities and decisions worthy of these names, they belong to the time of a risk and of an act of faith. Beyond knowledge. For if I decide because *I know*, within the limits of what *I know* and *know I must do*, then I am simply deploying a foreseeable program and there is no decision, no responsibility, no event" (2003, 118).

What is important for Derrida is that psychoanalysis must reinvent itself and its responsibilities. Responsibilities cannot be grounded in theoretical knowledge; rather, as Diane Davis puts it, they have to be understood as "response-ability" — the ability to answer, and to do so openly, so as to respond to the other. This ability cannot be normativized or institutionalized. Where it is institutionalized and normativized, one can no longer speak of responsibility in terms of response-ability (Davis 2013, 77) and one can no longer speak of ethics. Because processes of normalizing and normativizing lead to the disappearance of the other,

they focus on given norms instead of calculating with the arrival of the radical other.

While Kant, for example, separates pure reason, aesthetics, and ethics in his three critiques, they remain external to one another, and therefore—as Horkheimer and Adorno showed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (2000)—there is a risk of pure reason becoming perverted. In contrast to Kant, in both Freud's and Derrida's epistemology, ethics is intrinsic to and entangled with knowledge and vice versa, because both calculate with the impossible and the radical other. This insight brings us once more to the ethical dimension of a “psychoanalysis to come”: the clinical encounter is an immediate one, the other does not wait. The analyst's answer comes from elsewhere, from the unconscious; it should not be based on scientific knowledge and rational decisions. It is an answer that is overdetermined, that emerges from the encounter between one unconscious and another unconscious. This does not mean that psychoanalytic technique or the psychoanalytic relationship would be mysterious or entirely enigmatic. Rather, it means that psychoanalytic practice based on the encounter with the other involves a risk, and that every answer must individually take the responsibility for this risk.

The radical openness of a psychoanalysis to come that has the potentiality to interrupt and to intervene in the constative knowledge of psychoanalysis and its performative practice also affects the thinking of the archives of psychoanalysis: not only the unconscious archive, as I have shown above, but also psychoanalysis's theoretical and institutional archives, its clinical, theoretical, and institutional practices—the “archivization of psychoanalysis itself” (Derrida 1995, 16–17). In “Archive Fever,” Derrida links his thinking of the archive to the history of psychoanalysis. As in democracy and in psychoanalysis, there is an autoimmune process within the archive as well: it is the death drive, the drive to preserve and to conserve, that is the foundation of the archive but at the same time its immanent threat. This is the threat to erase multiplicity and ambiguity and to construct the archive as *One*, as container of the original, of the past, as unequivocal, as an uncon-

tested authority. The archive, as Derrida puts it, is related at the same time to both *arché* and *an-arché*. The archive works against itself at all times; its effect is subject to reproduction, repetition, citation, and thus to the death drive, which is inseparably bound to repetition (14). The archive also holds a relationship to the event and therefore to the future: "The archivization produces as much as it records the event" (17). Therefore, the archive is not a question of the past but "a question of the future, the question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise and of a responsibility for tomorrow" (27). In this sense, the archive functions as the linchpin of a psychoanalysis to come, just as it functions as the linchpin of every coming.

"Psychoanalysis to come" does not reject the archive; rather, it deconstructs the archive and its authority, instigates a thinking of the *arché* not as origin but as a productive space and source of continuously new beginnings without which psychoanalysis is not possible: new beginnings, continuously new approximations to the other, the need of taking up again and again an analytic attitude, an evenly suspended, open attitude toward the other, keeping psychoanalysis in the risky process of becoming.

Conclusion

"Psychoanalysis to come" implies that it will never fully arrive, that it will remain in the process of coming, which means it remains in itself open and anti-ideologic. Thus, the figure of the "to come" is more than a vague supplement: it is a promise. "Psychoanalysis to come" contains a promise and addresses the event, which is the arriving of the radical other that forces psychoanalysis to invent itself continuously anew. This cannot be perceived as an ideal, as some Kantian regulative idea, nor is it a specific concept or an ideology; it is not a determined idea that has to be realized. Although the "to come" will always remain in the process of coming and will never be an ideal that can be realized, it will nevertheless have an effect in the present:

This im-possible is not privative. It is not the inaccessible, and it is not what I can indefinitely defer: it announces itself; it precedes me, swoops down upon and seizes me *here and now* in a nonvirtualizable way, in actuality and not potentiality. It comes upon me from on high, in the form of an injunction that does not simply wait on the horizon, that I do not see coming, that never leaves me in peace and never lets me put it off until later. Such an urgency cannot be *idealized* any more than the other as other can. This im-possible is thus not a (regulative) *idea* or *ideal*. It is what is most undeniably *real*. And sensible. Like the other. Like the irreducible and nonappropriable *différance* of the other. (Derrida 2005, 84)

With “psychoanalysis to come” I would like to respond to the proclaimed “crisis of psychoanalysis,” to Eribon’s discussion of the potentiality of a nonstructural reformation of psychoanalysis, to the critique of psychoanalysis’s normativity and its individualizing attitude, as well as to the debates about its actuality and relevance. Philosophically, the terms “actual” and “actuality” do not simply describe the here and now, the current state of affairs. Especially in the light of twentieth-century philosophy, “actuality” refers to a dynamic of becoming and claims that a thing’s actuality still matters and will matter in the future. It refers to the immanent movement of a concept, of a theory or practice, to a constant force or potential transformation immanent to what is at stake. Actuality cannot be grasped and fixed as a current state; it is always already opening itself to a future to come. Thus I have attempted to approach, together with Derrida, the actuality of Freud as well as the actuality of psychoanalysis, where Freud and psychoanalysis still matter and will matter. Finally, to close, but in such a way as to open again, I will quote from Freud’s short “Autobiographical Study” from 1925: “Looking back, then, over the patchwork of my life’s labours, I can say that I have made many beginnings and thrown out many suggestions. Something will come of them in the future, though I cannot myself tell whether it will be much or little. I can, however, express a

hope that I have opened up a pathway for an important advance in our knowledge" (1925, 70).

Esther Hutfless is philosopher and psychoanalyst in Vienna, Austria. She teaches philosophy, feminist theory, and psychoanalysis at the University of Vienna. Her publications include *How to Be a Refug(e)e for a Stranger? Fragments and Brief Chronicles of the Time of Migration* (with Elisabeth Schäfer, 2019), *The Case of Dora — A Queer Perspective on Hysteria and Perversion* (2018), *Queering Psychoanalysis: Psychoanalyse und Queer Theory — Transdisziplinäre Verschränkungen* (with Barbara Zach, 2017), and the first German translation of Cixous's *The Laugh of the Medusa*, *Hélène Cixous: Das Lachen der Medusa; Zusammen mit aktuellen Beiträgen* (with Elisabeth Schäfer and Gertrude Postl, 2013).

NOTES

1. The "yes"—in particular, the "yes, yes," the double affirmation—is an important figure in Derrida's thinking. It precedes every act of speaking or writing, but it does not signify something specific, it does not accredit a subject—neither a speaking nor a receiving one. Rather, the "yes" means affirming the other: "The *yes* to which we now refer is 'anterior.' . . . Before the *Ich* in *Ich bin* affirms or negates, it poses itself or pre-poses itself: not as *ego*, as the conscious or unconscious self, as masculine or feminine subject, spirit or flesh, but as a pre-performative force. . . . *Yes* indicates that there is address to the other. This address is not necessarily a dialogue or an interlocution, since it assumes neither voice nor symmetry, but the haste, in advance, of a response that is already asking. For if there is some other, if there is some *yes*, then the other no longer lets itself be produced by the same or by the ego. *Yes*, the condition of any signature and of any performative, addresses itself to some other which it does not constitute, and it can only begin by *asking* the other, in response to a request that has always already been made, to *ask* it to say *yes*" (Derrida 1992, 298–99).

2. The title of this conference, which translates as General Estates of Psychoanalysis, refers to a political institution. The French kings have convoked this assembly of the three classes consisting of clergy, nobility, and commoners in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in times of crisis to legitimate decisions of the king. 1789 the third estate resisted this system and formed a national assembly inviting the other estates to join and initiated the French Revolution. It was the aim of the États Généraux de la Psychanalyse to cre-

ate an assembly where analysts around the world could speak in their own name. See <http://www.psychomedia.it/jep/number10-11/koltai.htm>.

3. Since structural psychoanalysis is still very much present in the humanities and cultural sciences—not only in France but also in the Anglo-American countries—it is not surprising that Eribon seems to miss recent developments, for example, within relational psychoanalysis, which also differ from structural perspectives.

4. Derrida's thinking of a reason without alibi contains a critique of reason similar to that formulated by Horkheimer and Adorno. They too describe a "self-destruction of Enlightenment" that can be compared to Derrida's thinking of autoimmunity (Horkheimer and Adorno 2000, xiv, xvi), and they argue that, for example, fascists or sadistic murderers use forms of "alibis"—they refer to rationality, progressive thinkers, pure reason, and science to justify and legitimate their crimes. Above all, for Horkheimer and Adorno there is "the impossibility of deriving from reason a fundamental argument against murder" (93).

5. Flax's argumentation here is very close to Derrida's perception of psychoanalysis without alibi and may perhaps be thought together with Derrida's "unconditional University" (Derrida 2002b).

REFERENCES

- Bischof, Sascha. 2004. *Gerechtigkeit—Verantwortung—Gastfreundschaft: Ethik-Ansätze nach Jacques Derrida*. Freiburg: Academic Press Fribourg.
- Canavêz, Fernanda. 2017. "From Autoimmune Resistance to Multiplicity in Psychoanalysis." *Psicologia USP* 28 (3): 424–31.
- Canavêz, Fernanda, and Heraldo Miranda. 2011. "Resistance in Freud and Foucault." *Recherches en Psychanalyse*, no. 12:150–57, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-recherches-en-psychanalyse-2011-2-page-150.html>.
- Cixous, Hélène. 2007. *Insister of Jacques Derrida*. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Clemenz, Manfred. 1998. *Psychoanalytische Sozialpsychologie: Grundlagen und Probleme*. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- Davis, Diane. 2013. "Performative Perfume." In *Performatives after Deconstruction*, ed. Mauro Senatore, 70–85. London: Bloomsbury.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1972. "Freud and the Scene of Writing." Trans. Jeffrey Mehlman. *Yale French Studies*, no. 48:74–117.
- . 1990. "Let Us Not Forget—Psychoanalysis." *Oxford Literary Review* 12 (1/2): 3–7.

- . 1992. "Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce." In *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge, 253–309. New York: Routledge.
- . 1995. "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression." Trans. Eric Prenowitz. *Diacritics* 25 (2): 9–63.
- . 2002a. "Psychoanalysis Searches the States of Its Soul: The Impossible Beyond of a Sovereign Cruelty." In *Without Alibi*, ed. and trans. Peggy Kamuf, 238–80. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2002b. "The University without Condition." In *Without Alibi*, ed. and trans. Peggy Kamuf, 202–37. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2002c. *Derrida*. Documentary by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman. Jane Doe Films, USA.
- . 2003. "Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides." In *Philosophy in Times of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, ed. Giovanna Borradori, 85–136. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 2005. *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*. Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2007a. "Geopsychoanalysis 'and the Rest of the World.'" In *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume I*, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg, 318–43. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2007b. "Psyche: Invention of the Other." In *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume I*, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg, 1–47. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2007c. "Author's Preface." In *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume I*, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg, xii–xiv. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques, and Elisabeth Roudinesco. 2004. *For What Tomorrow . . .* Ed. Mieke Bal and Hent de Vries. Trans. Jeff Ford. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Deserno, Heinrich. 2016. *Die Analyse und das Arbeitsbündnis: Kritik eines Konzepts*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- Dooley, Mark, and Liam Kavanagh. 2014. *The Philosophy of Derrida*. New York: Routledge.
- Ellmann, Maud. 2000. "Deconstruction and Psychoanalysis." In *Deconstructions: A User's Guide*, ed. Nicholas Royle, 211–37. London: Palgrave.
- Eribon, Didier. 2017. *Der Psychoanalyse entkommen*. Trans. Brita Pohl. Wien: Turia + Kant.

- . 2018. *Grundlagen eines kritischen Denkens*. Trans. Oliver Precht. Wien: Turia + Kant.
- Flax, Jane. 2013. *Disputed Subjects: Essays on Psychoanalysis, Politics and Philosophy*. New York: Routledge.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1900. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. *Standard Edition*, 4.
- . 1911. "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning." *Standard Edition*, 12:213–26.
- . 1912. "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis." *Standard Edition*, 12:109–20.
- . 1925. "An Autobiographical Study." *Standard Edition*, 20:1–74.
- . 1933. "Why War?" *Standard Edition*, 22:195–216.
- Herzog, Dagmar. 2017. *Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in the Age of Catastrophes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. 2000. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Trans. John Cumming. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Major, René. 2001. "Derrida and Psychoanalysis: Desistential Psychoanalysis." In *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, ed. Tom Cohen, 296–314. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2016. "Derrida's Psychoanalysis." *The Undecidable Unconscious: A Journal of Deconstruction and Psychoanalysis* 3:1–19.
- Matthews, Daniel. 2013. "The Democracy to Come: Notes on the Thought of Jacques Derrida." *Critical Legal Thinking*. April 16, 2013. <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/04/16/the-democracy-to-come-notes-on-the-thought-of-jacques-derrida/>.
- O'Connor, Noreen. 2010. "The An-Arche of Psychoanalysis." In *Questioning Identities. Philosophy in Psychoanalytic Practice*, ed. Marry Lynne Ellis and Noreen O'Connor, 47–57. London: Karnac.
- Reiche, Reimut. 2004. "Subjekt, Patient, Außenwelt." In *Triebchicksal der Gesellschaft: Über den Strukturwandel der Psyche*, 63–86. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- Richards, Arnold. 2015. "Psychoanalysis in Crisis: The Danger of Ideology." *Psychoanalytic Review* 102 (3): 389–405.
- Seeger, Stefan A. 2010. *Verantwortung: Tradition und Dekonstruktion*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.
- Van Haute, Philippe, and Herman Westerink. 2017. *Deconstructing Normativity? Re-reading Freud's 1905 "Three Essays"*. New York: Routledge.