

Book Reviews

NORMAN KIELL, *Freud without hindsight: reviews of his work, 1893–1939*, Madison, Conn., International Universities Press, 1988, 8vo, pp. xvii, 758, \$65.00.

The history of the reception of Freud's work has long been a matter of discussion. Freud felt deeply isolated in the scientific world up to the first years of this century. But was this feeling in accordance with the facts, or merely his very subjective point of view, as Ellenberger and others have suggested? Contemporary reviews are probably the most important measure of the reception of one's scientific work (others are the number of books sold, academic titles and prizes, nowadays perhaps the number of items in the "Science Citation Index", a rather strange instrument for the evaluation of one's work). The purpose of Kiell's book is to present an exhaustive bibliography of reviews on Freud's works and to reprint a representative sample of them (mostly difficult to obtain) for the English-speaking world. Nothing similar, apart from a collection of 17 reviews of the *Interpretation of Dreams* edited by Gerd Kimmerle, has been published before (*Freuds Traumdeutung. Frühe Rezensionen 1899–1903*, Tübingen, Edition Diskord, 1986).

The bibliography presented by Kiell contains some 800 reviews, divided into four categories: Books, Collections, Shorter Writings, and Letters. Presenting such exhaustive material is, of course, complex and difficult, and some compromises are unavoidable. Kiell omits the titles of the original reviews. This sometimes makes it hard to identify the reviewed work, for example among the reviews of Freud's *Sammlung kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre*, or those of some shorter papers (pp. 737–41). In further editions the reviewed work of Freud should be marked, for example in the style of the new bibliography by Ingeborg Meyer-Palmedo and Gerhard Fichtner (*Freud-Bibliographie mit Werkkonkordanz*, Frankfurt, S. Fischer, 1989).

Although the bibliography is not the main purpose of the book, the question arises as to what extent Kiell has really traced the review material. No one would pretend to have found every review ever written on a work of Freud's. G. Fichtner in Tübingen has been collecting Freud reviews for a number of years without making systematic efforts at such a project. His collection (which, unlike Kiell's, includes "pre-analytic" works) contains about 1,064 reviews. A comparison of the reviews of the *Interpretation of Dreams* shows that Kiell lists 66 reviews, Fichtner 119, including 40 of those listed by Kiell. So Fichtner missed 26 of Kiell's reviews, and Kiell missed 79 of Fichtner's. Kiell lays some stress on the English-speaking world, while Fichtner more broadly catches German-language reviews. The picture may be a bit different for other works of Freud, but this example shows the problem.

Kiell reprints on 666 pages a sample of 172 reviews of 39 works by Freud, of which 78 appeared in English and 89 have been translated from the German and a few from French. All were written during Freud's lifetime, while the bibliography contains also reviews written after Freud's death. Each review has a short biographical introduction about the reviewer and the context of the review, as well as about Freud's reception of the review, if known. Those introductions, although not always without errors, are very welcome, for Freud's reaction to some reviews is of great importance. Of course the author of a reviewed book has a subjective point of view. But very often he knows best if a review has really caught the essentials of his publication or not. Freud had a feeling for this, since he himself was an experienced reviewer (more than 70 reviews by Freud have been located: F. G. Fichtner, 'Unbekannte Arbeiten von Freud—Schätze im Keller', *Med. hist. J.*, 1987, 22: 246–62).

In the book's 28-page introduction, Kiell usefully reflects on methodology, as well as the problems that arise in translating Freud—or reviews of Freud. In an overview of earlier research on the reviews of Freud's work he tries to re-evaluate how authors like Bry and Rifkin, Ellenberger and Decker rated reviews of the *Interpretation of Dreams*, sometimes correcting their opinion: the early reviews are much less favourable than they thought. Freud was quite right to feel isolated, misunderstood, and ignored in the years after the publication of his magnum opus.

A book like this can hardly be without mistakes. There are, however, a few avoidable errors, for example on page 9, when Kiell mentions Freud's phantasy of an inscription about the revelation of the secret of dreams, which was not on the wall of Berggasse 19 but on the Cobenzl, a hill near Vienna, where Freud dreamt his famous Irma-dream in the villa "Bellevue". An even more important example: review 27 was not written by Friedrich Eckstein, but by his sister

Book Reviews

Emma, Freud's famous patient, and it sheds some more light on his relationship with her. (Kiell gives the correct reference—*Arbeiter-Zeitung* XII, no. 289, dated 21 October 1900—but omits the pages (1–3). It remains unclear what he means by “IV, 711, 20 III” (p. 717). The article is signed “Emma Eckstein”.) Nevertheless, Kiell's book is a valuable instrument for any scholar interested in the reception of psychoanalysis. A German edition, perhaps brought up to date and slightly modified in its bibliographical presentation, would be highly welcome.

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JOHN M. MacGREGOR, *The discovery of the art of the insane*, Princeton University Press, 1989, 4to, pp. xix, 390, illus., \$49.50.

Vincent van Gogh writes to his mother from the hospital at St Rémy. “A French writer says that all painters are more or less crazy . . . Whatever the truth of it may be, I imagine that here, where I don't have to worry about anything, etc., the quality of my work is progressing.”

We needed a history of psychiatry that evaluates its practitioners as *patrons*, who facilitate artistic expression, in the widest sense, by freeing the artist from “worry about anything”. Most asylum doctors dismissed the art as meaningless, at best, or obscene and offensive. But some, like those at Charenton during Charles Meryon's stays there (1858–59, and 1866–8), evidently let the institution provide not only food and shelter, but space, materials, and above all the peace in which the insane could work out, through their art, an accommodation to a fate that was often terrifying, and unalterable.

MacGregor's subject is, not so much the art of the insane itself, but the changing psychiatric, psychoanalytic, and art-historical response to it. By “the insane” he means people who are clearly diagnosed as psychotic, and whose art, spontaneously produced, is the expression of prolonged illnesses, and institutionalizations. Edvard Munch and August Strindberg, for example, are mentioned only because they might have paved the way for German Expressionist interest in the art of Ernst Josephson, who was in 1910, unlike the other two Scandinavians, clearly understood to have been insane. MacGregor is suspicious of retrospective diagnoses; despises drawing-room pathography, especially in the hands of art historians; and loathes the “pernicious” genius-as-madman model, as old as Plato and codified by Cesare Lombroso. Van Gogh appears, not as a psychotic artist, but as an eloquent witness to the artist's life in an asylum, and an inspiration for twentieth-century artists like Antonin Artaud, whose wonderful, and mad, elucidation of the *Wheatfield with Crows* is quoted.

The first half of the book surveys the relationship between psychiatry and art until the twentieth century. The “art” is that produced in or about the asylum, first, by such sane artists as William Hogarth, Francesco Goya, and Théodore Géricault. There were insane artists, like Richard Dadd and James Tilly Matthews: not the only architect never to have produced a real building, Matthews was taught technical drawing in Bethlem. MacGregor has some suggestive things to say about the ways in which diagramming buildings and machines help lunatics in their struggle to maintain some order in the world and I wish he had expanded on this, perhaps at the expense of the more familiar material about the sane artists. Finally, the insane “non-professionals”, like Benjamin Rush's patient Richard Nisbett, Bethlem's Jonathan Martin, and Gérard de Nerval increasingly dominate the story as it moves forward chronologically. Like the entire book, this is all well illustrated and documented. But compared to MacGregor's account of Hans Prinzhorn, whose *Bildneri des Geisteskranken* was published in 1922, and what follows in the second half of this book, it is over-written and lifeless. MacGregor is a very good historian of twentieth-century art; with the modern period he can, moreover, finally ditch the psychiatrists. In his opinion, psychiatry *per se*, as opposed to visually cultured psychiatrist-patrons, never had much to contribute to our understanding of psychotic art, still less to the big questions opened by the recognition of that category to the philosophy of art. In any case, psychiatry became less interested in spontaneous art than in art therapy, (which according to the author has little to do with art, or therapy); and in psychological tests that require a patient to