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# THE ANALYST AS LISTENING–ACCOMPANIST: DESIRE IN BION AND LACAN

BY MITCHELL WILSON

*Bion and Lacan have surveyed the territory of the desire of the analyst most compellingly, though an explicit pairing of the two is rare in the literature. The difference between them as regards desire appears to be stark: the former says no to desire, the latter says yes. This paper essays to show that despite clear differences, both Bion and Lacan situate the analyst in the same open, present, and futural position. This analytic position is mobile (rather than fixed) and partakes of a particular kind of desire: one that has not been reduced to a wish but is, instead, trained on the emergence of something new and potentially significant that could not have been imagined or predicted. In this context, the paper describes the analyst as a "listening–accompanist."*

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis, desire, wish, emotional experience, Bion, Lacan, futural, unconscious, O, Real, lack.

A space must be maintained or desire ends.

—Carson 1998, p. 26

## INTRODUCTION

In psychoanalysis, the status of desire has, historically, rested squarely within or about the patient—his or her demands, transference fantasies, urgent requests, and more subtle pressures exerted in the analyst's direction. But as a category of the *analyst's* experience and conceptualization,

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desire has been—variously—of uncertain, vague, or in some quarters nonexistent status. With the exception of Lacanianism and its offshoots, the analyst's desire as a direct object of analytic inquiry has been sadly lacking. Without desire as a category of inquiry, the analyst is at a substantial navigational loss and is often left to ponder faint glimmerings in the twilight of the countertransference without realizing that it is precisely his or her desire—the *particular wishful form* it has taken in that moment—that determines the countertransference to begin with (Wilson 2013). Unlike many other health care disciplines in which accepted practices for most illnesses are in fact accepted by the community, psychoanalysis is peculiar, if not unique, in that its practical efficacy is dependent on the desire of the practitioner as it affects the patient. While this statement may seem like a truism regarding any human endeavor, in psychoanalysis, accepted practices and the analyst's desire that underwrites them often become, out of therapeutic necessity, an object of scrutiny for both analyst and analysand.[1]

While this "practitioner's desire" may partake of "accepted practices," we might wonder whether the desire of the analyst that is efficacious has anything to do with practices that are "accepted." By accepted practices I mean those that get established, over time, in any given psychoanalysis. Reliability, consistency, presence ... these ways of being must be descriptive of any psychoanalyst. We might justifiably say that the analyst's reliability, consistency, and presence are key psychoanalytic virtues; within any given analysis, they become—again, over time—expected, relied on. And so, these virtues are not only part of accepted practice, they become part of essential practice. They constitute a field of caretaking, a form of ethical responsibility for the other (Chetrit-Vatine 2014). Some have called these aspects of practice the analytic frame—they establish the formal shape of psychoanalytic work. The frame is inhabited by these analytic virtues, that are, as I said, the backbones of essential practice.

Against this formal background of caretaking live the rhythms and happenings of the psychoanalytic hour: the pre-greeting of the patient (which in the mind of the analyst may entail seconds to days), the

[1] By contrast, an appendectomy is performed successfully without the desire of the surgeon becoming a necessary topic of discussion as part of that intervention.

greeting of him or her, and then listening, engaging, asking, and a thousand other things ... as well as disruptions, hesitations, false starts. All of this unfolding is part of the un-accepted, the un-usual, the what-is-happening-now-and-next. For Bion and Lacan, as I describe in this paper, this now and this next are where the desire of the analyst lives. It lives in the absence, the space, in which something new might emerge. Much can be brought to bear on any given clinical moment, on any given *here*—from the analyst's purely spontaneous gesture to an intervention that carries a substantial load of history or thought, for either the analyst or the analysand, or at times both. Whether a light or heavy load is brought to bear, the fact remains that the moment of impact remains, shimmering in history or not, as it moves into the future. And this impact—small or not so small—is the direct result of the analyst's desire as a fact of the matter, no less consequential than a billiard ball on a billiard ball. Obviously, causation in mental functioning or in human interaction is complex and usually overdetermined. And we know that in psychoanalysis, causality is bidirectional, both forward and backward, following the logic of après-coup. But the aspect of things the analyst has at least a chance to come into conversation with is his or her desire as it presses on the patient and on the analytic work.

To my mind, Bion and Lacan have surveyed this territory of the desire of the analyst most compellingly, though an explicit pairing of the two is rare in the literature.[2] Perhaps this is because, on a superficial level, the difference between them as regards desire appears to be stark: one says no to desire, the other says yes. And yet, as I hope to show in this paper, they both situate the analyst in the same open, present, and *futural* position. This analytic position is mobile (rather than fixed) and partakes of a particular kind of desire: *one that has not been reduced to a wish* but is, instead, trained on the emergence of something new, something of potential significance that could not have been imagined or predicted. As the rock-bottom thing that motivates human action, desire is the genus within which various wishes are its species. Freud spoke of unconscious wishes that are threatening to consciousness and so are pressed-back, or re-pressed. The desire I am speaking of here subsumes the Freudian

[2] Notable exceptions include Eigen (1981) and Webb and Sells (1995).

*wunsch*. Human desire, then, is a substantive in that it exists in reality. It is not, however, anything concrete. Wishes have specific and definable aims; desire, in the Lacanian sense, does not and so is "indestructible" (Lacan 2002b, p. 431).

As I hope to show, the distinction between wish and desire is a fruitful way forward in thinking through the role of desire in Bion's and Lacan's conceptualization of the analyst's position in clinical work. But the distinction is not an entirely stable one, as can be appreciated by considering the following questions—questions that all psychoanalysts must answer for themselves: What does the analyst want in this work, with this patient, at this time? What is it that the analyst moves toward as he or she listens? What, among all the "data" that the analyst encounters, must the analyst respect, take notice of, think about, and perhaps comment on, no matter what? What is the analyst willing to avow, to commit to, to stake a claim on, in the psychoanalytic endeavor? To risk, perhaps, hurting patients for the larger purpose of helping them consider something hard, something difficult, or something that is impossible to do anything about? And what can the analyst ignore, or discount, or move beyond without undue concern or obsessive worrying? When must the analyst circle back and attend to something that had been passed over the first or second time around? These are some of the questions that I subsume under the category of the desire of the analyst.[3] They are questions that can be read as analytic wishes, especially if they take on the ossified character of the presumed, the taken-for-granted. There is an inevitable tendency to reduce the radical openness of desire—its nonconcreteness—to something specific, practical, and concrete. As will become clearer over the course of this essay, desire is an ideal point, a stance to which the analyst aspires asymptotically, but one that in practice is less than pure and never fully reached. This *lack* in the center of desire's function and activity can never be closed or satisfied. That the desire of the analyst is a position that is, perhaps, more aspirational that achievable does not in any way nullify the importance of this specific aspiration, let alone the category of desire itself.

[3] Greenberg (2015) approaches these questions from a somewhat different angle, linking the analyst's theory of therapeutic process, which he calls a "controlling fiction," to the "analyst's responsibility" to attend and intervene in ways consistent with that theory.

Inevitably, my effort in this paper is partial and interpretive. I offer a reading and intertextual analysis of a few key writings of Bion's and Lacan's (and some secondary sources) that mark the territory of the analyst's desire, its veritable longitude and latitude, which includes the field of language and speech as well as the nether reaches beyond this field: the Real, O, the unsymbolizable, lack—realms that are literally beyond the pale of representation and the Symbolic order. Bion, I argue, does not (and cannot) eschew desire entirely. His effort is to find the basic elements of the analyst's most effective position. Bion's pithy advice that the analyst ought to remain watchful of desire points the way toward an ideal analytic position in which a *particular* desire of the analyst is finely honed, shorn of specific wishes. This ideal position has distinct features, mostly involving *containing*, *reverie*, and *intuition*. This analytic position is one of desire, nonetheless. For Lacan, the intimate relevance of the analyst's desire to clinical work is not an issue. Instead, the analyst's question is always what kind of desire. What is the "force-element," as Lacan says, that the analyst exerts or applies that makes an impactful difference for the analysand?

There are important differences between these two psychoanalytic thinkers, especially regarding the role of speech and language in psychoanalysis. For Lacan, desire emerges within speech driven by the demand for love and knowledge the patient makes on the analyst. For Bion, the relationship between language and desire is not theorized as such, and its role in psychoanalysis, therefore, is less clearly articulated than what one finds in Lacan. And so, the objects of psychoanalytic interest—what the desire of the analyst is trained on—are different for Bion and Lacan. Bion emphasizes *intuition* and *emotional experience* that he believes lie outside language and secondary process functioning. For Lacan, intuition is a vague and untrustworthy ally in a practice that is fundamentally structured on the speech relation. Though these differences are important to chart, both Lacan and Bion (especially the later Bion, circa 1967 and beyond) view the unconscious as emergent, the to-be-realized, and not "ontic," substantial, "real," reified.

Because the unconscious is "pre-ontological," as Lacan would put it, I argue that for both Bion and Lacan the pursuit of the unconscious is ultimately an ethical pursuit, in that the psychoanalyst must tie his or her

actions (and accounts for those actions) in relation to its emergence in the now-and-the-next of the clinical moment.[4] Lacan made the connection between desire, the unconscious, and ethics explicit (1981, 1992). Bion's emphasis on *negative capability*, on the analyst's *faith* and *passion*, the pursuit of "at-one-ment" and O, all suggest an ethics of analytic action, though as far as I know he never located the analyst's activity within an ethical field.

## BION ON DESIRE

Consider heartily that Bion's advises the psychoanalyst to approach each session "without memory and desire" (1967). Bion writes:

> Obey the following rules:
>
> 1. Memory: Do not remember past sessions. The greater the impulse to "remember" what has been said or done, the more the need to resist it ...
>
> 2. Desires: the psychoanalyst can start by avoiding any desires for the approaching end of the session (or week, or term). Desires for results, "cure" or even understanding must not be allowed to proliferate. [quoted in Spillius 1988, p. 18]

These "rules" have become shibboleths in contemporary psychoanalysis, perhaps because of what appear to be Bion's draconian pronouncements on desire's lures and dangers. In general, categorical statements lead to either their adherence or their dismissal. So, let's take a step or two back from the manifest and categorical and think about what Bion is getting at here regarding the analyst's ideal position. In my reading, he means something like this: as we engage the patient before us, we aim to put aside what we think we know, what we remember to have been, what theoretical ideas impress upon us as we listen ... and, also, to eschew images of the future, from hopes we might have for our patient, from ideas of cure, and from such prosaic near-term interests as what we might

[4] As Lear (2012) writes: "The ethics of psychoanalysis is basically concerned with two questions: first, what is psychoanalysis good for? Second, how does psychoanalytic technique facilitate (or impede) that good?" (p. 1244).

have for dinner once the final session of the day is concluded. As Bion (2013) says in his Los Angeles Seminars:

> I would like you to consider what is meant by the word desire. I am saying ... take a simple example, because I say, "Don't desire the end of the session." "Don't desire the weekend break." If you do, it will interfere with your observations. There is something very peculiar about desire. It has a peculiarly devastating effect upon one's clinical observation. [p. 6]

Bion is trying to articulate a way—perhaps we might say an analytic method, though that word already approaches something too fixed—that creates a clearing of the psychoanalytic field of the detritus of what's already been, so that the analyst can be in the best position to engage or receive or initiate something other than received wisdom, the habitual, the already thought, the presumed known. This is a kind of eidetic reduction known to phenomenology:[5] a method of bracketing sense experience in the effort to expose the object of interest as it is, in this case, in Bion's idiom, *emotional experience*, what he termed *O*.[6] The Bionian project is the emptying of self (i.e., of "memory and desire") in order to receive and contain the emotional experience evolving in the session. Though "emotion" is a complex and heterogeneous term, Bion seems to mean a kind of unarticulated psychic pain that resists symbolization and gets passed between the analytic pair. The desire of the analyst at this point is to change the form of the emotional experience, to "trans-form" it. The analyst or patient may name this experience, but in so doing this naming both marks a piece of what-has-been (i.e., something that has been traversed) and points to the futural unknown. "What is of importance," Ogden writes in a recent paper on Bion, "when the analyst is ready to make an interpretation, is the unknown, which is alive even as the analyst

[5] From Wikipedia: "Eidetic reduction is a technique in the study of essences in phenomenology whose goal is to identify the basic components of phenomena. Eidetic reduction requires that a phenomenologist examine the essence of a mental object, be it a simple mental act, or the unity of consciousness itself, with the intention of drawing out the absolutely necessary and invariable components that make the mental object what it is. This reduction is done with the intention of removing what is perceived, and leaving only what is required."

[6] Let us note, in passing, the inevitable use of the language of desire to convey Bion's basic idea: "we aim to put aside"; "Bion is trying to articulate . . . "; "in the effort to expose . . ."

is making an interpretation of what is already known" (2015, p. 296). This unknown—a place of absence from which something new can coming into being—links Bion with Lacan.

Bion is taking an axe to desires plural, as in a "wish for this outcome" and a "wish for that object." He is not foreclosing desire per se. Simply put, Bion fashions a more refined, articulate, incisive, and present analytic desire, not the total abrogation of desire. This desire is Bion's attempt to put the analyst in the best possible position to contain, and perhaps interpret, the "emotional storm" that is inevitably created when "two personalities meet" (1994, p. 247). This "storm," as Hinze (2015) points out, is directly related to the patient's "demand," which Freud cautioned the analyst not to "belittle . . . by granting or refusing an illusory emotional satisfaction" (Freud 1927, as quoted in Hinze 2015, pp. 767–768).

Regarding what I would call this *Bionian desire*, Bion himself would have no complaint to name it as such. It is unfortunate that his justly famous article on "memory and desire" has been at times misunderstood, and, frankly, misapplied, to the detriment of psychoanalytic work and theory building. The casualty here is the crucial category of desire itself as it applies to the analyst, a category that has been relegated by many analysts to the dustbin of the un-thought, or the "bad," or that which should be simply jettisoned. I cannot improve on this extended and directly relevant comment from Shulman (2016):

> "Without desire" in Bion's famous precept pertains to the analyst's "local" and immediate functioning within the session, in which open receptivity is privileged over other psychoanalytic values; it is not a recommendation for a lack of investment in the patient. The analyst's working "without desire" is close kin to Freud's "evenly suspended attention," and is an aspirational statement. It speaks to an *ideal* receptivity—the imaginary "asymptote" to the analyst's actual listening to his patient—rather than of the error-ridden, bumpy learning-curve process of actually coming to understand each patient. The phrase is absurd if taken literally, as are those notions of the analyst's eliminating memory and history to which it is linked in Bion. His is a commentary on openness and minimal pre-judgment, the analyst's *striving* to listen as much as he can, without an immediate agenda and with minimal therapeutic zeal. The analyst cannot eliminate desire, or

> memory, in an analytic process any more than he can eliminate knowing its history; he can only strive to limit their intrusion on his conscious mental process and, to an extent that Bion makes quite clear is limited, on his preconscious receptive processes. Desire, here in the form of Bion's intention toward unprejudiced listening, cannot be eliminated from any human action. [p. 714, italics in original]

The difficulty, in short, is that too often Bion's "aspirational statement" becomes yet another way for the analyst to mask his or her own activity and the desire that underwrites it (Wilson 2013).

## LACAN ON DESIRE

In *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, Lacan places the desire of the analyst in the forefront of clinical work and theorizes its explanatory potential, including the entire realm of the countertransference. Late in the seminar he observes wryly that it is entirely possible for someone "not to want to ejaculate" or "that someone may not wish to think" (1981, p. 234). Desire, he says, is of a different order and is more basic:

> But what does not wanting to desire mean? The whole of analytic experience—which merely gives form to what is for each individual at the very root of his experience—shows us that not to want to desire and to desire are the same thing. [p. 235][7]

Lacan's point is consistent with what I averred about Bion's position earlier: desire is unavoidable. The question will always be what kind of desire? As we saw from Bion, the analyst's desire is a highly refined desire—aspirational, as Shulman notes, ideal perhaps, asymptotic, as well as open, receptive, and leaning in an unknown futural direction. For Lacan, these features obtain, but he adds an element that the category of desire

[7] We might wonder if Lacan had Bion in mind here. They had met in 1945, when a contingent of French analysts visited London and spent a few weeks taking in the Kleinian scene. Bion made a singular impression on Lacan, who at that point was just emerging from the humiliation of the German occupation and a liberation that was only weeks old. Lacan wrote about this meeting: "The flame of creation burns within him; we are in the presence of one of those beings who are solitary in even their highest achievements" (Aguayo 2017, p. 98).

cannot help but suggest: the element of *force*. And so, a page or two later in the seminar, Lacan sets the scene of the psychoanalytic encounter, as the desire of the patient (whether shrouded in "not wanting to desire" or not) and that of the analyst come upon each other, as it were, "face to face." (Note the similarity with Bion's depiction of "two personalities meeting.") The patient wants something from the analyst—the analyst's love, let's say, or special knowledge. The analyst qua analyst wants something else. While Lacan paints a picture of inevitable and necessary conflict between the two parties, he also captures the subtle intensity of the analyst's ethical responsibility to the patient in the pursuit of the truth of his or her desire:

> It is at this point of meeting that the analyst is awaited. In so far as the analyst is supposed to know, he is also supposed to set out in search of unconscious desire. This is why I say ... that desire is the axis, the pivot, the handle, the hammer, by which is applied the force-element, the inertia, that lies behind what is formulated at first, in the discourse of the patient, as demand, namely, the transference. The axis, the common-point of this two-edged axe, is the desire of the analyst, which I designate here as an essential function. And let no one tell me that I do not name this desire, for it is precisely this point that can be articulated only in the relation of desire to desire. [p. 235]

Notice the metaphors of force and action Lacan employs. The analyst uses a particularly effective kind of "internal leverage"[8] in the service of making or marking a difference to the patient at that moment. This basic point is central to any viable psychoanalytic practice: the analyst's desire not only must be brought to bear on the desire of the patient, it cannot help but be brought to bear on the desire of the patient.

There remains to be described in more detail, however, the analyst's role in causing, initiating, or venturing into moments of analytic significance and the various materials that are the objects of the analyst's desire. And it is with respect to the analytic object that one finds significant differences between Bion and Lacan, especially regarding the question of the role of speech and language in psychoanalytic work.

[8] I am indebted to Dr. Bo Houston for this most apt phrase.

## BION ON LANGUAGE

One key aspect of sense experience that Bion encouraged analysts to bracket is the realm of verbal meanings. He expressly distrusted the capacity of linguistic tools to adequately convey emotional experience as it evolved within a session. Again, here is Bion (2013) from the Los Angeles Seminars:

> Over and over again, one is dealing with something which is as obvious and unarguable as anxiety, or sex. It is perfectly obvious to us as analysts who were in that analytic situation, but the moment we start putting it into words, it sounds like nonsense. And so it is, because the language that we use is talking about something quite different, and there's a gap between what the words mean and what they are accepted as meaning, and the thing that we're really talking about. The analytic situation with which we are all familiar is ineffable; it cannot be known except by the person who was there, and who went through that emotional experience. [p. 4]

Bion's use of language—his particular style of literary production—has been oft-commented on; Webb and Sells (1995), for example, call it a form of "unsaying" (p. 198). However, Bion himself said surprisingly little about language and speech as it relates to psychoanalysis. His notion of the "Language of Achievement" (1970, pp. 125–129)—in which the analyst lives in the realm of not knowing and tolerates frustration sustained by "negative capability" in order to be open to other registers beyond linguistic representations—is more a suggestive description of the analyst's task than a worked-out theory of the role of language in analysis.[9] As a general matter, Bion seemed both to take language for granted regarding those patients who could make use of words to represent their experience (i.e., "neurotic" structures) and to minimize it for those who could not (i.e., "psychotic" structures). Given Bion's enduring

[9] Grotstein (2009) distinguishes between the "language of substitution—that is, of signs, symbols, and representations" and the Language of Achievement, "the hard-won yield of emotional truths that surface from the analyst's unconscious to his conscious awareness in reverie—as if they, not the analyst, were their agent" (p. 72). Notice that this description may depend on language but barely theorizes its role in psychoanalytic work.

interest in and experience with patients in the borderline/schizophrenic spectrum, as his early papers such as "Attacks on Linking" (1959) demonstrate, it is no surprise that his view on language is classically Freudian: language (i.e., "word presentations") serves solely secondary process functions and so is associated with the workings of consciousness. "Bion," as Markman (2015) observes, "used the notion of caesura to indicate a divide between representations and the undifferentiated zone" (p. 954). So Bion directs the analyst's attention to the unconscious, which for him is beyond language because more primitive (i.e., "psychotic") experience is in the realm of the unrepresented, the undifferentiated. And, as we've just seen, Bion expresses considerable worry about the capacity of words to represent psychoanalytic experience with any success.

Bion is hardly the first Englishman to bemoan the limits of words to securely attach themselves to objects in the world. As Peters (1999) describes in his masterful *Speaking into Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*, there is "a long British tradition distrusting the deceit of words found in such thinkers as Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Bentham, and Russell" (p. 13).[10] By either taking language and speech for granted or minimizing their role altogether, Bion essentially did an "end-around" language, speech, and the signifier. These are not, for Bion, the principal tools at the psychoanalyst's disposal. Instead, Bion increasingly pushed for the use of the analyst's *intuition* (2013, p. 38) and the free play of the analyst's imagination (which Bion termed *reverie*) directed toward emerging emotion that signifies aspects of psychic reality with which the patient (and often the analyst) is struggling in the session. He compared the analyst's receptivity of emotional experience (O) to that of the mystic's contact with God as the representative of truth (p. 49). But this God is unknowable. For Bion, the analyst's desire is for emotional experience of a kind that cannot be captured by verbal means, experience that he likened to the "invisible aspects of the [electromagnetic] spectrum" (p. 60).

[10] Sterne, in his *Tristram Shandy* (1760), a text deeply influenced by Lockean ideas, writes: "Now you must understand that not one of these [explanations] was the true cause of the confusion in my uncle Toby's discourse. . . . What it did arise from, I have hinted above, and a fertile source of obscurity it is,—and ever will be,—and that is the unsteady use of words which have perplexed the clearest and most exalted understandings . . . 'Twas not by ideas,—by Heaven!; his life was put in jeopardy by words" (pp. 86-87).

There is something both compelling and vague about this picture of psychoanalytic engagement. The desired-for receptive state that the analyst ought to inhabit—this is clear enough. At the same time, there is the ever-elusive question of what the "actual emotional truth of the session" (Markman 2015, p. 953) means, in that the phrase suggests that *one* truth emerges. A further question is what the analyst is to do after that, once "emotional experience" is in fact experienced. The analyst, usually after considerable struggle, engages with it, thinks about it relatively open-mindedly, freely. This is the essence of what Bion called *alpha-function*. And what might the analyst say about it? Often enough, words must, in the end, be applied. Typically, Bion gives brief clinical examples of interventions that are denotative, "deep," internal to the patient, and seemingly specific. Ogden (2016) calls this "direct discourse" (pp. 414–417). For instance, in his Los Angeles seminars Bion describes a patient who expressed a fear that "they would injure themselves" or who had a "dream in which they had actually cut their veins while having a bath."

Bion continues:

> I would have said: "You feel that you have something very bad inside you. And although you describe this as something which is outside of you and slashes your wrists and arms and so forth, actually I think it is felt to be an object which is inside you, which has no regard for your personality or even your anatomy, but breaks out by cutting you inside outwards.'" [p. 62]

It is important to note an irony that is fairly loud here: language, it is asserted, is inherently wobbly and not to be trusted to capture an experience that is "ineffable," yet Bion uses it as if it were functionally unproblematic, as if words precisely match experience.[11] I will revisit this issue later in the paper in the section "Objects of Analytic Desire."

[11] In one of the few direct references to the analyst's use of language, Bion says: "If you use very few words, and if you always use them correctly—meaning relating directly to what you think or feel yourself—then the patient may gradually understand the language which is spoken by [the analyst]" (2005, p. 5).

## LACAN ON LANGUAGE AND THE SPEECH-RELATION

Lacan's basic assessment of the limitations of language is no different from Bion's, but for Lacan this is only a so-called limitation. The "gap between what the words mean ... and the thing that we're really talking about," as Bion observed, is that gap that Lacan theorizes between *signifier* and *signified*. But unlike Bion, Lacan had a worked-out theory of the signifier—a sophisticated way of conceptualizing degrees of freedom between the word (signifier: its material sound or typography) and its various referents (i.e., signifieds). The subject represents herself and is represented by signifiers as a way of making sense of her position in the world (e.g., I am a "woman," a "student," "lonely," "happy," etc.). Without our diving deeply into territory that many others have described in detail,[12] the key points are the following: (1) the relationship between the sound of a word (signifier) and its meaning (signified) is arbitrary and, also, not fixed; (2) signifiers refer in a systematic way to other signifiers, as the example of a dictionary entry demonstrates; and (3) the *signifier* is emergent, a pointing toward other signifiers; the *signified* is meaning proper, static, fixed. This last point is especially important. In psychoanalysis the signifier is, as Lacan says below, the "mainspring," not of a specific signification but of emergent and futural signifying. Here Lacan (1993) is speaking to a group of analysts attending his 1955–56 seminar on the psychoses:

> I'm at sea, the captain of a small ship. I see things moving about in the night, in a way that gives me cause to think that there may be a sign there. How shall I react? If I'm not a human being, I shall react with all sorts of displays, as they say—modeled, motor, and emotional. I satisfy the description of psychologists, I understand something, in fact I do everything I'm telling you that you must know how not to do. If on the other hand I am a human being, I write in my log book *"At such and such a time, at such and such a degree of latitude and longitude, we noticed this and that."*

[12] See, e.g., Benvenuto and Kennedy 1986, Evans 1996, and Fink 1995. See also Lacan 1993, pp. 32, 119-120, 167.

> This is what is fundamental. I shelter my responsibility. What distinguishes the signifier is here. I make a note of the sign as such. It's the acknowledgement of a receipt that is essential to communication insofar as it is not significant, but signifying. If you don't articulate this distinction clearly, you will keep falling back upon meaning that can only mask from you the original mainspring of the signifier insofar as it carries out its true function. [p. 188]

For Lacan, the "subject's relation to his representation" is of fundamental importance (Leikert 2017, p. 660): how he locates himself within a network of enigmatic but potentially meaningful relations. The sea captain, in this extended metaphor, is more curious than he is anxious in the face of things "moving about in the night." And we notice his effort at location; he makes notes and indications, elements that constitute a system of mediation—in this case, a logbook—that allows the captain a degree of independence from the strange and enigmatic markings in the night sky.[13] Through the shaping of this event into a signifying system, the captain "shelters his responsibility" from the immediacy of impulsive reaction.[14] He has developed a way of representing himself and his place, a way of making himself, in other words, into an emerging human subject in relation to his perplexing surround. Lacan evokes something akin to Bion's emphasis on the subject's capacity to "alphabetize" or "think" about emotional experience, rather than be caught up (as certain higher primates, including humans, can be) in "all sorts of [automatic] displays."

The "original mainspring of the signifier" is a phrase to be taken (as is true with many of Lacan's locutions) literally. When he says "mainspring" he means to indicate a root element that has potential energy; it is something central and potentially impactful. It turns and releases like a spring. Consider Freud's "Dream of the Botanical Monograph" as an especially rich example of how a few key words, when "released," touch on the most intimate aspects of Freud's concerns at that moment: his history with cocaine and the death of a colleague, his writing the Dream Book, his

[13] One can see that Laplanche's influential concept about the "enigmatic signifiers from the other" is an extension of Lacan's basic insight.

[14] The classic Freudian example of mediation through signifiers is the "fort!–da!" story that is told in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1922). I am grateful to Owen Hewitson for his help in parsing this passage from Lacan (personal communication).

sexual interest in a friend's wife, and the like (Freud 1900, pp. 169–182). The signifier's potential energy rests in its inherently unanchored status, which allows free association to be relatively free, metaphor to be metaphoric, and the subject, as Ruti (2012) says, "to devise personally resonant forms of meaning" (p. 52). These meanings resonant precisely because they are not fixed but are, instead, alive and open to further elaboration, like with our sea captain and his markings in the logbook.

In contrast to the logbook (or, more generally, any system of mediation) in which there are possible significations indicated by the markings that make it up, definitive facts can be facts only by way of brute experience, such as the ship running aground on rocks in shallow water. For the psychoanalyst, the "rocks" are "understanding" and "meaning," lures to be clearly illuminated so they can be more easily avoided. Definitive understanding, definitive meaning—these are fixed experiences and closed entities (what Lacan calls "significant" in the above quote). They cease to be interpretable, in the psychoanalytic sense; they just are.

It is important to reiterate, as with Bion, that we are talking about an ideal analytic position, a zero-point. From the perspective of this zero-point, the analyst's desire to understand and find meaning so as to tell the patient something about himself or herself is, for Lacan, precisely the wrong kind of analytic desire. While the psychoanalyst may, even routinely, offer "understanding and insight," from this ideal position such offerings are *always* inherently partial, lacking, and open to further elaboration, including the patient's utter disregard from what has just been offered. One can hear resonances in Lacan's warning about "understanding the patient" with Bion's concept of –K, the putting to use of knowledge in order not-to-know, in order to foreclose new experience, or not-to-experience something more unsettling, confusing, or painful.

In addition to having a sophisticated theory of the signifier-as-open-potential, Lacan had a clear statement that psychoanalysis is fundamentally a speech-relation. The signifier is the very grounding for the development of the unconscious as well as for the psychoanalytic method, a method that cures through speech. Crucially, speech is the articulation of desire; the signifier, especially within the context of the transference, is

the carrier of human desire.[15] While Bion hoped to somehow move the analyst *beyond* language and used terms such as *reverie*, *intuition*, and *mystic*, in an attempt to capture this particular position of analytic desire, Lacan sent the analyst on a journey *into* language, into not only its structuring conditions on the human subject but all its rough edges, its echoes, its senselessness and materiality.

## OBJECTS OF ANALYTIC DESIRE

I have been arguing—Bion's famous admonition about desire notwithstanding—that he and Lacan share a similar perspective on the ideal position of the analyst within the clinical encounter. What is confusing, perhaps, in making this comparison is that for Lacan the immediate object of the analyst's desire is clearly different from Bion's analytic object. As I have described in the previous sections, Bion tended to bracket language so something unconscious might emerge, usually registered first in the analyst (the result, from a Bionian point of view, of projective identification). Lacan dove right into language for the same exact reason: that something unconscious, something unrealized, might be realized within the clinical moment.

"Intuiting emotional experience," for Bion, is central to the analyst's position and task. This is the proper object of analytic desire. Bion wished to minimize the analyst's reliance on conscious awareness ("sense impressions"), as well as on specific wishes (e.g., the end of the session, therapeutic gain) in order for an unconscious communicative experience of the emotional reality of the session to emerge. The "at-one-ment" that Bion speaks of is, as Ogden (2015) describes it, analogous to waking dreaming:

> When we dream—both when we are asleep and when we are awake—we have the experience of sensing (intuiting) the reality of an aspect of our unconscious life, and are at one with it. Dreaming ... is a transitive verb. In dreaming, we are not dreaming about something, we are dreaming something, dreaming up

[15] This is why, in part, Lacan repeatedly stressed that the analytic surface is not superficial; the wavelike movement of the patient's speech, animated by the transference, *is* desire.

> an aspect of ourselves . . . . While dreaming, we are intuiting (dreaming up) an element of our unconscious emotional lives, and are at one with it in a way that differs from any other experience. [p. 294]

Ogden is pointing us toward the immediacy of the reality of the unconscious that shows itself in dreaming (or in the analytic session), if the analyst has a freely mobile imagination at his or her disposal. Like the sea captain's, the analyst's capacity to imagine is a direct consequence of giving himself or herself over to a process that is larger than he or she alone. If the analyst is overly anxious, concerned with surviving and maintaining a certain position, then the reality of something new showing itself will be foreclosed. "The analyst must engage in an act of self-renunciation," Ogden advises, so as to be in a position to be open to this kind of analytic experience (2015, p. 294).

Ogden gives clinical examples in which the analyst freely associates to what can only be called "sense impressions."[16] Here are two: "I sensed, when I met Ms. C in the waiting room, that she wanted to tell me that she genuinely loved her child" (p. 298) and "When I opened the door to the waiting room, it seemed more starkly furnished than I'd remembered it" (p. 302). With these impressions in tow, Ogden waits, listens, and sees what "comes up" in his experience ("dreaming the session") as he listens to his patient. Ogden's clinical illustrations, given to us in a paper about Bion, involve a sense of traversal, a moving through or over difficult and opaque territory until a clearing is in view. Eventually, something emotionally intense is clarified and shared between him and his patient. I take Ogden's description of his work to be useful information about what Bion's "objects of analytic desire" are (since Bion himself gives few detailed clinical examples to speak of).

For Lacan, intuition is too faulty a compass for the analyst to depend on. In fact, Lacan was deeply skeptical of intuition as a reliable analytic faculty because of how easily the analyst can confuse his or her felt experience for the patient's. While Lacan would entirely agree with the "self-

[16] In other words, Bion's attempt to move the analyst's capacities for attention beyond the senses is, practically speaking, impossible. Again, we are dealing with the aspirational and the asymptotic.

renunciation" advocated by Ogden, intuition is much too "self" and not enough "renunciation." Here is Lacan from an early paper, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," in which he bemoans the trend in psychoanalysis away from the structuring conditions of the Symbolic and the speech relation and toward the vagaries of experience, feeling, and emotional contact:

> Now all speech calls for a response . . . there is no speech without a response, even if speech meets only with silence, provided it has an auditor. This is the heart of its function in analysis. But if the psychoanalyst is not aware that this is how speech functions, he will experience its call all the more strongly; and if emptiness is the first thing to make itself heard in analysis, he will feel it in himself and he will seek a reality beyond speech to fill the emptiness. This leads the analyst to analyse the subject's behavior in order to find in it what the subject is not saying. [2002a, p. 206]

And:

> Nothing could be more misleading for the analyst than to seek to guide himself by some supposed "contact" he experiences with the subject's reality. This vacuous buzzword of intuitionist and even phenomenological psychology has become extended in contemporary usage in a way that is thoroughly symptomatic of the ever-scarcer effects of speech in the present context of psychoanalytic practice. [p. 210]

Here we see an essential way in which Lacan differs from Bion. Both are keenly interested in what is emerging now in the session. But for Lacan the now-moment is always within the speech relation in which the movements of the signifier are animated by desire. Thus, the object of the analyst's desire is the *signifier-moment*—an opening, a half saying, a turn, an inflection, in the patient's (or analyst's) discourse within this dialogic relation. These moments are intimately related to how the analysand is putting his or her world together. Already in 1953, Lacan critiques, rightly or wrongly, a gathering movement within psychoanalytic practice toward an emphasis on phenomenological experience and emotional "contact" at the expense of

the speech-relation and the subject's relationship to his or her ways of self-representation.[17]

## THE ANALYST AS LISTENING-ACCOMPANIST

If there is something both compelling and vague, as I said earlier in this paper, about Bion's picture of psychoanalytic engagement, there is, on the other hand, something overly rigid and constraining in Lacan's bracketing of the phenomenological/experiential aspects of the analytic encounter. After all—and this is a crucial point—*anything* that reaches the analyst's awareness while engaging with a patient in psychoanalysis can, in principle, take on the status of a signifier. A vague sense of unpleasure, a phrase or image that suddenly pops to mind, a feeling of despair or sadness, a ray of sunshine through the consulting room window—any of these (and countless other) moments of experience can, if registered as *potentially significant*, pose the same kinds of questions as those raised by a patient's dream or parapraxis or long silence.

With this broader conception of the signifier firmly in view, here is one way to fashion a picture of the analyst's desire in light of the ideas of Bion and Lacan I have been discussing here: Fundamentally, the psychoanalytic session is structured on the speech-relation; the patient speaks and the analyst listens. This relation is both mutual and asymmetric, because the analyst is in a position of caretaking in relation to the patient. Within this basic dialogical structure, the analyst desires to isolate in the here and now registered (i.e., felt, heard, seen) signifiers (i.e., words and other sounds, facial indications, bodily movements, eye glances, images, feelings, silences, and the like) that point to *something more and potentially important that might be said*. These are indications and signals from the patient (and sometimes the analyst) that may require a comment, an accent or re-inflection, forms of emphasis and punctuation from the analyst. An analyst can feel the mutuality of experience, the in-mixing of subjectivities and the sharing of

[17] This critique is, as many readers know, deeper than what I have, because of space constraints, described here. Lacan is also criticizing the tendency of some analysts to reduce an analytic situation that is structured on the speech/dialogical relation to a simple re-creation of the mother-infant dyad, and that turns the analyst into a stand-in for the mother.

space, and a kind of rhythmic call-and-response. Something is being created, rather than discovered, in this live, moving, diachronic engagement. But the asymmetry of the relationship is never elided. And if "meaning" and "understanding" are lures to be avoided, lest the dialogue shut down and emotional experience stagnate, this in no way means the patient's (or analyst's) speech is not an intimate part of this embodied dialogical dance. On the contrary. It is the analyst's responsibility to engage with the patient's speech-in-time, ready-to-hand, present, palpably aural and physically impactful. Bion's "undifferentiated zone" beyond the caesura of language must, in the end, find representation, whether through "direct discourse" or alive metaphor (Markman 2015). Emotional-moments, then, become signifier-moments, as the analyst answers movement with movement, gesture with gesture, within a common rhythm (Muller 2016).

This analytic way is a kind of *listening-accompaniment*: at choice points the analyst intervenes within the rhythm of a series of nows, within the diachronic unfolding of the patient's speaking and experiencing . . . *here* . . . and . . . . . *here* . . . And . . . . . . . . (here). How the analyst knows that a point is "choice" is complex, but the point in question is a point that *allows a question*, or calls for a response in the hope of furthering the opening of something potentially emotionally important or disturbing or enigmatic to the patient and often to the analytic couple. While rhythm and pace are key, so are the silences that form the "dark energy" surrounding the various soundings the patient makes (words, sighs, grunts, cries, giggles, and the like).[18] "The unconscious is what closes up again as soon as it has opened, in accordance with a *temporal pulsation*," Lacan stressed repeatedly in Seminar 11 (1981, p. 125, italics added). It is a question, then, of the analyst not missing a beat, or rather not missing the opening, the gap in the fabric of the dialogue when such an opportunity is there for the taking. Such an opportunity may offer itself once an hour or once an

[18] Although Lacan would quickly jettison the term *inter-subjective* that he sometimes used in the 1950s to describe his perspective, it is not without irony that his emphasis on the rhythm of the spoken word and the analyst's listening-accompanying position has been elaborated empirically by intersubjective/relational psychoanalysts such as Beatrice Beebe. Her careful work on gestural turn-taking (through both verbal exchanges and bodily movements) between mother and young infant (Beebe 2014) is, in my view, directly relevant to this discussion. See also Jaffe and Feldstein's *Rhythms of Dialogue* (1970).

analysis. There are no rules. Whether now or later, this opening, this gap, is the moment of the emergence of the potentially significant, which, let's be clear, may be painful, disturbing, even upending.

Whitney Balliett, jazz critic for the *New Yorker* magazine for many years, wrote a memorable essay on "Big" Sid Catlett, a drummer who played in the 1940s with Louis Armstrong and later with Dizzy Gillespie. Balliett's effort to capture the real-time flow of Catlett's playing in words seems to me directly analogous to the position of the analyst as listening-accompanist. Here is Balliett (1976):

> Catlett's accompanying had an unfailing freshness and authority. He made everything that went on in front of him sound new. "Wow, man, I never heard you play that before," he seemed to say to each instrumentalist. His wire brushes achieved a singular, graceful, padding effect at slower tempos and a precise, hurrying, relentlessly pushing effect at faster tempos. When he switched to drumsticks in mid-performance, as he often did, it was dramatic and lifting. His library of accompanying techniques was endless. He used different cymbals behind different instruments—a heavy ride cymbal behind a trumpet; the high hat, its cymbals half-closed, behind a trombone; a Chinese cymbal, with its sizzling sound, behind a clarinetist. All the while, his left hand worked out an astonishing series of accents on the snare drum. [p. 108]

"Wow, man. I've never heard you play that before" is American vernacular that feels, admittedly, foreign to both Bion and Lacan. Yet it captures best how I understand their basic effort: the analyst's desire is a desire for the new within the psychoanalytic session, vivified by the transferential field, for an ideal, vanishing point, for what has yet to exist, which does not mean a desire for anything illusory.

This analytic desire instantiates, through its practice, through its doing, a particular faith in the patient and in the psychoanalytic process. This faith is, perhaps, hard to specify, but it is about the kind of support that the "wow, man" comment demonstrates: an implicit "this is possible, you can do this." If there is friction and strife between analyst and patient, as there sometimes is, an implicit, or sometimes an explicit, "it's okay, we can do it. We can get through this" is in order and is a further expression of the analyst's desire in support of the analysis.

## CONCLUSION: THE ETHICAL UNCONSCIOUS

I have used the word *futural* to indicate the realm of analytic desire that is most felicitous to the process and is a kind of leaning forward, as the listening-accompanist, into the next. This emergent, this next, comes from nothing, literally. It is the yet-to-be-experienced. This is why both Lacan and the later Bion desired to go beyond the "ontic," beyond the physically extant, into the realm of the yet-to-be-realized. From this point of view, the unconscious is nonsubstantive—it is decidedly not buried, repressed stuff that exists in a warded-off place. Nor is it an "unrepresented mental state."[19] It is, instead, "pre-ontological" and ethical. Lacan, again from Seminar 11, said: "The status of the unconscious, which ... is so fragile on the ontic plane, is ethical. In his thirst for truth, Freud says, *Whatever it is, I must go there*, because somewhere, this unconscious reveals itself" (1981, p. 33). Here is Grotstein (1997) describing Bion's "Transformations in 'O'" in similar terms:

> Bion replaced Freud's concepts of the id, the unconscious, and the "seething cauldron" with an epistemic function that harkens back to the creative role of the unconscious in the construction of dreams and jokes .... Bion revealed the ineffable matrix, the container beyond the container of our existence, the eternally unsaturated Void, one that undermines every deterministic certainty with a mocking transcending doubt.

And elsewhere in the same paper Grotstein writes that Bion's picture of the unconscious as "creative" and "eternally unsaturated" is an effort to "transcend the positivistic certainty of psychoanalytic ontic determinism."[20] The "epistemic function" that Grotstein describes involves the immediacy of the unconscious revealing itself (as in Ogden's account of "waking dreaming").

[19] This is a common phrase that one meets with in the contemporary literature, and space constraints prevent me from discussing the concept at any length. But on its face it is an oxymoron.

[20] J. Aguayo, the noted scholar of Bion's and Grotstein's work, dates this text, copyright 1997, to a presentation Grotstein gave in 2006. It was never formally published (personal communication).

If an ethics essentially consists in a judgment of our action, in both the action's undertaking and its outcome, its result, then the epistemic function of which Grotstein speaks leads directly to an ethical one: the analyst's engagement with what "can be known" involves the analyst in a desire to "be there," to be at (one with) this "unconscious revealing," to hear it, to receive it, and to further its becoming.[21] I believe that from the point of view I have been articulating in this paper, both Bion and Lacan situate the analyst in this place of emergence: Lacan called it *lack* or the real,[22] and Bion called it *O*. Again, this emergence of the next is an "ideal point," partly because the past is never entirely free from the emergent present, and synchronic moments ("points") are always part of formal diachronic movement (think, again, of the jazz drummer accenting a given *something* as the music pushes ahead).

Something is made in psychoanalysis, but it is not substantial; it does not have mass, nor is it material. The analyst's desire is to occupy a place that is without substance—eternally unsaturated, void—and to act in that place as necessary. A wish, in the Freudian sense, has a direct object and so is structured around satisfaction. The analyst's desire is without an object in its positivity. When desire becomes *fixed* in the wish for a specific object relation or experience, it ceases to be desire as such.[23] Bion's admonishment regarding desire is actually about wishes that get in the way of the analyst's capacity to sense something new and emotionally meaningful in the moment. For Lacan, in the end, desire's object is desire itself, to be open to the "further open." This is the true place of the analyst's desire—a place of potentially transformative emergence. The analyst's desire is to mark this movement, this emergence.

[21] For more detailed discussions of questions regarding psychoanalytic ethics, action, and desire, see Lacan 1992; Kirshner 2012; Lear 2012; Friedman 2012; and Wilson 2012, 2016; regarding ethics, character, and the analyst's offer of analysis, see Kite 2016; Kattlove 2016; and Morris 2016.

[22] There is much more to say about this point. Lacan specifically designated the analyst's lacking position as the place of the *objet a*. See Kirshner 2005 for a detailed exploration of this concept and Wilson 2006 for a discussion of the role of lack in the analytic process.

[23] As I have described elsewhere, clinical impasses begin when the analyst's desire gets fixed into specific wishes. Impasses yield when what had been hitherto out of awareness and, instead, enacted-in-action becomes an object of reflection, of engagement, as the analyst's desire gets "re-engaged" (see Racker 1957; Wilson 2013).

It is important to reflect, if briefly, on ways in which both Bion's and Lacan's objects of analytic desire can become reified into wishes, and at times into subtle and not-so-subtle demands on the patient, and so clog up the analytic process. *Intuition, reverie,* and the like can too easily lead the analyst to overvalue his or her own ideas and feelings and mistake them for the patient's experience. This risk is substantial and involves a conceptual confusion about the Imaginary register, and the nature of the functioning of the ego (Wilson 2003). In this case, desire solidifies too easily into wish, as the analyst may become fixed on the putative validity of an idea or feeling. These moments amount to the analyst indulging in an extreme form of self-reliance—as if the analyst has temporarily suspended his or her participation in the dialogical relation, including the asymmetrical conditions established by transference. The analyst, in this case, ceases to "shelter his responsibility" within a flexible yet structured analytic frame. The well-known Bionian question is a good one: when is a "selected fact" merely an "over-valued idea" (Britton and Steiner 1994)? In my estimation, sometimes it is very hard to tell. The analyst's openness to his own necessary limitations (i.e., his own lack) is the way forward to an engagement with something new, perhaps previously unthought and unimagined.

Lacan's focus on the speech relation, I believe, at least has the advantage of epistemological immediacy: the words have been spoken and heard, the pace experienced, the gaps, hesitations, tone, and prosody felt. And yet Lacanian objects of desire are at no less risk of reification. Here I have in mind the fetishizing of the signifier narrowly defined as the sound of the word, as if a unilateral focus on the materiality of the patient's speech (puns and the like) is enough to make a difference for a given patient. It is often not nearly enough. In this quite limited psychoanalytic horizon in which the broader experiential surround is bracketed, the symbolic becomes the last lure of the imaginary, as the analysis risks turning into an exercise of further alienation without therapeutic impact.

All analysts, as Laplanche (1999) has said, work "under the constant threat of narcissistic closure" (p. 81), in which desire becomes reduced to wish and is overly invested by the analyst with narcissistic value. Bion and Lacan point us away from narcissistic closure, away from anxious "displays" of wish and action in the face of the enigmatic, and toward the

shelter of newly emergent representations, new articulations, and new experiences.

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# Rivalry: Benign or Belligerent Sibling of Envy and Jealousy? A Clinical Reflection on the "Winded, not Wounded" Experience in the Countertransference

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# RIVALRY: BENIGN OR BELLIGERENT SIBLING OF ENVY AND JEALOUSY? A CLINICAL REFLECTION ON THE "WINDED, NOT WOUNDED" EXPERIENCE IN THE COUNTERTRANSFERENCE

BY ROSEMARY DAVIES

*Recognizing rivalry as a discrete concept, adjacent to envy and jealousy but clearly differentiable, has a useful place, in particular, in clinical work. In the transference-countertransference, the analyst feels alive to difference, provoked to fight or duel, embattled but invigorated and alert, sometimes "winded but not wounded." This contrasts with the deadliness that can characterize the countertransference with the more manifestly envious patients. In rivalry, there is a need to keep the object alive, despite the ambivalent tie to the object. Drawing on Freud's idea of "intimate friend and hated enemy," I argue that Mitchell's (2003) description of the duality of "simultaneity of adoration and murder" in sibling rivalry is central to clinical conceptualization: this simultaneity links to Freud's (1920) first adumbration of the death drive as rooted in the need "to restore an earlier state of things."*

**Keywords:** Rivalry, envy, jealousy, transference–countertransference, death drive.

Carla brought a dream …

> She had been commanding soldiers into battle—ten, twenty, forty, fifty—but then she felt frightened and was trying to find a secret hiding place, as had the recusant priests who, persecuted

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for their Catholicism by the Puritans, sought out secret hiding places in the homes of wealthy Catholic families. She was fearful that she would not find a safe place.

The dream brought to mind a theme that had characterized Carla's analysis: the dueling murderousness in rivalry, what Anthi (1999) calls "belligerent rivalry" (p. 1004). At this point in the analysis, where a particularly negative transference predominated, I thought, among other things, how the dream illustrated the two of us on the battlefield, rivals fighting for a place in relation to our shared deity, Catholic or Protestant. Carla, as the commanding officer, needs to get me into line. But then she is assailed by a fear that if she does try to get me into line, she will risk losing me and the valued place of safety that is her analytic session, where she may find protection from her persecutory objects and persecutory parts of herself. At times in Carla's analysis, we were immobilized as she angrily remained in her secret hiding place and excluded me from any access, perhaps in fear that my puritan analytic stance would ransack the pleasure of the ornate Catholic church (her pleasure).

Carla's relationships with friends, colleagues, and lovers were characterized by intense beginnings, swiftly followed by angry, persecuted, and desperate attacks on the object. In the early part of her analysis, she revealed conflicting feelings about me. She would belittle me as a dreary member of the "helping professions" and tell me that in her growing success she would be "leaving you behind." She was contemptuous in her manner of paying bills, letting me know of the potential for great wealth in her professional world.

At the same time, early in the analysis she spoke of how she wanted to know more about the psychoanalytic theory she had been fascinated by at art college. And she acknowledged her recognition of her dependence on me and how, at times, she felt understood by me, which helped her to get on with things in a way that she felt she hadn't previously been able to do.

However, Carla's verbal assaults could be ferocious and sudden. I used to find myself feeling winded, but not very often wounded. When I could recover my breath after these episodes, I noted I did not feel the

deadly inertia that characterized the countertransference in work with more obviously envious patients.

## RIVALRY IN PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

Envy and jealousy have been extensively elaborated in psychoanalytic theory, but until recently the concept of rivalry has not been so clearly articulated. Sibling rivalry underpins Freud's theory of the mind, but as Anthi (1999) notes, "Rivalry and its associated affects represent a strong motivational source in human relations. In spite of that there have been very few analytic studies of the phenomenon" (p. 1006).

Over the past two decades, studies of siblings and rivalry have become more abundant (see, for example, Coles 2006; Mitchell 2003). I would like to consider whether the recognition of rivalry as a discrete concept has a useful place in clinical work. And I would like to tease out what I see as a subtle manifestation that can be experienced clinically, very particularly through the medium of the countertransference that characterizes the belligerence of the rivalrous moment.

Any conceptualization of rivalry brings to mind the other parts of the great triptych: envy and jealousy. There can be no doubt that these are interrelated experiences, but they are not identical. Sometimes, though, the differentiation between the three is overlooked and the terms are used interchangeably. Of course, the three are connected in the elemental force of the narcissistic threat that lies behind each affective experience. For example, the rivalry with, the envy and jealousy of, the sibling bears witness to the pain of the realization that parents have needs and wishes beyond His Majesty the Baby. As Blass (2014) notes, "[In rivalry] competing children . . . are also companions to the shared fate of exclusion from the couple" (p. xix).

The narcissistic threat may provoke differing responses. In rivalry, self-preservative aggression may be marshalled, whereas in envy, toxic and sadistic murderousness may hold thrall.

Following the early Freudian and Kleinian models, envy, rivalry, and jealousy were differentiated according to the matrices of a two-person relationship or a three-person relationship. For example, Riviere (1932), in a complex and masterly paper titled "Jealousy as a Mechanism of

Defence," considered jealousy to be equally as destructive an affect as envy. She described it as a "dominant phantasy ... within a triangular situation" (p. 416).

Klein (1957) was clear in distinguishing envy from jealousy: envy involves "the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable—the envious impulse being to take it away or to spoil it." Jealousy is described as a three-person situation in which the "love the subject feels is his due ... has been taken away, or is in danger of being taken away, from him by his rival" (p. 212).

However, in contemporary theory, it no longer suffices to argue that rivalry, jealousy, and envy can be differentiated according to the two- or three-person matrix. Rivalry and jealousy presuppose the presence in the mind of three, for they imply competition with another for the same object. But externally, there may be only two persons in the relationship. In Green's (1986) conceptualization, the mother–infant dyad always implies a third presence, for the mother has a paternal object in her mind. Similarly, in more recent conceptualizations, envy, despite originally being seen in terms of a two-person matrix, can be seen as arising in a three-person relationship. For example, Britton (2008) and Sodré (2008) consider envy as arising in the context of an embryonic recognition of a separate object, on the cusp of the depressive position, where the object, being recognized, is also experienced as in relation to yet another, a third.

Freud's (1933) painfully vivid description of the intensity of betrayal and rivalry experienced by the displaced infant upon the birth of a sibling illustrates, both clinically and theoretically, the central impact of rivalry on the construction of an internal world:

> The next accusation against the child's mother flares up when the next baby appears in the nursery .... What the child grudges the unwanted intruder and rival is not only the suckling but all the other signs of maternal care. It feels that it has been dethroned, despoiled, prejudiced in its rights; it casts a jealous hatred upon the new baby and develops a grievance against the faithless mother .... We rarely form a correct idea of the strength of these jealous impulses, of the tenacity with which they persist and of the magnitude of their influence on later development .... This jealousy is constantly receiving fresh nourishment in the

> later years of childhood and the whole shock is repeated with the birth of each new brother or sister. [p. 123][1]

At the same time, Freud argued that rivalry can be an inspiration. According to Freud, intense rivalry inspired his great epistemophilic triumph: his investigation of the structure of the mind. In particular, Freud's account of his own childhood, chronicled by Jones (1953), illustrated this in his ambivalent relationship with his nephew John: "An intimate friend and hated enemy have always been indispensable to my life . . . . Not infrequently . . . that friend and enemy have coincided" (p. 37).[2]

Freud (1908) emphasized that the epistemophilic instinct is animated by the arrival of a rival child who displaces him in his mother's attention and "sharpens his capacity for thought" (p. 212). He described his discovery of the Oedipus complex as rooted in his murderous rivalry with his younger brother Julius, who died at the age of eight months, when Freud was nineteen months old. The theme of rivalry leading to murder is encapsulated in this oedipal situation. Klein (1940), too, thought of rivalry thus: "We know the great part rivalry plays in the child's burning desire . . . an incentive to achievement" (p. 154).

The classical definition of rivalry as described by Neubauer (1982) further elaborates a psychoanalytic consideration of rivalry:

> Psychoanalysts can easily link the meaning of rivalry to the original root of the term, namely, "one dwelling by or using the same stream as another," or "the fighting for the access to the river," or "one who is in pursuit of the same object as another" (*The New Century Dictionary*). The struggle is for the basic supply of water for survival or, in our terms, for the mother's supply to satisfy basic needs. Rivalry, the striving for

[1] Similarly, in 1937 Freud wrote, "It is a 'construction' when one lays before the subject of the analysis a piece of his early history that he has forgotten, in some such way as this: 'you regarded yourself as the sole and unlimited possessor of your mother, then came another baby and brought you grave disillusionment'" (p. 261).

[2] It is beyond the scope of this paper, but somewhat irresistible, to speculate on the nature of the amalgam of the triptych of rivalry, envy, and jealousy that was present in the manifestation of the compulsion to repeat that Freud (1920) famously describes and seems not to recognize as his own story: "the benefactor who is abandoned in anger after a time by each of his protégés, however much they may otherwise differ from one another, and who thus seems doomed to taste all the bitterness of ingratitude" (p. 22).

> the exclusive access to the source, implies an assertive, aggressive struggle against the rival. Only later . . . does it lead to sharing of the source, the mother, to coexistence with the rival, a mutuality of interest . . . . Rivalry is an act, based on the wish not to lose the object to the rival. Thus, in rivalry, the contact with the object is maintained. [p. 122]

Drawing on Freud's idea of "intimate friend and hated enemy," Mitchell (2000, 2003, 2013) has written extensively about rivalry in her work on siblings, pointing to the neglect of the horizontal axis, and the privileging of the vertical axis, in the psychoanalytic theory of the Oedipus complex. Mitchell's (2003, p. 29) focus on rivalry draws attention to the "adoration and murder" inherent in the rivalry between siblings. Rivalry inspires creativity and may also be accompanied by an assertive-aggressive struggle, which at times manifests as deep antagonism. Freud (1910) wrote:

> In the happiest young marriage the father is aware that the baby, especially if he is a baby son, has become his rival, and this is the starting-point of an antagonism towards the favourite which is deeply rooted in the unconscious. [p. 117]

Similarly, rivals in literature are often depicted as the closest of friends yet the most ardent of adversaries. A central element of many classic stories is the rivalrous duel between suitors for a desired mistress, but here again the preservation of the desired object, as with Freud's beautiful young mother, is central. An envious dynamic may well have placed her life at risk. How different, for example, from the murderous envy of Iago, which, as Sodré (2008) writes, meant that "simply organising the murder of one or both partners [of the primal scene] would not be enough, he must destroy love in the mind of the lover" (p. 28).

Thus, rivalry may be characterized as a dueling that might result in murder alongside a healthy creativity and mutuality of interest and love between the rivals.[3]

[3] Debate remains over whether a positive spin can be put on the conceptualization of envy. Some argue that malignant envy may have its counterpart in a form of envy that inspires achievement (Joffe 1969; Parsons 1993). On the other hand, Spillius (1993) argues that what might be called positive envy is better thought of as admiration, a certain sort of wistful longing.

Freud (1919) conceptualized another complex manifestation of rivalry in "A Child Is Being Beaten." Beyond rivalry as focusing on access to the source of the river, access to the feeding breast, Freud elaborates the rivalry for the father. This is not just the relation to the father who is the rival in the oedipal battle for the mother but also the complex relationship with the sibling who competes for the father. In observing the father beating the hated sibling, the child concludes, "My father does not love this other child, he loves only me" (p. 187).

## RIVALRY AND ENVY IN CONTEMPORARY CLINICAL THEORY

In contemporary clinical theory, the focus is placed on maintenance of contact with the object, when either envious or jealous or rivalrous feelings are dominant. Spillius (1993), for example, differentiates between two forms of envious relationship to the object: ego-syntonic and impenitent. The maintenance of contact with the object in the envious relationship takes on the hue of the cruel, sadistic holding characteristic of Glasser's (1979) core complex. I think there is a subtle differentiation to be made between the nature of the contact with the object in the envious moment and that in the rivalrous moment, which is useful to recognize in clinical work. As cited above, Neubauer notes that "rivalry is an act, based on the wish not to lose the object to the rival" (1982, p. 122). Thus, *in rivalry, the contact with the object is maintained.*

By contrast, the contact with the object may be destroyed in envy. And, as cited above, Klein (1957) described envy as involving "the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable—*the envious impulse being to take it away or to spoil it* (p. 212, italics added).

Rivalry involves fighting over access to an object, the mother, who needs to be alive to satisfy the vital self-preservative drive of both the child and the interloper, whereas in the envious moment the vied-for object may not be vital to the subject or may not be recognized as such.

What is envied is the rival's relationship to a thing or person. The rival's imagined state of being and relatedness may also be envied. A well-known example would be the following common observation. Two children are fighting over a toy. The solicitous parents suggest the children take turns and are amazed when one child wrests the seemingly coveted toy from the other and then destroys it, indicating not the desire for the toy but the desire to kill off the other child's pleasurable relationship with the toy, to take it away and destroy or spoil it. Isaacs (1935) described how, in "the chagrin of envy . . . what is so desperately desired may be wanted simply because someone has it or desires it. A thing that has long been treated with indifference or contempt . . . may suddenly assume great value . . . if another person begins to take interest in it" (p. 39).

But in a rivalrous relationship, for example between siblings, the fought-over mother is not so much at risk of being robbed or spoiled. Rather, she may be ambivalently cathected but known to be vital for the survival of her rivalrous children. Clinically this, to me, is central. The rivals need to keep the fought-over object alive. In clinical work with the rivalrous patient, one's life is not at stake, but one has to be alive to battle. In pathological jealousy or envy, the survival of the object is not ensured. Malignant envy is profoundly toxic; it is characterized by varied degrees of destructiveness. In this sense, it takes its meaning very much in the same vein as in the classical definition of envy as one of the seven deadly sins. I see Giotto's fourteenth-century depiction of Envy[4] as destructive of the other, but essentially victim of her own destructiveness, as particularly helpful in the clinical elaboration. Here a serpent is seen issuing from the mouth of the figure of Envy. The serpent turns back on itself and poisons the subject. The fires of hell and the burning desire for things belonging to others are depicted as devouring her. Envy is here characterized by destructiveness, which damages the relationship with the object and, in turn, poisons the subject.

Undoubtedly, the attack on the envied object may be accompanied by a desire not to carry out the destruction, but this is the work of reparation,

[4] Cappella degli Scrovegni, Padua.

not the manifestation of envy, whereas I consider the survival of the object to be an integral part of the rivalrous relationship. Thus, clinically and conceptually, rivalry is distinguishable from envy and jealousy in that the death drive is mitigated by the life drive. On the other hand, envy, in its destructive manifestation, illustrates what Freud (1930) described as "the pure culture of the death drive" (p. 53).

It is in connection with the death drive that Bell (2008) considers what he describes as malignant envy to be indistinguishable from a certain form of rivalry:

> We can think of rivalry, and here I am following Bion, as a psychic quality mapped on the two axes of the life and death drives. When life drives predominate, rivalry becomes competitiveness, pursuing perfection of one's craft, without denial of the inevitable pleasure of defeating the other. Where death drives predominate rivalry becomes belief in superiority, arrogance, hatred of vulnerability, powerful feelings of entitlement to destroy what is good. It thus becomes indistinguishable from malignant envy, a kind of ultimate evil. [p. 34]

One does indeed experience both love and murderousness in the treatment of envious, jealous, and rivalrous patients. But rivalry, whether in its belligerent or benign form, involves preservation of the object, whereas envy does not guarantee the object's survival. Clinically, toxicity or ultimate evil does not seem to me to characterize the rivalrous patient, even in its belligerent manifestation: there is a liveliness that militates against the death wish in the "simultaneity of murder and adoration" (Mitchell 2003, p. 29) characterizing rivalry.

The experience within the transference and countertransference gives some hints in differentiating that which is a manifestation of rivalry. In my experience, working with the envious patient can evoke in the analyst feelings of deathliness, hopelessness, and uselessness. The negative transference can manifest in violent and suicidal enactments. On the other hand, in working with the rivalrous patient, even in the face of the most virulent attack, the analyst feels alive to difference, embattled but invigorated and alert. The negative transference is characterized by provocation to fight or duel, the throwing down of the gauntlet. At times, this

belligerence leads to warring and murder, but perhaps this can be seen as a crime of passion rather than the tortured, sadistic murder of the object in the envious attack.

To exemplify this particular manifestation, I describe in some detail a session from Carla's analysis. I appreciate, of course, that in the quotidian course of any psychoanalysis, these differentiations may well be more subtle than the examples I have chosen. Furthermore, in presenting the clinical detail I am mindful that nothing quite does justice to the psychoanalytic encounter in the consulting room; the description of it is but an approximation.

## CARLA

Carla, a beautiful, gamine young woman, was in her late twenties when she started analysis with me. Gifted at school, she had gained entrance to university and was becoming successful in her chosen field of art and design. This achievement provided respite and escape from a brutal and bleak family history.

### *Wednesday*

In the Tuesday session, Carla had been unusually quiet. She had remarked that she wanted me to be present, to be alongside her, as she imagined an attentive mother is when she "settles" a child. The early part of the Wednesday session, too, was quiet.

Carla then began to talk about her younger sister, who was on her mind in relation to a recent design and fashion event Carla had been organizing. Carla had been thinking about her excitement about it all, and she wondered if her sister might be jealous of her success. She went on to explain that she had spoken to her sister recently and her sister had talked to her about her own troubles, but Carla had not mentioned her own work. Carla felt that, in a way, her sister might be wanting to make some contact with her by revealing her troubles. But Carla exclaimed that her sister seemed to forget that they are siblings and that there might be some reciprocal exchange. "Perhaps I'm being cruel and critical," she said.

As I listened, I was mindful of the rivalry in the analysis, what her experience of my cruel withholding as her analyst might be, but I did not interpret this, for I considered that it was probably preconsciously, if not consciously, known to her. She continued by telling me that she had noticed what I was wearing and that she liked the colors I had chosen. She thought I had put it together in a clever sort of way that I could "carry off." She talked about remembering a distinguished psychoanalyst who had given a lecture on psychoanalysis and art at her college. The lecturer had been tall and slim, and Carla bemoaned her own petite build. Carla said this in a self-deprecating way, but I also recalled her letting me know recently, rather tentatively, that she would like to use some of the psychoanalytic theory she had heard at the lecture given by the tall, slim analyst. These ideas, she said, might help develop some ideas she had about her design work.

I was mindful of Carla's rivalrous wish to emulate the "cleverly dressed" in psychoanalytic theory analyst she thought me to be. However, I also thought that she was inviting me into her world of clever dressing in her professional life of fashion and design. There, I would be outshone by her and her fashionable, arty colleagues. But her concern about this contemptuous dismissal may have been hinted at in her wondering about her cruel dismissal of a sister, who may well have been trying to make contact with her in sharing her troubles: the "push-me/pull-you" dynamic of rivalry.

Carla's characteristically intense scrutiny of me at the beginning of the session was unnerving, reminding me of her need to watch her objects who might attack in an unpredictable way, mirroring her own impulse to belittle and humiliate. But I was also aware that she had yearned for a benign, maternal element during the Tuesday session, when she had wanted me to be present as a silent, accompanying object.

Carla returned to thinking about her sister and then went on to talk about having gone out for a drink with another artist. She had felt ill at ease with him and found herself feeling critical of him, but then he revealed that he had confused feelings about her. But there was something disturbing and troubling about him. She went on to tell me about another friend she had met up with who was very angry with her. The friend had told Carla how she had let her down in a discussion during a

meeting by agreeing with a controversial writer's point of view rather than seeing the friend's point of view. Carla hadn't known what to say to her friend and had ended up just letting her talk, just being with her. She felt she was unable to say anything else. She expressed to me her confusion and doubt and how demanding she had found this friend, and she did, indeed, worry that she herself hadn't been a good-enough friend.

I felt that in her reference to herself as overidentified with the "controversial writer's point of view," she was cautioning me lest I get carried away with my psychoanalytic version of things and fail to understand her point of view. I felt the familiar, rapid to and fro between being experienced as the accompanying, "just letting her talk," good enough friend and as a crazy, ugly, rejecting, nonunderstanding, not good enough other. So I took up her train of thought and, linking it with the end of Tuesday's session and the beginning of this session, I said, "It's as if you are saying you want the attentive, reliable analyst but feel worried by another troubling and confusing analyst, taken up with her clever dressing, who both worries and intrigues you ... there's a tension between the two experiences of me."

She said she felt "a kind of calmness after you talked," but then she felt overtaken by something, and it felt as if she needed to attack back with all the things she imagines doing better than me. She couldn't allow me to be the mother who "settles" her. But she did think that what I said about the tension between two states was right. She recalled that after her session the day before, the backache she felt during the session had eased. She had been able to relax. But then she found herself turning me into a "conceited" person. The backache was still there, and she didn't want to let me get away with the pleasure of thinking I had been helpful. Her manner became quite vituperative, and she exclaimed, "Why on earth should I be worried about what you were wearing?" After all, she exclaimed, it wasn't as if I were "dressed up to the nines, in haute couture." She said something then about having heard what I'd said about the tension between two states.

I felt the tension between being experienced as the analyst who could say something helpful and being reduced to a useless, unhelpful analyst: the rivalry with the admired other, which leads to a challenge and maybe a duel but might also lead to resolution. I commented, "I think you are

worried that if you hear what I say, and you let me know I can be helpful, you fear my haughty (my 'haute couture') triumph."

She returned to the topic of her backache and ridding herself of it. She told me that in order to be rid of any sense that she needed me, she had practiced her deep breathing exercises, exhaling strongly, and, she said emphatically, "That got rid of the backache."

In the silence that followed, I found myself saying, "Breathing away the fiery, difficult feelings, like a dragon!"

In retrospect, I wonder if this unheralded evocation of a dragon was some sort of unconscious enactment that, in the cut and thrust of the session, I was not cognizant of. Only later could I consider its provenance. For example, was I responding to a feeling that the dragon had breathed fire on me and I was provoked to slay it, or was I the dragon-like presence for her? Certainly there had been something of a sense of triumph and battle in the air with dragons coming to mind.

The enlivening, but still embattled, encounter with Carla seems to illustrate the rapid movement of the rival between "intimate friend and hated enemy," as Freud described: the belligerent liveliness of the rivalrous patient, which can lead to the excitement of a tussle but may lead also to a duel to the death. The subject needs to keep the object of desire alive while threatening the rival. In analysis, the rival and the object of desire are conflated in the transference, and the patient oscillates between adoration and battle with her analyst. Carla in the Tuesday session and the early part of the Wednesday session was, I consider, libidinally engaged with me. She wanted me to quietly accompany her at a difficult time on Tuesday and, in a rather different way, to begin with on Wednesday. She admired my looking cleverly dressed and let me know her backache had eased: she was in the company of a good object. Subtly, she moved the scene into one in which she clearly would be the victor: her professional domain of clever dressing in fashion and design. The understanding of her fear of my haughty refusal of her overtures illustrates how I had become both object of desire in "haute couture" and rival in the transference.

There is a shift between, for example, Carla's experience of me as the mother who soothes and settles, over whom she and her sister fought, and the experience of me as the tantalizing, rivalrous other who is

haughty and dismissive, who does not heed her view, and who is seduced by the "controversial writer's point of view." Her ambivalent feelings about me as her rival illustrate that "adoration and murder" were indeed in the air. I was the adored but tantalizing object of desire as she responded to my interpretations early in the session with a "kind of calmness" and as she let me soothe her backache. Here were traces of incestuous wishes revealing an erotic element that emerged from time to time in the analysis. Indeed, was there a wish that I might lay my hands on her painful back rather than leave her to manage her pain untouched and unhandled? Similarly, the fiery breath of sexual desire may have made manifest an incestuous longing in the treatment. But her rivalry got the upper hand and she battled with me: she couldn't let me have the pleasure of being helpful, the backache had returned, and I was reduced to an unhelpful, conceited analyst.

In her rivalrous state, Carla lost sight of me as a helpful object and failed also to understand a more benign version of her sister, who seemed to be trying to engage with her in entrusting her with intimacies. I wonder, in the spontaneous outburst about a dragon, whether I was in some way recognizing the elusive presence of the dragon of fairy tales and childhood games. The children, who play out eternally the battle to slay the dragon, are mirrored in analysis as the analyst and analysand enact the positions of dragon and hero in myriad protean forms.

## RIVALRY AND ENVY AND THE DEATH DRIVE

This presence of desire and hatred brings to mind the manifestations of Eros and Thanatos in the internal worlds of the envious and the rivalrous patient. The death drive is considered dominant when envy has the upper hand, but the duality of "simultaneity of adoration and murder," as Mitchell (2003) describes in her thesis on sibling rivalry, results also in a complex interweaving of the life and death drives. She writes of "the life drive flooding in to mitigate the death drive" (p. 29).

In drawing on the theory of the death drive, I am aware I am venturing into disputed territory: "a lucky hit . . . or one may have gone shamefully astray" (p. 57), as Freud (1920) described his first theorizing on the

death instinct in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. I am mindful that the notion of drive has the connotation of purpose: there is intention behind, for example, the sexual and the self-preservative drives, but it is difficult to argue that we willfully drive ourselves toward death. Parsons (2014) addresses this issue in what he describes as the psychic state of "keeping death alive." He follows Freud's theorizing on death: "Death is always and forever unrepresentable ... being creatively alive means staying imaginatively open to death; not just as a fact that we know about, but as something we shall inevitably experience" (p. 150).

Freud (1920), in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, postulated the notion of a death drive in his struggle to make sense of the psychic dominance of the deadly compulsion to repeat:

> *It seems, then, that an instinct is an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things.* . . . This view of instincts strikes us as strange because we have become used to see in them a factor impelling towards change and development, whereas we are now asked to recognize in them the precise contrary—an expression of the *conservative* nature of living substance. [p. 36, italics in original]

For the purpose of this discussion, I use the concept of the death drive as a sort of shorthand for what I regard as a central pillar of clinical theory: the experience in the consulting room of grappling with an unconscious force, often manifested in the incalculable power of the compulsion to repeat, which feels like an unconscious pull toward something deadly that kills off any attempted engagement with life.

Klein (1957) linked envy very directly with the death drive. Rosenfeld (1987) elaborates this in his theory of destructive narcissism, closely linked with the workings of the death drive: the patient attacks any trace of an alive, separate object who might awaken envy. When help is forthcoming, there is a flight to narcissistic self-sufficiency and an envious attack on the other for being helpful.

This was vividly illustrated in a moment during the analysis of Patrick, an envious, narcissistic young man. He reported a dream in which he had committed suicide and subsequently saw me attending his funeral, where

his family took murderous revenge on me as the one responsible for his death: I was to join him on the funeral pyre. Here the destructiveness, characteristic of envy that kills off the object, clearly had the upper hand.

In my countertransference in Patrick's analysis, I experienced the enervating deathliness of envy: a barren, objectless wasteland in which analyst and analysand are destroyed at his funeral, where I am exposed as useless. His parents are transformed into objects wreaking revenge on me, as I am murderously implicated in their son's death. Furthermore, the omnipotent idea inherent in such a dream, that one survives one's own death to attend the funeral, indicates an envious narcissism that denudes others of their value and circumvents depressive feelings of grief and loss. Patrick, in his envy, had deadened his loving, dependent self and identified almost entirely with the destructive narcissistic parts of the self. He could neither symbiotically identify with me nor destructively obliterate me. Rather, he was faced with the recognition of a real, separate, and, perhaps, helpful object.

Rosenfeld (1987) elaborates the danger of this. He writes how dependence on an object implies love, recognition, and value of the object: "When he is faced with the reality of being dependent on the analyst ... he would prefer to die, to be non-existent, to deny the fact of his birth .... Some of these patients become very depressed and suicidal" (p. 107).

Carla, in her rivalrous engagement with me, demonstrated a more libidinally tinged narcissism. Noting her analyst's external presentation, "cleverly dressed," she may also have been concerned that her analyst might not be trustworthy at a deeper level. Her narcissistic solution in these circumstances was not to scotomize or eradicate me, as in the destructive narcissistic solution, but to symbiotically identify with me in Rosenfeld's terms. She would, on these occasions, detail the ways in which she would outshine me, sartorially in her arty world or intellectually in her academic theorizing on psychoanalysis and art. Similarly, she turned to the narcissistic solution when she relied on her own breath to get rid of her backache. It seemed she could not hold on to the moment's calm she had felt in response to my interpretation.

Mitchell (2003) also argues that rivalry is, in part, linked with the death drive, but her thesis includes a liveliness that militates against the possible murder: the "simultaneity of murder and adoration." She

describes how each sibling "evokes the danger of the other's annihilation" (p. 28)—perhaps like the deadly and death-defying dragon that leapt unheralded into my mind. This murderousness is transmuted and sanctioned in aggressive play and healthy rivalry. The birth of a rival, the new sibling, the competitor for parental love, threatens the existence of the subject. This evocation of the danger of annihilation at the birth of a new sibling can be experienced as the death of the subject's self in the mind of the mother as she is taken up with her new one.

Sibling rivalry can include the most concrete but murderous moments: the toddler who suffocates the newborn with overzealous cuddles, loving her or him "to bits." This idiomatic expression encapsulates the danger inherent in two fighting for the same source if we recall Neubauer's classical definition of rivalry. The rivalrous older child feels, "Let that new intruder, the baby, be nothing so I can reassert my place in my mother's mind." The child feels annihilated by the new one who stands in his or her place. Here Mitchell (2003) reminds us of the simultaneity of love and murder: "Into the wish to kill the one who annihilates the subject by its existence, rushes the love that was also present in the anticipation of another self ... the life drive flooding in to mitigate the death drive" (p. 29).

The envious patient, in the thrall of destructive narcissism, aims to deaden and spoil the object's pleasure, perhaps in the last resort symbolically murdering the object, as Patrick did in the homicidal aspect of his dream of suicide and in the dream fantasy of murderous revenge. Thus envy, linked with the death drive, is elaborating what Freud (1930) wrote in *Civilization and Its Discontents*: "The death drive operates silently ... diverted towards the external world and comes to light as a drive of aggressiveness and destructiveness" (p. 119).

On the other hand, in rivalry there is a wish to return to an earlier idealized state, illustrated in the child's wish to annihilate the newborn rival, to make it disappear, but to preserve the source, the mother. In this context, Mitchell's thesis is derived from the death drive of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), "a drive ... inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things" (p. 36).

The challenge for the mother is to keep both children alive while keeping herself alive as the dependable, nourishing object, both in reality for the nursling and for the usurped older child. Carla demanded this of

me in that she wanted me to be alive to her dependence on me but also to be mindful of her resentment of me as a haughty, conceited other, more taken up with other patients than with her. This was vividly exemplified at the beginning of a session later in her analysis when, already in a state of some discontent with me, she reacted in an irritated manner when she noticed me smoothing out the antimacassar on the pillow on the couch as she entered my consulting room. "Don't you think I know someone comes before me and will come after me—I am the middle child, after all," she exclaimed, taking the view that I was trying to disguise the reality of her position as one among other patients of mine, rivals but betrayed and betrayed even further by the denial in the smoothing away of the traces of others.

Conceptualizing rivalry in this way facilitates a clinical differentiation in which aggressive and belligerent affects are present, but they have a self-preservative hue. The presence of the death drive in rivalry is mitigated by a healthy competitive, self-preservative edge that is absent in envy, which destroys the life inherent in pleasure. Carla needed me to be alive to her rivalry: I was both the rivalrous sibling and the desired mother. I rarely felt destroyed by Carla's attacks, but I often felt challenged by them. Her evocation of me as a "conceited" object, as she described me, did not leave me feeling scooped out and reduced. Rather, I felt alert to her need to engage me in battle: rivalry allows for difference, with all the danger and excitement that involves.

This more benign element of rivalry, the mitigation of murderousness, is described by Neubauer (1982): "Rivalry may be resolved by competition and coexistence . . . but envy cannot lead to solutions—it is a malignant factor" (p. 124).

Mitchell (2013), in her elaboration of the lateral axis in the oedipal story, contends that the possible resolution or mitigation of murderousness often means that rivalry can be seen as the solution to jealousy rather than as synonymous with envy. She convincingly argues that the mother, faced with the ferocious murderousness of the jealous, usurped older child, institutes what she describes as the "law of the mother." The mother recognizes that the toddler wants to be rid of the baby who has taken its place, but, Mitchell (2013, p. 30) writes, "Babies do not kill each other [simply] because we do not give them access to knives and guns" (Richard Tremblay,

as quoted in Pinker 2011, p. 483). Crucially, she suggests that the mother sanctions rivalrous play as a solution to the potential for murder.

The psychoanalytic parallel locates itself in what Freud (1914) called the "transference as playground" (p. 154). Perhaps the reference to the playground is all the more pertinent here in that Freud (1912), implying the link between sanctioned battling play and rivalry, also argued, "Every conflict has to be fought out in the transference" (p. 104).

Carla's engaged but embattled response to interpretations addressing whether she is in the company of a benign, good enough maternal figure or a haughty, rejecting one, reflecting her own projective identification of an incapacitating internal psychic state, allowed us to consider how she had to contain my dangerousness but acknowledged the vital secret analytic place that allows for respite and recovery. When Carla talked about herself "exhaling strongly" as a way to rid herself of something she does not want, this may have been the narcissistic solution, pushing away any dependence on me or any feeling that I could be helpful. Bringing the dragon into "play," so to speak, drew attention to the dragon of fairy tales and childhood games. This, in turn, allowed Carla to risk the thought that this "playground" was a realm to be ventured into and explored. My unconscious evocation of the dragon allowed her to experience me as able to be open to that realm. In that domain, she experienced me as an object that could be attacked: a rivalrous attack, which has a dynamic, life-affirming quality.

In the dream reported at the beginning of this paper, in which Carla commanded soldiers to battle, one can discern the mitigating factor. Through the dream work and her engaged response to it, we were able to think about the pain and humiliation she can feel in her analysis. She does often try to "get me in line" to contain my dangerousness, but she acknowledges the vital secret analytic place that allows for respite and recovery. There is coexistence in her analysis that allows for the competitive rivalry, but the setting protects either of us from being slain by the dragon. Carla may have been intent on battle, but she strove to keep her object alive in the face of the threat.

I want to conclude with the following word of warning. Loewald (1981) warns against an overdependence on theoretical conceptualizations. He quotes the French poet Paul Valéry on how concepts can appear

> like one of those light planks which one throws across a ditch or mountain crevasse and which will bear a man crossing it rapidly. But he must pass without weighing on it, without stopping—above all, he must not take it into his head to dance on the slender plank to test its resistance! Otherwise the fragile bridge tips or breaks immediately, and all is hurled into the depths. Consult your own experience; and you will find that we understand each other, and ourselves, only thanks to our rapid passage over words. We must not lay stress upon them, or we shall see the clearest discourse dissolve into enigmas. [p. 23]

Heeding Valéry's recommendation, I have "consulted my [clinical] experience," and I hope that the "slender plank" of my conceptual argument allows some further interrogation of this vital psychoanalytic concept. Clumsy dancing and hurling into the depths are to be avoided.

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# Otherness and the Analysis of Action

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# OTHERNESS AND THE ANALYSIS OF ACTION

BY JAY GREENBERG

*Psychoanalysts are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of addressing aspects of their analysands' experience that have not and cannot be put into words. In this essay I address the technical challenges inherent in the interpretation of the actions that in one way or another are always central to the course of treatment.*

**Keywords:** Action, interpretation, otherness, technique, therapeutic action.

In recent years the interest of psychoanalysts representing a wide range of theoretical traditions has turned away from uncovering repressed mental contents by using evenly hovering attention to decode their analysands' free associations. In place of this, we focus more on the workings of preverbal or nonverbal proto-experience that could not have been repressed because it was never symbolically encoded. Different traditions emphasize different ways in which these proto-experiences manifest themselves in patients' lives and within the analytic dyad; among the phenomena that have been described are psychosomatic symptoms, failures to dream or to mentalize, dissociation, enactments of various sorts, and so on.

In this essay I focus on the broad concept of action in the psychoanalytic situation and especially on its interpretation. I turn shortly to just what I mean by action; the definition itself is complex and is likely to lead to interesting discussions about the nature of psychoanalytic process. But before I do so, I want to note that despite the shift in attention that I have mentioned, not all analysts agree that it is either possible or useful to interpret what has not been symbolized.

This skepticism gets expressed in different ways in different analytic cultures. In Anglophone writings, the divide can be traced to the

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countertransference wars that began in the last half of the twentieth century and that continue, although in considerably muted form, today. The dispute revolves around the informational value of countertransference: while some analysts believe that countertransference is a useful, even essential tool for understanding what cannot be put into words, others are mistrustful of these data. For the skeptics, whose voices can and should haunt us even as their perspective becomes less popular, only experience that has been symbolized and that can at least potentially be spoken of is amenable to interpretation. Inferences about what cannot be put into words by the analysand should not be fully trusted; the analyst's theory, even his or her unconscious dynamics, is likely to shape what can be heard. Accordingly, action dimensions of the analytic process are inattended, and enactments tend to be dismissed as technical errors.

Despite working from very different metapsychological assumptions, many French analysts also assiduously avoid engaging with acts that have not been given some sort of verbal expression. Consider an example of the latter as a way to highlight just how dramatic the differences can be. I have been part of a group of North American analysts who meet regularly with some French colleagues to discuss clinical material. A few years ago, one of the French analysts presented a case in which the analysand frequently failed to come to her sessions or to notify the analyst of her whereabouts, often for weeks and sometimes even for months at a time. When the patient did appear for a session, the absences were never mentioned by the analyst, until he discerned a reference to them in a dream. Only then did he feel that what had happened had become part of his analysand's unconscious experience, and so only then did her experience of the acts become a proper focus of psychoanalytic inquiry. I would add that colleagues working within other traditions have their own reasons for avoiding the interpretation of unsymbolized action.

In this essay, because my focus is clinical, I am going to avoid engaging either the etiological hypotheses that shape some Anglophone analysts' sensibilities or the metapsychology that determines the French analysts' technical choices. Setting theory aside allows me to begin with the clinical assumption that action gives expression to experience that is unconscious, and that accordingly we limit ourselves if we do not engage it interpretively. However, I do think that the interpretation of action

poses difficulties that do not arise when we confine ourselves more narrowly to the interpretation of verbal contents; spelling out and addressing these difficulties is my focus. I hope that it will also lead to some ideas about the technical challenges inherent in our attempts to engage a potentially fruitful dimension of all analytic treatments.

Talking about the interpretation of action in the psychoanalytic situation is complicated by the fact that the concept of action itself is used to describe a confusing array of loosely related phenomena. I mention three of these, in order to define my field of inquiry, and eventually to highlight a common clinical problem that arises in our approach to all three. First, there is the sort of action that arose in the report of my French colleague. Involving behaviors of the analysand that the analysand does not explicitly talk about, most action of this sort is less dramatic than what he described. An example from my practice stays with me in a poignant way. Several years ago, I changed the carpet in my office. The change was quite dramatic; I replaced a subdued blue carpet with one that was a much brighter rust color. Every analysand noticed and commented on the change, with one exception. The one who did not was, interestingly, a keen amateur photographer whose sharp visual sense frequently gave shape to his associations. He alone said nothing about the new carpet, but the next day he came to his session wearing a sweater identical in color to it. I had never seen that sweater before, and of course he said nothing about it.

Within this category I would include other sorts of actions that may occur frequently but that are episodic by their nature: the analysand comes late, misses a session, pays the bill late. Less likely to be noted by the analyst but hardly different in kind and thus illustrative of both the ubiquity of action and how vexing it can be to engage it, the analysand comes on time, shows up for every scheduled appointment, pays promptly. Next, and in contrast, there is the sort of action that is a constant current running through and shaping the sessions, even when the analysand is doing nothing overtly except speaking. This is action embodied in the manner in which the analysand thinks and talks—word choice, vocalization, quality of responsiveness, and so on. Whether we include this sort of action in our understanding of the events of an analysis depends entirely on what we choose to look at; to take a simple example,

we may focus exclusively on the content of the analysand's associations, or we may notice that however much *we* may be able to find meaning in that content, the analysand does not and apparently cannot be moved by whatever he or she is saying. The action, then, is in the lifelessness of the analysand's speech or in the evisceration of meaning. This kind of action has been called to our attention by analysts of many different theoretical persuasions over the years, notably Betty Joseph (1985), Henry Smith (2006), and recently Fred Busch (2013). In this group Edgar Levenson (1972) deserves special mention; he was the first North American analyst to call attention to the way in which the analysand's acts can affect not only the analyst's experience but also his or her behavior.

Let me add as an aside that when we are sensitized to ubiquity of action in the psychoanalytic situation, our understanding of the goals of treatment is likely to shift subtly but decisively. Instead of trying to unearth missing pieces of the analysand's life history in an attempt to create coherent narratives—the goal that guided Freud's work and that until recently has been embraced by most analysts—we focus on the way in which our analysand is processing his or her experience. Although discussion of this very interesting development is beyond the scope of this essay, I do want to note that a range of terms and concepts has been used to describe the new treatment goal; I am thinking of facilitating the development of alpha function, developing the capacity to mentalize or what others have called mindfulness, moving from dissociative organization to the experience of conflict, promoting creative thinking, and so on.

Returning to the manifestations of action that we encounter, there is the kind that is most frequently discussed these days under the rubric of "enactment"; this involves unsymbolized and perhaps unnoticed action that both the analysand and the analyst participate in. These acts may be more or less florid and more or less conscious, and they may occur either episodically or continuously. Some North American analysts have focused on more dramatic and thus more episodic enactments, those involving what might be characterized as countertransference outbursts but that can be viewed as outpourings of a transference–countertransference matrix. More elusive are the ongoing enacted dimensions of the relationship created within each dyad, those requiring what Baranger, Baranger, and Mom (1983) have termed a "second look."

A recent experience illustrates this sort of thing well. I was a consultant to an experienced, skilled analyst who presented a case that was troubling him. The patient, a young man who had suffered severe trauma both early in his life and recently, said things that as I listened made me increasingly afraid both for him and for others in his life. Yet in the face of all this the analyst stayed remarkably—I would say alarmingly—calm. He interpreted consistently and at considerable depth, and his patient responded well, recalling dreams, childhood memories, powerful emotions. And yet over a fairly prolonged period there did not seem to be much change; the patient continued to live a life that was marginal and that, as it seemed to me at least, flirted with disaster.

After listening to the presentation for some time, over a couple of meetings, I noticed that the analyst never reported asking his patient a question. Because I had not previously known the analyst and was not familiar with his theory of technique, I was not sure whether he believed in principle that analysts should not ask questions, and I raised this with him. Surprised, he said that in fact he usually asked many questions, that he taught his students to do so, and that it had never occurred to him that things were different with this particular analysand, although he could certainly see that they were. After some further discussion, we were both able to appreciate that by not asking questions, and in other ways as well, he had been engaging his analysand in ways that provided stability—the content of the interpretations—and that avoided the kind of freedom that comes with uncertainty. That is, the interpretations provided a containing structure that warded off the anxieties that both participants might have felt about the analysand's capacity for a violent, psychotic collapse.

I want to make two points about this, both of which highlight some problems involved in the analysis of action. First, to arrive at this view of the treatment, we had to look past the manifest content of the sessions to find a perspective on the process that could easily be overlooked (and was overlooked by the analyst). Without addressing what Katz (2013) has termed the "enacted dimension of psychoanalytic process," there was still plenty of material available to allow us to formulate dynamic and genetic hypotheses about the analysand's life, including the transference. To go further, we had to think of the process as embodying the actions of both

participants, something that for a long time was not done and that still is not done in some psychoanalytic quarters. Second, I hope it goes without saying that the action involved was not simply what could be observed from outside the analytic dyad. That is, the manifest behavior of making frequent interpretations and avoiding questions was not decisive in its own right; the kind of support offered by the analyst in response to his and his analysand's anxieties could have been the result of any pattern of engagement, including frequently asking questions.

I hope these ways of putting things and the vignettes that I have described illustrate my belief that when all is said and done, we swim, or drown, in an ocean of action; we are immersed in it even when nothing exceptional seems to be happening. This does not, as one might imagine, make our impossible profession any easier; more likely, it makes things more difficult. For instance, if action is going on all the time, then noticing or not noticing that there is a particular act that might be interpreted, and deciding whether and how to interpret what has been noticed, is itself an act of the analyst's. That is, it involves turning away from our usual practice of paying close attention to the associations of the analysand, and thus it has its own place in the action sequence.

Acknowledging this complicates things; by confronting us with the ubiquity of action, it forces us to ask what is *not* action—that is, what is "representation." The vignette reported by my French colleague illustrates this strikingly. He reports having talked to his patient about her prolonged absences after they were "represented" in her dream. I find this formulation problematic—does it mean that it appeared directly in the manifest content of the dream or that the analyst was able to "discern" an allusion to it somehow or other? Neither of these possibilities seems very satisfying: if the former, I imagine an analyst waiting for a long time for something that might never happen. If the latter, I imagine that the analyst's biases and more generally his or her countertransference are bound to be implicated in what he or she is able to discern. This highlights what I have in mind when I say that the decision to interpret—*even discerning that there is something to interpret*—can itself be usefully thought of as an unsymbolized action. This can lead to the kind of infinite regress that Smith (2003) has so vividly illustrated in his writing, although I have to add that some analysts are more troubled by this than others seem to be.

This is vexing enough, but I want to use these ideas to address a specific problem that arises when we think about the interpretation of action but that has application to a broad range of technical issues. It is part of the definition of action itself that any act can be interpreted from a range of different perspectives, and there are no guidelines for which of these is likely to be most facilitative in any particular instance and which may disrupt the collaboration between analyst and analysand.

This is a question that has been with different visions of whether an act was motivated at all. This is a problem that has been with psychoanalysis from its very beginnings; Freud noticed it early on when he described his commitment to finding meaning in parapraxes, which he described as symptomatic acts. The person who commits a parapraxis, Freud noted, will be reluctant to find meaning in these acts and typically will be unable to do so at least without a great deal of focused effort, precisely because they are symptomatic (1901, 1913). However, the observer of the act will find the meaning of at least many parapraxes to be transparent, especially if he or she is the object of them. To borrow the sort of example that Freud was fond of using, a man who calls his new girlfriend by the name of his ex-wife courts trouble, even if *he* believes that doing so is only a matter of habit, or of a similarity in the sound of their names, or of exhaustion. The difficulty in reaching common ground points to how different actions look when they are viewed from inside as compared to how they appear from an outside perspective. In saying this, I include but do not limit myself to defensiveness or other forms of self-deception on the part of either observer.

These differences with regard to the way in which the meanings of parapraxes are understood are a case in point of the kinds of difficulties that arise when we risk attributing meaning to actions. They suggest to me that the interpretation of action is technically complex and interpersonally delicate because it confronts analyst and analysand alike with the problem of otherness. The analyst inevitably observes the analysand's acts from his or her perspective as an outsider. This position is multiply determined; the analyst is literally an outsider (for instance, when he or she hears about the analysand's acting out in one or another extra-analytic setting) and is often the object of the analysand's actions in the consulting room. Additionally, the analyst is an outsider by virtue of the sorts of

unconscious identifications—especially what Racker (1957) called complementary identifications—that are evoked within the transference–countertransference. And the analyst's own network of internal relationships, including his or her relationship with psychoanalysis as a theory and as a profession, contributes to the irreducibility of otherness.

Addressing this, Poland (2012) has recently pointed out that in every analysis "each participant starts as an outsider to the universe of private meanings of the other." I would extend this; in important ways, analyst and analysand remain outsiders to each other, even as they get to know each other very well. Perhaps because the reality of otherness can be so painful, it presents a problem that analysts have historically been reluctant to recognize. Freud believed, after all, that "hate, as a relation to objects, is older than love" (1915, p. 139). Perhaps accordingly, he could never reflect deeply on the way that the encounter with the analyst as a real other would influence the analysand. Instead, he seemed to think that whatever otherness there was depended simply on the analyst's possession of a body of scientific knowledge that was unavailable to the patient and that therefore differentiated the mental state of the analyst from that of the patient. The analyst—established as other fundamentally by virtue of his or her command of this body of knowledge and purged of any tendency to idiosyncratic application of it by his or her personal analysis—could use it to correctly and completely decode the latent meanings of the analysand's free associations. At the extreme of this way of looking at things, the analysand was seen to be dealing less with an analyst than with an "analyzing instrument" (Isakower 1992).

But recent developments—the proliferation of interpretative systems embodied in a range of theoretical models and the contemporary epistemological insistence on what Renik (1993) calls the analyst's "irreducible subjectivity"—cast doubt on the original formulations; our historical infatuation with science as the solution to otherness has seen its day. In its wake, strikingly, concepts have arisen that suggest that we need not think of ourselves as "other" after all, or at least that we can abrogate difference in the interest of therapeutic connection. Kohut's (1959) "empathic perception" and "vicarious introspection" seem to suggest that we need not worry as much as we have been about our separateness. "Vicarious introspection"—finding ourselves in the analysand—is a conceit and virtually

an oxymoron that amounts to a nearly explicit denial of otherness. Similarly, Bion's (1963) concept of the analyst's mind as a container of parts of the analysand's mind, and its development in contemporary Kleinian notions of projective identification, explicitly blurs psychic boundaries and thus the differences of which we become aware when we think of analyst and analysand as "other" to each other. More recent concepts such as "affect attunement" and, on a more cognitive level, social-constructivism work in a similar direction.

If Freud minimized the impact of our otherness by stressing our objectivity, then today, grappling with similar concerns, we reclaim subjectivity but deny the inevitability of difference. One of the few to take on the problem of otherness directly is the French analyst Jean Laplanche, who has argued that it is a crucial aspect of the psychoanalytic situation that "there is the traumatic element ... of the subject faced by the enigma of the other" (1999, p. 12). He goes on to say, "As in all trauma, 'energy' is created this way." This is an interesting if somewhat obscure idea. It refers back to Laplanche's unacknowledgedly interpersonal theory that the development of the unconscious begins with the infant's encounter with the unconscious of the mother. When the mother offers the breast, he suggests, she is responding to the infant's need for food, but she is doing so by presenting him with a part of her body that has unconscious sexual meanings attached to it in her own experience. This is the moment of traumatic otherness. The infant—for whom the need for food is straightforward—is thus exposed to the multiple, enigmatic meanings that the mother's breast has for her. It is a traumatic moment because the infant cannot assimilate all these meanings and as a result some are repressed, creating the unconscious. But alongside this process of disavowal, the mind is energized because thinking is made necessary by the presence of the enigma; the infant must attempt the impossible, finding a way to master trauma.

Consider the parallel situation in analysis. First, the very act of interpreting reveals the analyst as an other; no matter how empathic the interpretation is, at its core it is the product of another mind. Adding to this, the interpretation is bound to be imbued with multiple unconscious layers of meaning for the analyst, analogous to the multiple unconscious meanings that the breast has for the mother. To take a few simple

examples, it may be something that he or she has said before, to other analysands, in other contexts. It may be something that he or she has heard before, in his or her own analysis. It may come out of personal reflections on his or her own history, and be charged with the emotional intensities of personal recollection. Because of all these extrinsic factors, not to mention the affective climate in the analysis out of which the intervention emerges, it may be charged with love or with hate. And the analyst may be either more or less aware of any of these emotional components of what he or she says. Seen from this perspective, whatever the analyst says—by its nature a confrontation with the mind of other—is inherently and inescapably traumatic. But the trauma is also the source of energy in the analysis because it requires both the analyst and the analysand to think, to try to assimilate and comprehend the nature of what is happening between them. Laplanche elegantly captured the paradox: the same experience that moves the analysis traumatizes the analysand. To this I would add that the analyst who can remain empathic while traumatizing the analysand appreciates the potentially disorganizing impact of his or her otherness, even when things are apparently going well.

To my eye, all of this decisively shapes the nature of the psychoanalytic situation, but the problems become more immediate and especially salient when we attempt to interpret action. As with finding meaning in parapraxes, interpreting action inevitably entails an assertion of otherness in a way that other sorts of meaning making may not. It is not coincidental that in the consultation I described it was an outsider who thought to raise the issue of the analyst not having asked questions. It is always harder to locate the impact of one's own participation, not to mention finding its meaning.

Let me reiterate that in saying this I am stressing aspects of the problem of interpreting action that are more clinical than metapsychological; that is, I am not taking a position on whether unsymbolized experience should be included in our conceptualization of the structure of the unconscious. The metapsychology may, in fact, mask the complexities of finding a facilitative interpretive stance in the face of the unrelenting pressure of action—our analysands' and our own. But illuminating the benefits and the pitfalls of interpreting action will certainly sensitize us to

the delicately balanced relationship that we struggle to create and maintain within each unique analytic dyad.

With these considerations in mind, let me describe a clinical moment that captures what I hope to accomplish when I am feeling my way to the interpretation of an action that is unfolding within a moment in an analysis; it is a moment that illustrates both the complexity and the potential involved in the analysis of action.

While I am in session with my first patient of the day, my second patient, Barbara, arrives, and I buzz her into my waiting room. Barbara, a single woman in her early sixties, is twenty minutes early for her session, which is typical for her except for those times when she is quite late or when she misses a session entirely because she has overslept, or woken up feeling sick, or has gotten delayed on the New York City subway. During the twenty minutes, Barbara coughs loudly and frequently, diverting my attention from the analysand I am with to her own obvious discomfort. I find myself annoyed by this—annoyed with Barbara for causing the distraction, and annoyed with myself for not having been careful enough to create an office that has adequate sound barriers. Let me add, accurately and I hope not too defensively, that I have been in the office for thirty years and that this kind of disturbance has never been a problem before.

When I open the door to the waiting room to invite Barbara in, she is coughing. She spends the first several minutes of her session anxiously apologizing for what she imagines must have been disruptive. I don't respond to this, and after a while Barbara calms down and begins to talk about events in her life that have been preoccupying her. Her older brother has been extremely ill and is in intensive care. He is depressed (as he has probably been for most of his life), and his failure to take care of himself adequately has contributed to what might well prove to be a fatal illness. Most urgent for Barbara today is that her brother's wife, preoccupied with the illness of her own father, is neglecting Barbara's brother. Barbara's sister-in-law visits irregularly at best and isn't particularly nice to her husband when she does show up.

This leaves Barbara with the responsibility of looking after her brother. He himself doesn't particularly appreciate her devotion; he more or less takes it for granted. But at least the doctors and nurses

notice. "He never looks so happy as when he hears your voice," they tell her. "It's always the best part of his day."

This story, as you might imagine, has often been told, in many iterations that constitute variations on a theme. Her brother's family is a mess—has been for years—and he and the children look to Barbara as a source of calm and stability. Most notable to me as Barbara is recounting her story is that since entering the consulting room, she has not coughed at all, not even once.

As Barbara continues to talk, I feel flooded by the action. It is all action—her assumption of a role in her brother's life and her embrace of his illness as an occasion to do so, her intrusion into the closed world of my session with the previous patient, the way her need to cough vanishes once I welcome her in, the repeated apologies that appear to taunt me with her violent appropriation of my attention while disavowing any wish to do so. Whether I look into or outside the immediacy of the transference, I find only action.

But, typical of action, words, whether clarifying or transformative or responsive in some other way, are hard to come by. This is at the core of our problem, clearly illustrated by what is playing out between me and Barbara. The action is encapsulated within a sense of self that is both fierce and fragile; both the ferocity and the fragility push back against any attempts to understand or even to verbalize what is going on. Her brother *needs* somebody, over the years his kids have *needed* a loving adult presence, she *needs* to cough, she regrets terribly any inconvenience that her coughing may have caused me and my previous analysand.

These needs are a poignant counterpoint to my annoyance, my feeling that I have been imposed on first by Barbara's coughing, and then by her apologies. These feelings are actions of my own, and I worry that speaking from them, however gently I might do so, risks imposing my otherness on her with an intensity that could be traumatic. And there is an undeniable history of trauma in Barbara's life; I don't think the details are particularly illuminating for my purpose in this essay, but certainly the relationship between trauma and what cannot be symbolized is central to the problem of analyzing action.

So I remain silent, listening to Barbara's account of the events at the hospital. But as the session goes on, things take a peculiar although not

uncharacteristic turn. She is telling me about her sister-in-law's neglect, describing a recent evening in which the sister-in-law came to the hospital but was cranky and stayed for only a short time, and she ends the account with "Do you understand?" She goes on to mention a comment in which her nephew disparaged his mother, again appending "Do you understand?" to the description. She does this fairly frequently, but today—in the context of all that is happening—it strikes me in a new way.

Typically, I have experienced the question as self-justifying, self-exculpating, ultimately as attempting to abrogate my otherness. Today, in contrast, it strikes me as a reiteration of her coughing in the waiting room; it lets me know that her stories, although expressed in words, do not constitute ideas for her to think about. Rather, they are disembodied bits of herself that she is forcing into me, thus creating a fantasied relationship. On the surface, this means constituting me as somebody who understands her, but of course there is a great deal more.

This is the action dimension of what is happening between Barbara and me. To make a very long story very short, in this moment I have put words to something that I have known wordlessly for a long time, that she is trying to marry me to her stories in a way that is analogous to her attempt to marry herself to her brother's illness and to become the mother of his children. As she resents and loathes her brother's marriage, so she resents my time with another patient and ultimately my relationship with the contents of my own mind. This recalls my thoughts earlier in the session that I have failed to provide adequate soundproofing in my office—i.e., that I haven't created a space that is safe for thinking. More deeply this reflects my annoyance with myself for not having adequately preserved an analytic space within my mind in response to Barbara's intrusions; it leaves me with the thought that I have colluded with her attempts to marry me and have not preserved enough of my own separateness and integrity to symbolize what Barbara cannot.

This movement in my countertransference leaves me able to form ideas that describe the action, so at this point I feel that I have something to say, something that will begin to clarify what is being enacted and that can advance the work of analysis. However, I feel that what I have to offer is still well outside Barbara's symbolic discourse—the idea is mine, after all, and it originates in my experience of myself as Barbara's object. But I

also believe that it is close enough to what she is capable of experiencing that it will not be the kind of shock or attack that an interpretation would have been earlier in the session.

> "You seem to be more interested in what I am thinking than in what you are thinking," I say.

Even this is a bit beyond what Barbara can comfortably assimilate, because it emphasizes what Barbara is *doing* rather than what she is *saying*, and she bristles. "I just want you to understand that I have to be there for him, because Fiona (her sister-in-law) is just so self-absorbed."

> "And if I didn't get that?" I ask.

> "I would feel you wouldn't realize that I *have* to be there to take care of him."

"So then I might think that you *want* to be there with him," I say. In pointing to this, I have decided that, at least temporarily, the action is best pursued outside the transference. Her coughing—the expression in action of her wanting to disrupt my relationship with my previous patient and to take her place beside me—sets the tone of the session. It informs my sensibility throughout the session, but it is still very far from what she finds acceptable enough to be spoken about except indirectly.

> "I wish I didn't have to be there," Barbara responds testily.

> "I wonder," I say. "You certainly feel great when the nurses say how nobody makes your brother as happy as you do. It's like when you were a kid and felt so proud when he would take you for rides around the neighborhood in his car."

> "You know, when I first decided to try analysis Harriet (a therapist friend of hers who was instrumental in persuading her to enter treatment and who referred her to me) said 'Your mother's the main problem, of course, but you're also going to have to deal with your brother in treatment.'"

This is the first I have heard of Harriet's comment, and I have the thought that Barbara is moving toward including her desire in her discourse. The action within the transference still seems out of reach, but I

see a chance of bringing desire—which until now has been expressed only in action—into our conversation.

> "He was a pretty charismatic character," I say. This is a provocative comment; when he was healthy, Barbara presented her brother as mean-spirited and self-absorbed; since his illness, he has been described as depressed, miserably dependent, even passively suicidal.
>
> "Even now, he's almost seventy years old, he's always got a lot of young girls around him. It's embarrassing to me and to his kids, an old man with all those girls."

Echoes of the transference, forcing me to attend to her while I'm basking in the admiration of another patient. Expressed in words now, not instead of but alongside of the action—talked about indirectly and in displacement but talked about nonetheless. The action has informed the session even though its meaning has been disavowed; it has sensitized me to a moment when it would be useful for me to intervene and has suggested an interpretive direction. But the action itself has not been directly engaged, especially as it has played out in the transference (and, I should add, in the countertransference). Doing so, I believe, would have been too shocking to be useful; the shock would come not only from exposing her desire for me but from what it would reveal about what I—her object but also an outsider with a mind of my own—am thinking about what she is *doing*. But waiting for the patient to be able to put what she has done into words would be to close my eyes to the unconscious meaning of undertaking the action in the first place.

Even as analysts increasingly attend to the expression of unsymbolized proto-experience, this sort of disavowal of action is not uncommon. I would suggest, in fact, that it is an unavoidable and perhaps even necessary dimension of every analytic encounter. Knowing another person requires a continuous oscillation between empathic understanding and observation from a perspective possible only for an outsider, an oscillation between what Racker (1957) called concordant and complementary identifications. Because interpreting action inevitably reveals us as "other" to our analysands, it always comes as something of a shock, and for some analysands it can be traumatic. The course we follow is risky and delicate,

but when we embrace our shifting role and seek to find a middle way, we have the best chance of working with our analysands to find meaning in their acts.

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# Awakening to and from the Traumatic Lacuna

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# AWAKENING TO AND FROM THE TRAUMATIC LACUNA

BY DANA AMIR

*This paper presents a close reading of testimonies of Holocaust survivors. This close reading approaches the ways in which traumatic language breaks its own rules and generates a syntactic lacuna, opening up an abyss in the structure of the sentence. While analyzing these texts, the paper will give special attention to breakdowns in language, assuming that this is the witnesses' way of inserting an experience of ambiguity into the ostensibly coherent flow of speech.*

**Keywords:** Trauma, testimony, witness, language, lacuna.

The psychoanalytic literature on trauma refers extensively to the major role of the other in bearing witness to a trauma the victim often has not, and could not have, witnessed himself or herself. Authors from various theoretical fields (Laub and Auerhahn 1993; Oliner 1996) describe trauma as something that has taken place "over there, far away," an event that does not belong to the experiencing "I." Trauma is often conceptualized as an external event, detached from the narrator who experienced it. Survivors of trauma claim that they live in two worlds: the world of their traumatic memories (a kind of everlasting present) and the real world (the concrete present). Usually they neither wish nor are able to integrate these two worlds. As a result, the traumatic memory is preserved frozen and timeless, and psychic movement becomes automatic, aimless and senseless (Laub 2005; Amir 2012).

Trauma is not only an experience but also the failure to experience that experience: not merely the threat itself, but the fact that the threat

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was recognized as such only a moment too late. As it was not experienced in time, the event is condemned not to be fully known (Caruth 1996, p. 62). As such, it returns to claim its presence, trying to cover an experiential void through compulsive repetition. At the heart of the traumatic experience there is an experience of excess that escapes representation and leaves a lacuna within consciousness (LaCapra 2001).

Van der Kolk, McFarlane, and Weisaeth (1996, pp. 282, 296) argue that while terrifying events may be remembered extremely vividly, they may equally resist any kind of integration. These memories remain powerful but frozen, untransformable by either circumstantial processes or the passing of time. They are subject to neither assimilation nor developmental change, since they are not integrated into the associative network. As a result, they remain concealed, retaining their magnetic force in their detailed and contradictory clarity, in the condensed vagueness that envelops them. Rather than undergoing the transformation that leads to a personal narrative, traumatic experiences are imprinted as primary impressions that do not receive verbal representation (pp. 282, 296). As Modell (2006) suggests, trauma tends to freeze the past and therefore "deprives it of the plasticity it needs if it is to connect to the present" (Stern 2012, p. 56). Memories of trauma are not only rigid and concrete but unmentalized. As such, they remain "things-in-themselves," neither adaptable nor generative (p. 56).

In her book *Ces parents qui vivent à travers moi*, 2010 (*The Parents Who Live Through Me*), Gampel describes the permanent coexistence, typical of Holocaust survivors and other victims of collective violence, of two "background images": one is a "background of security" and the other is a "background of the uncanny." According to Gampel, children whose parents died in the Holocaust witnessed the sudden erasure—physical as well as emotional—of their parents and were often left with alienated parental figures, frozen and lifeless. As a result, "a background of the uncanny" emerged (Gampel 1999, p. 15). From that point on, this background is the receptacle of all loss and functions, simultaneously, as its means of denial, likely to express itself in the form of psychic holes. Gerson (2009) refers to this as the "dead third":

> The "dead third" is conceptualized as the loss of a "live third" upon whom the individual had previously relied, had entrusted with faith, and in relation to whom or which, had developed a sense of personal continuity and meaning. In this regard, the third—again, whether person, relationship, or institution—serves the elemental function of solidifying an individual's sense of person, place, and purpose. [ . . . ] Under such circumstances, the living thirds in which the person was nested now become a nest of dead thirds from which he or she cannot escape. [p. 1343]

In his *Remnants of Auschwitz* (2002), Agamben mentions that there are two Latin words for the English word *witness*. The first of these is *testis*, whose etymology points at one who puts himself in the position of the mediator or arbitrator, the third party in a conflict between two sides. The other word is *superstes*, the one who having experienced something to its ultimate end can testify to it. Based on the movement between the first and the third person of experience, the function of the inner witness (Amir 2012, 2014) encapsulates both these meanings. In fact, it refers to the ability to shift between being a *superstes*—who has undergone the full experience—and being a *testis*, who mediates between the ultimate experience and language. Testimony is always the attempt to bear witness to something that failed to be registered as it happened, and its modalities represent various types of awakening to this failure.

The following section focuses on two testimonial texts taken years after the war from Holocaust survivors who had been children during the events.[1] The texts demonstrate these various modalities of awakening to and from the traumatic lacuna and their expressions in language.

T, born in 1932, begins her testimony by telling about the separation from her parents when handed over to a Christian family:

> At night then when a woman came suddenly whom I didn't know, it was supposed to be . . . . And I don't recollect how I said goodbye but I remember I must have had a fight with my father because he wanted me to put on a coat or something like that and I remember that I must have perhaps left crying, certainly not with a good feeling, but on the other hand this whole thing

[1] These testimonies are from the Ray D. Wolf Centre for Study of Psychological Stress, University of Haifa, Israel. Ellipses without brackets are in the original text.

> was not exactly surprising, because they had prepared me, they talked to me about it beforehand that this was going to happen.

One observes here the traumatic oscillations between knowing and not-knowing (Wiseman and Barber 2008). Though she was prepared for the coming separation, the girl does not know how she took leave. Faintly, she remembers an argument that was disproportionate to such a charged moment (her father died of typhoid shortly after in a labor camp and she never saw him again), she remembers leaving in tears, but she cannot put a finger on the emotional experience of separation:

> I remember how my mother put something around my neck, she put something around my neck, and it seems there were valuable things inside it, maybe rings, maybe things like that, jewelry, in the little bag, maybe cookies, maybe things I loved, I remember having a little bag and this little bag disappeared later on, disappeared, it wasn't with me anymore.

The little bag symbolizes the hole in which everything the girl tried to preserve was lost. Here we face the lacuna related to the moment when the most important event vanishes into a void that fails to preserve or collect it. Further manifestations of this lacuna are related to the form, and not just the content, of reconstruction:

> When we got to that work place, where the Jews worked, the women, she handed me on, someone took me, don't remember who, a woman, and I couldn't get to my mother [ . . . ] And they took me, and either they first bribed the guards, or they said "Listen we'll hold you on both sides, we'll lift you a little and you'll look taller and you'll look as though you were part of the work team and you'll enter the camp through the gate." And that's how it was [ . . . ] So there, that's the question, what I remember.

The language of this testimony gropes after the event rather than describes it: "and either they first bribed . . . or they said." The narrator herself, that is, does not recollect whether they bribed the guards to smuggle her into the camp or they made her look taller, or perhaps it was both. She does not know whether what she describes is reality—or whether it is her own attempt to impose a logical narrative on this arbitrary chronology. Often, throughout her testimonial text, the language she uses is a

reconstructive-deconstructive one in the sense that she constructs her memory from hindsight while constantly doubting it: "To what extent can I repeat today that I remember it this way without relying too much on my diary?"

T is preoccupied by the attempt to distinguish between the memories that she wrote in her diary and the living memories, and she often doubts the emotional vitality of her recollections that seem like a repetition of what she noted down rather than a real vivid recollection. This, too, is a lacuna: one that spreads between what a person has been told, or even what she herself had documented, and the living experience she went through. Witnessing narratives often collapse into familiar, worn narratives. What is dropped out of these narratives is what was not registered, it would seem, at the very moment of the happening, and therefore cannot be revisited.

This is the case with the following recollection:

> They got us out of the shed and the Germans they told us to march in line and when we passed through the light I saw, there, near the latrines a boy, a friend of mine, he was lying there, injured, dying, and more injured or dying people, and they were begging for help. I didn't know what, no one, us they were taking out in rows and I think it got wiped out, I think I am relying a lot on what I wrote, today, when I try to connect to these images I think I [*sic*] a great deal was wiped out.

Both form and subject matter here reveal the lacuna from which this account emerges: In formal terms, especially conspicuous is the syntactic fragmentation ("I didn't know what, no one," "I think I [*sic*] a great deal was wiped out"). In terms of its subject matter, the paragraph tells about a memory that has been robbed, in effect, of its status as memory. This is not because the details it describes did not actually happen but because the narrator herself does not remember them in a vital manner. The inability to remember in a vital manner indicates her position as the very event was taking place: the position of one who witnesses something to which she cannot bear witness. Her gaze was turned, at one and the same time, toward the dying boy and away from him, just like it was turned, simultaneously, toward her registering consciousness and away from it.

Hence this is not a memory that grew remote but one that was never fully registered (Amir 2016).

Such a mode of memory-less memory is also manifested here:

> Now they did not allow us either food or drink, I don't think they allowed us to get off the carriage at all, today I am not connected to this recollection. I mean, I think I might remember more from my diary, but I am unable to get linked up to these images of that time, that's what I find strange, because it's rather traumatic, very traumatic. Now when I was thirty I went for treatment with some psychiatrist and there were some rather tough week or two when I was tottering between reality, whether to keep close to reality or to get myself checked into a psychiatric hospital [ . . . ] Now why do I say traumatic, because there was this bit, during my treatment [ . . . ], when I was at home, I felt, I went with my husband, that I have to eat, I must eat and I remember telling him in a very hysterical way, and I felt that if I wouldn't eat that very instant, I would die as it were. Today I try to think, to make connections, could I have re-lived it then, during that treatment? At the time, he stopped at some kiosk and bought me a bagel and with that bagel I got to the psychiatrist and it was as though I filled some terrible hole in my stomach. But that was here, when I was thirty, when there was enough food, so I could not have felt such hunger. I think it was related to [ . . . ] Because three days without food?

It is the gulf between the traumatic intensity of the events (hunger, people who suffocate and die from overcrowding and then are thrown out of the carriage) and the lacuna related to the inability to experience the horror when it happened that is responsible for triggering the bodily experience of acute hunger many years later. What was not registered at the moment itself left its mark in the course of the years until it found—probably also thanks to the protective conditions of the psychiatric treatment—the strength to break out irrepressibly.

> At certain points in life they would ask me, when I came to Israel, when I still was a girl, and also later when I was a young woman—How come you survived? How come you survived? And that got me wondering too and I started to check why, actually, did I survive and to evolve all kinds of theories about why I survived. And

> to this very day, there is no sure answer, but rather all kinds of historical events in whose light I can understand why I survived. So I don't know what to stick to [ . . . ].

The traumatic nature of survival, writes Caruth (1996), is related to the fact that it is experienced as arbitrary, and thus as meaningless and bearing no relation to the survivors themselves. This awakening itself involves a traumatic effect, one that embraces both the missed encounter with the catastrophe and the incomprehensibility of survival. T's attempt to reclaim her survival passes through the "big history" (in T's words: "all kinds of historical events in whose light I can understand why I survived"), but remains sterile in terms of her personal biography. She does not know why she was saved. This is not because she fails to reproduce the chain of concrete events leading up to it but because she has no access to the deep meaning of her being saved. The arbitrary nature of her survival, much like that of the trauma itself, together amount to an attack on the ability to feel protected in a world whose events may be interpreted and predicted. It is no coincidence that language keeps breaking down wherever she touches on moments that cannot be conveyed or understood. This is what happens when she tells about the moment when they brought her to the crematorium where, eventually, the taps yielded water instead of gas:

> I know that I first entered a sauna and next the crematorium. In the diary it says, what I remember, that they walked us there, today I don't even really remember how it was that water came out, rather than gas as it were [ . . . ] I don't remember. I remember what happened later, facts. Now that you mention it, I think I'm, in a way . . . that feelings, apparently, about everything related to the atrocities, that they died, if it's something that is possible, or maybe I repressed it way down and it's better not taken out of there. When you ask what I felt, what I do remember is for instance, a sad story, is that they left some for me some sock [*sic*], that they put a dress on me, with a small checkered pattern, I must have been given some black and white skirt, because later from that skirt I sewed a bra for my big sister [ . . . ] I don't remember the way we left the sauna [ . . . ].

The testimony addressing the moment of near death in fact breaks up twice over: once, in its language, which becomes fragmented, consisting of half sentences, conveying bits of information that are put into doubt immediately by means of the statement "I don't remember"; and a second time when the traumatic memory is covered up by another fragmented memory, that of the sock and the dress (skirt?) in which they put her, a memory that serves to bypass the memory that cannot be remembered, a sort of bridge over the traumatic abyss: "And I don't remember when they did this, I should remember it. I don't even know at which stage in life I decided that I don't remember, I don't want to know this."

At this point the tape recording ends, and it seems to have taken some time to start a new tape. When the interview resumes, T asks: "I am still in Auschwitz, right?" To testify, for her, is not "to talk about Auschwitz" but "to be in Auschwitz." This is why her language grows more fragmented and truncated as she enters her memories more deeply. This is the broken language of a child who understands what is going on only partially, only in unconnected segments:

> There are two people who stayed with me, stuck, and don't ask what I felt, don't ask me. I remember on the road [during the death march] someone who was squashed because they had trampled him, I think they squashed him, because it was hundreds, hundreds, thousands of people who were walking, squashed, because his face, as I saw it, was like a fish, something like that. A fish is, fish is something kind of squashed, flattened, that's the word, he was totally flattened, maybe it was a woman, something flat. Because they walked over it. That left an impression on me. And another thing we are walking and some canal [ . . . ], I remember water there, there was some figure with his entrails oozing out, and crying, yelling. That's it.

"And those who were on the sides of the road, that wasn't all that impressive," she says elsewhere in her testimony about the people on the death march who collapsed in exhaustion. But "these two people, the one still because of that flat [*sic*], the second because of his entrails coming out, that was something." Creating a hierarchy is one way of safeguarding the ability to think. In the absence of the capacity to make a hierarchy, to constitute differences, to put things into categories—thinking cannot

occur. In the face of the uncontainable atrocity this child's mind fights for the ability to think, a struggle reflected in the attempt to hierarchically "organize" the horror. This is why she doesn't remember what she felt yet knows very well what "impressed" her in the catastrophic spectacle on the roadside. Hierarchical ordering here is not a form of distraction. It is her desperate struggle to preserve consciousness in the face of what is beyond the ability of this consciousness to contain (Amir 2016). At some point she loses her mother for a while:

> My mother wasn't there. And I know I cried a lot, I was inconsolable [ . . . ] I lost my mother and that was the end of the story. I didn't want to go on living, it was clear to me. And I don't know, in the morning, perhaps, I went down to pee, God knows what, or resourcefulness, resourcefulness that was quite something, I walked along the orchard and all of a sudden I see my mother.
>
> [ . . . ] and we found one another and she took me to her carriage, which is where my sister was too. And then she warmed my legs, she took my foot and put my foot, my feet between her breasts and she warmed my legs. That's it. From the moment I found my mother everything else became unimportant, to be with my mother was the most important thing.

"To be with my mother" goes beyond the girl's obvious wish to be close to her mother. "Mother" is the very representation of the good object that when annihilated, as Laub (2005) suggests, releases the by-products of the death drive that the proximity to it neutralizes. Maintaining closeness to the concrete good object allows this girl to preserve a representation of a good object within, one that attenuates the representations of cruelty and evil, one that preserves her ability to conduct an imaginary or concrete dialogue with an other, to maintain, that is, a reflective position that transcends the extreme helplessness and makes it possible to transform its excess.

When the interviewer asks T about her fears she replies: "Now I have no fears, I have anxieties of a different type, no physical fear. [ . . . ] I do have fears but they're of a very different kind, things that are much less defined and not so conscious. They're vague." This distinction between fears and vague anxieties is fundamental to the understanding of the

traumatic lacuna. Since the most formative memory is not of the kind that is registered and erased, or remembered and repressed, but one that cannot be registered even as it occurs, the associated fears cannot undergo regular processes of condensation, denial, repression, or displacement. They rather go on murmuring in consciousness as free-floating, vague derivatives of the empty lacuna, gaining neither meaning nor sensory representation. It can be said that they carry something of the qualities of the lacuna itself: a vague sense of absence instead of presence. One may refer here to Green's (1999) "blank anxiety" as opposed to "red anxiety" (related to injury, destruction, i.e., derivatives of oedipal castration anxiety). This anxiety is marked not by the presence of a horror-inducing object but by the empty space that marks the place in which the latter should have been (Amir 2016).

T's testimonial text is the enactment of this empty space in language. It reports not through words but through the empty spaces between them; not through the links it generates but through their fragmentation. Even when this testimonial text includes explicit memories, they do not retrospectively absorb meaning but rather stay in the same crude mode in which they were captured in the first place. They serve not as an expression of a developed point of view but as a repetition of the moment in which the narrator herself has turned away.

A, born in 1934, was separated from her family when she was six:

> This silence inside . . . . First in the middle of the night and in the house, I didn't understand and I asked where my mother was. And my father said my mother felt unwell, she was taken to hospital, and while she was in hospital we would be with the women [two unfamiliar women the girl sees for the first time in their home], and when she would feel better we'd return home. And my big brother, he was already nearly 15, he was terribly sad. [ . . . ] And he gave me a book, to put in my pocket, or I don't know, I was holding it. He gave me a book.

A's testimonial narrative preserves the perspective of the little girl throughout, without "straying" to the adult viewpoint or to explanations with hindsight for the benefit of the listener. She takes the listener on a journey that fits the size of the girl she was, bringing to life the sense of disconnection, fragmentation, helplessness, and horror she herself

experienced at the time. The book her brother put into her hands, the book that, she repeats twice, he gave her, is not just a kind of "transitional object" (Winnicott 1971). It serves as a thread connecting the first part of her childhood narrative and the other part that is about to start now. This thread is so crucial to her because reality after the rupture, which began that night when she was taken to an unknown institution, is characterized by an attack on any ability to link between what happens from now on and her previous life:

> I'm given a chain with an identity number and I ask where I am, I ask the nurse where I am. (sighs) It's hard. She tells me I am an abandoned girl, she tells me I am an abandoned girl, and I don't know what that is. And then she senses I don't know what that is, and then she explains very thoroughly and says that I will never see, neither my father nor my mother, and I ask "And where are my little brother and sister?" and she says my siblings, too, I won't see. I am an abandoned child, my father and mother don't want me anymore and that's it. The shock I felt I cannot . . . . It's hard for me to understand what happened to me. It's clear that I was shocked but I cannot put any feeling to that word. It's as though it wasn't me. As though it wasn't, it was a mistake, it wasn't me.

So the rupture is not merely what cuts between life as it was and as it will be from now on. It is the total breakdown of biographical and emotional continuity. The girl has not only been robbed of her previous life, in her family, with her parents; she has also been deprived of the ability to render meaningful the terrible loss she experiences. The statement "I am an abandoned girl" erases not only the future ("that I will never see, neither my father nor my mother") but also the past. It is a statement that perpetrates an all-out and cruel attack against this girl's ability to keep a sense of sanity, actually creating a psychotic reality in which whatever has been so far loses its truth value, becoming instead a kind of lie or fiction in a way that makes it hard for her to distinguish between reality and dream and between hers and not hers ("It's as though it wasn't me").

> I remember I started reading in the book and they came to take the book away. That is to say, now I have nothing. I no longer have my clothes, I no longer have my book, I have nothing. I,

> simply, as I say, and I don't think I am mistaken, I am no longer me. It's really no longer me.

Meanwhile this girl conducts a terrifying struggle against this alienation, taking a position by the door to the dormitory for hours on end to catch sight of her small brother and sister from whom she was separated:

> And I stood at the door to see whether I could see my brother and sister, ... and that's how I stood near the wall without budging but I saw nothing. For how long I stayed there I don't remember. I feel it was a long long long time. Many days, maybe many weeks, maybe many months, I don't remember, just a feeling of it being a long long long time.

A's testimonial narrative does not adjust itself to her retrospective knowledge that this first separation from her siblings lasted only five days. The time of trauma is experienced as an eternal present, unchanging, with neither a link to a past nor a connection to a future. Stern (2004), along with Modell, introduced the concepts of kairos and chronos into the psychoanalytic thinking. While *kairos* is the Greek term for human cyclical, nonlinear time, the kind of time that can turn back on itself in ways that allow meanings to change and grow, *chronos* is the "scientific" or objective, linear time, which does not allow the future to affect the past.

> Unless meaning is embedded in kairos—that is, unless experience can move freely between the past, present, and future—new meaning cannot come into being .... In kairos, we circle back on our histories in ways that are routinely nonlinear and cyclical, and sometimes also capacious, endless, and oceanic. It is precisely this embeddedness in the fertile ground of kairos that trauma steals from us. [Stern 2012, p. 57]

In other words, the time of trauma is neither kairos nor chronos. It is circular in a noncreative way. It lacks both its simple, objective, common linearity and its oceanic fertility. This alienated aspect of time is a central component of the uncanniness that is so typical of the traumatic experience. In A's testimony such an uncanny moment of encounter occurs when she does not recognize her siblings after she finally meets with them:

> The cart is empty and the women who are with us tell the younger children to sit in the cart, and she tells me to look after the children, they have to deal with the tickets, I don't know. [ . . . ] And all the children start to cry. All of them. And I don't know what to do. And I face the children and tell them not to cry and not to cry and suddenly I see a boy (sighs) who isn't crying. He doesn't cry. He looks at me with a frightening expression, big eyes, a frightening expression, and I look, look (sighs) and I say "K" [her little brother's name] and he responds with a look "I don't understand" and I see it is K. He knows his name. Because I feel he responds to me, to that name. [ . . . ] And I say "K.," and I say, look at that child, he isn't crying, he isn't crying. And I approach him and I want to take him, and he sits and suddenly I see another girl who doesn't cry, and I look and look, and I need a very long time to know that I am not wrong and I say "N." [her little sister's name], and N. responds to her name, with her eyes. And I know that I have been waiting so long, I was on the same minivan with them, I looked at all the children and I did not recognize them.

This is an appalling moment. The brother and sister she was looking for all that time appeared before her very eyes and she did not recognize them. She failed to identify them not because they had physically changed (as said, she was separated from them for only five days) but because they belonged in the world before the rupture, a world from which her present is severed not merely in terms of place and time but also in terms of meaning. Like her, they, too, did not recognize her (although the fact that they were the only two children who didn't cry implies that they somehow identified her as their older sister, even if not consciously). They stared at her as though they'd seen a ghost, and she, too, experienced them like two little ghosts, half belonging to the present world, half to the one that was lost. This is the experience of the uncanny at its most intense: where the familiar and the alien are welded together, creating a terrifying, disastrous ambiguity.

A few moments after reuniting, the children are once more divided:

> The suffering a child might undergo because it is not strong and has no protection, it cannot do anything and all I wanted was to hold them and protect them [ . . . ] and that was for me, I think,

> there is no word to explain that suffering. It is suffering, it is a huge cry that is stifled in the throat and cannot get out and it is also a pain in the stomach, there's no right word to explain. It's the worst I experienced in my life, when my brother and sister left me. I watched them as they left, until I saw that tiny spot and they were gone. [ . . . ] I thought, worse than that, nothing [*sic*], it cannot get.

Their second disappearance, after she already found them, was even more traumatic than the first. It was the silent, terrible confirmation of the fact that there was no end to the catastrophe, and in that sense it not only was taking place now but would go on forever. When concepts of time and space are blurred, the experience is that everything that happened is about to take place at any moment (Fink 1989).

Throughout the years she spent in the village with her adoptive family who raised her as an "abandoned child" without knowing anything about her and while she herself didn't know anything about this being only a cover story, A, who read books from age four, understood nothing of what she was taught at school and inexplicably and consistently failed in all subjects:

> And I go on going to school, while I understand nothing, I kept getting zero, zero, zero, and only in church I feel well. In church I learn everything. I understand everything and I go on hating Jews. And in this way three and a half years went by. That's a lot of time. Three and a half years is a huge amount of time to learn and understand nothing, like you don't learn anything and to go to church and to think about what the Jews did to Jesus. I mean, with me everything is the other way around. Instead of thinking that the Jews were wretched, for me it was all the other way around, to think about the Jews that killed a small child, I don't think about the adult, I only think about the child, I find it terribly hard. Three and a half years passed and the war ended. [ . . . ] When I returned to F. [her hometown] everything came back [i.e., her capacity to learn]. Everything apparently went on without me noticing, but I was unable to answer questions, I couldn't take tests, all I wanted was to read, only to read, but I had no books.

To survive, A. had to adopt the narrative that was imposed on her from outside, a narrative according to which her parents abandoned

her. She consciously takes in this narrative while constantly and unconsciously murmuring the opposite narrative for which she struggles inside. Hence she has to cope with an ongoing clash and ambiguity that cause an arbitrary tear in her identity narrative. This tear attacks her ability to think and thereby prevents her from learning and internalizing any new material. Underlying the ambiguous psychotic narrative there is a constant prohibition to think and to know (Amir 2010, 2014). This prohibition concerns not only the one thought she is not allowed to think ("I am a Jew") but along with it every other thought that might remind her of that thought or somehow connect to it. This is how the prohibition on a thought transforms into a comprehensive prohibition on thinking.

Especially interesting in the context of this testimonial text is the report that the desire to read is the only area in which her curiosity remains intact. Perhaps it was related to the fact that the last thread connecting her to the "previous world" was the book that her brother had given her when they parted. Reading, in that sense, may have connected her unconsciously to what her conscious mind was forbidden to connect to. Perhaps reading also pulled her away from the concrete reality that subjects she constantly failed, such as mathematics, physics, and geography, confronted her with. One can think of the general rules of perception and causality, represented by these subjects, as contradicting this girl's inner experience of a lack of any ability to understand the world in terms of sequence and meaning.

It comes as no surprise that she fears she might never grow up:

> The fear is because I cannot know more than I know when I don't understand what interests me, I am always at the same level so when I'll grow up I'll stay at the same [*sic*], like a girl, like a fool. Which means I'll never be an adult. I don't rise, I simply stay in the same place. When I'll be 30 or 40 years old, that's what I think, I'll be speaking at the same level, I won't know more.

The fear of not growing up is associated both with the frozen traumatic present and with the prohibition to gain access to the forbidden narrative, which in the case of this girl became translated into an injunction against any growth, emotional or intellectual. Interestingly and

shockingly, this prohibition on knowing is reproduced when she is found by her father at the end of the war:

> And when I wanted to tell my father, nevertheless, what happened in the village, he said "Be quiet, you should be grateful, you're alive." That's all I heard. And next he very quickly got married to a very young woman whose parents went to Auschwitz as well as her sister and her brother and all the pictures were up on the walls and they would say "You see, you see, that's what could have happened to you like them in the gas chambers, you must not tell." And I felt, because I felt so much hatred toward me, so I said Memer [the woman who took care of her in the village during the war] was right, the Jews are not nice, those Jews, I hate them, and I continued praying to Jesus at night. [ . . . ] My father only cared for one thing—to know what happened to his parents and his brothers and he knew there was no chance, as far as he had heard, that any of them would return. What about my story, he has no patience to listen [ . . . ] It's as though one isn't allowed to live. And so I wanted to die.

The prohibition on telling her story was experienced as a prohibition on life itself. She was found, but no one took an interest in her. Her story came full circle as it were when she was finally told that she was taken to the institution in an effort to rescue her, not to abandon her, but in fact, she was now abandoned for the second time into the ambiguous reality in which her father, who had struggled so hard to find her, turned out to be alienated from her, her siblings treated her as a stranger, and the people around her made her feel guilty for staying alive when so many others had perished. Again her ability to create a continuity of experience came under attack. This time the prohibition on thinking did not originate outside but inside the home. This prohibition constituted a second undermining of her ability to link, causing her to identify with the aggressor as a result: to identify with the hatred of Jews (who were now attacking her in the shape of her closest relatives) and with the wish to annihilate them—to the point of wishing to annihilate herself as well.

Many years later, married with two adolescent children, she decides to board a ship to Haifa. For her, this is an act of reparation:

> Four in the morning, it is very very cold, and we are in Haifa, in view of Mount Carmel, the sun, it's so hard for me to tell, is starting to rise. I look at the sky and the sun and I can't speak and I only think, I've got these thoughts racing fast through my head, you see, you're safe [ . . . ] And I think of my grandfather and grandmother whom I never knew, both my grandmothers, my mother, my aunt and cousin, all of whom perished in the gas chambers [ . . . ]. All of their faces come back to me and they are, as it were, with me [ . . . ].

Her insistence to move away from the traumatic zone allows her to restore the generational continuity ("All of their faces come back to me") and herself as part of it. For the first time since the age of six the traumatic temporality may be replaced with regular temporality, one that links the dimension of the past with that of the present, producing thereby the possibility of a future.

## DISCUSSION

Segal (1987), in her paper "Silence Is the Real Crime," writes that the atomic annihilation destroys the possibility of symbolic survival, unlike normal death or even death during a conventional war that preserves the symbolic idea of survival after and beyond one's concrete death (p. 7). In line with her ideas, the struggle for the creation of a testimonial narrative is not about the restoration of the concrete order but about the restoration of the symbolic order that had been destroyed.

The struggle of these witness-children is the struggle to gain entry into what Agamben (2002) calls "the archive of statements," without losing the link between what is stated and what cannot be uttered out loud. The act of testimony is always one of simultaneously capturing the event and losing hold of it, one of turning history into a personal narrative and of the collapse of that personal narrative into the historical unknown.

But counter to what one might expect, the traumatic lacuna is not silent. It has black hole–like qualities: it engulfs, it ensnarls, in its emptiness it is a sounding box for infernal voices. One might listen to this lacuna as one listens to the sounds coming from a seashell. Like the shell, the lacuna is a space saturated by the traces of what is not there; it is the

ultimate signifier of the encounter between the moment of missing the actual scream and the resonance that will forever range beyond it.

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# Shakespeare at Work: The Four Closet Scenes

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# SHAKESPEARE AT WORK: THE FOUR CLOSET SCENES

BY GEORGE MANDELBAUM

Hamlet *is the only Shakespeare play to have come down to us in three distinctly different versions. The three* Hamlets *(1603, 1604, 1623) embody different versions of the "closet scene," in which Hamlet kills Polonius and takes Gertrude to task for having married Claudius. Shakespeare wrote a fourth closet scene in the climactic* Othello *"death scene," which also depicts a man enraged at a woman to whom he is deeply attached and who he feels has betrayed him. This paper argues that as Shakespeare moved from version to version of the closet scene, he penetrated a defensive, wish-fulfilling fantasy as well as other defenses. He was then able to access and dramatically symbolize painful and powerful inner states as well as to create a lifelike, three-dimensional character in* Hamlet. *The process has implications about how Shakespeare worked.*

**Keywords:** Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, creativity, fantasy, symbolization, autoplastic and alloplastic, schema, defenses, alpha function.

## INTRODUCTION

Great plays do not seem to emerge fully developed from a playwright's mind like Athena springing from the head of Zeus. Rather, they seem to result from extended creative effort, sometimes carried out over many months or even years. When we attempt to understand such creativity in a

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modern playwright, we often have the various drafts of his plays and can thereby trace the movement from their initial to final form. That movement implies the changes that occurred in the playwright's mind as he or she worked on a play and suggests something about the underlying creative processes. Eugene O'Neill, for example, meticulously saved his initial written ideas for his plays, his scenarios for them, his notes to himself as he composed them, and their various written and typed versions. The various documents have become the basis for several studies of his creativity (Tinsley 1969; Floyd 1981; Barlow 1985; Mandelbaum 2015). Biographical data deepen such studies and make them more resonant, but are at times used very lightly (Barlow 1985) or not at all (e.g., Tinsley 1969). The changes to the various drafts of the plays in themselves suggest what might have been going through a playwright's mind as he or she composed them.

We cannot undertake such studies of Shakespeare, for we do not have the drafts of his plays that would illuminate the changes he made as he moved through their various forms. In some cases we have the quarto and folio versions of a play, and there have been astute studies of their relationship (e.g., Urkowitz 1980; Erne 2007), but such studies primarily address textual matters. The different published versions of a play do not differ enough to indicate much, if anything, about how Shakespeare might have worked.

It is also difficult, probably impossible, to undertake a study of Shakespeare's creativity through biographical analysis. Although we have contemporary references to him as well as legal documents relating to his life, we do not know enough about him to undertake much more than a highly speculative examination of that life or its relationship to his art. George Bernard Shaw famously quipped that "everything we know about Shakespeare can be put into a half-hour sketch" (quoted in Schoenbaum 1975, p. xi)—and then proceeded to summarize what we know in one short paragraph. Samuel Schoenbaum drolly noted that "Shaw wrote very concisely" (p. xi), but in his monumental history of Shakespeare biographies, he concluded that Shakespeare's plays stand on their own and are not illuminated by what little is actually known about him. "The notices of Shakespeare [i.e., the references to him while alive]," Schoenbaum declared, "fail to lay bare the wreathed trellis of his working brain" (1991,

pp. 4–5). In sum, we do not have the play documents or biographical data that might shed light on what is perhaps most intriguing about Shakespeare: the psychic processes through which he created his plays.

The one possible exception is *Hamlet*, "the only Shakespeare play to survive in three distinct versions" (Jolly 2014, p. 8). The three *Hamlets* contain three different versions of the Hamlet–Gertrude scene. In that scene—called a "closet scene" because it takes place in a private space, called a closet in Shakespeare's time—Hamlet kills Polonius and takes Gertrude to task for having married Claudius. The three closet scenes are probably Shakespeare's initial, subsequent, and later dramatic efforts to depict a highly charged mother–son relationship and perhaps dramatically to symbolize his own feelings about both of his parents. Sequentially created over a considerable period of time according to some scholars, the three scenes shed light on the artistic choices Shakespeare made as he reworked the scene and suggest some observations about his creativity.

Before the closet scenes can be discussed, I need to set the stage by briefly discussing the three texts. The three versions of *Hamlet* are termed Q1 (1603), Q2 (1604), and F (1623).[1] Q1 and Q2 were both published in quarto form. F appears in the great 1623 folio collection of Shakespeare's plays published seven years after his death at fifty-two.

Although many years separate Q2 from F, they are very similar, and the movement from the former to the latter involves relatively minor, albeit significant changes. Only a short period separates the publication of Q1 from Q2, but they are radically different. It is Shakespeare's psychic change as he advanced from Q1 to Q2—separated by one year in terms of publication but perhaps as many as thirteen or more years in terms of composition—that is at the heart of how he created what we know as *Hamlet* and of more general observations that could be made about the way he worked. Such observations are of particular importance in understanding other of Shakespeare's plays, for *Hamlet* is a watershed in the development of Shakespeare's dramaturgy. Q2 was followed by the other of his great tragedies—*Macbeth* (1603/1606?), *Othello* (1603/1604?), and *King*

[1] In this paper the dates for Q1, Q2 and F are the dates of publication. All other dates for Shakespeare's plays are the generally cited dates of composition with a slash between the possible earlier and later date.

*Lear* (1605/1606?). Psychoanalytic observations about the creation of *Hamlet* Q2 (and F) out of Q1 also help clarify important aspects of these tragedies.

## THE TEXTS

The remarkably odd Q1 is certainly *Hamlet*, but it is also certainly not the *Hamlet* we know. Q1 contains more or less the same characters and incidents of Q2, but Q1 differs radically in at least three significant ways. First, Q1 is only 55 percent as long as Q2. Second, the arrangement of scenes in Q1—its structure—is much simpler than the more complex Q2 arrangement. Finally and perhaps most interestingly, the Q1 closet scene and Hamlet–Gertrude relationship it depicts differ substantially from the ones in Q2. That relationship is also referred to in a Q1 scene between Horatio and Gertrude—a scene not found in either of the other versions.

Q2 differs substantially from Q1 in ways outlined above: Q2 is about 70 percent longer, has a more complex structure, and has a very different closet scene. Q2 is, however, very similar to F. One of the major differences is that Q2 contains some two hundred more lines than F and that twenty-seven of these extra lines are in the closet scene. In sum, the closet scene in Q1 differs substantially from the one in Q2; the closet scene in Q2 has twenty-seven lines not found in F; and the closet scene in F is missing those twenty-seven Q2 lines.

Although the odd Q1, the radically different Q2, and the very similar F were published sequentially, the order of their actual composition as well as how each relates to Shakespeare is controversial, and a review of the extensive scholarship on the texts (e.g., Duthie 1941; Urkowitz 1986; Foster 1991; Clayton 1992; Irace 1998; Erne 2003; Jolly 2014; Lesser 2015) lies outside the scope of this paper. It is perhaps sufficient to say that Q1 was unknown throughout the eighteenth and first quarter of the nineteenth century, and that when the first of two extant copies of it was first discovered in 1823 by Sir Henry Bunbury, it was viewed as Shakespeare's early version of the play that he then revised to create Q2.

Many modern Shakespeare scholars adhere to this revision theory. As the editor of a recent edition of Q1 observes: "To many the revision theory remains the most reasonable explanation for the special shape of Q1"

(Irace 1999, p. 2). I subscribe to the revision theory as well as to the argument of G. R. Hibbard (1987), editor of the Oxford *Hamlet*, that in F Shakespeare revised Q2—his earlier version of the play. This paper rests, then, on the belief that Shakespeare wrote the three *Hamlets* and therefore the three closet scenes in their order of publication.

The years of publication are not necessarily the dates of composition, which are uncertain. Jolly (2014) makes a compelling argument that Shakespeare probably wrote Q1 in 1587—when he would have been twenty-three years old. Q2 is generally believed to have been written around 1600, when Shakespeare was thirty-six and at the height of his power as a man of the theater—actor, playwright, and part owner of the Globe.

The three closet scenes are not the only ones Shakespeare wrote. He wrote a fourth within the *Othello* death scene, the scene in which Othello kills Desdemona and then himself. Despite the many differences among these four closet scenes, they have much in common. All four take place in a private space between a man and a woman to whom the man is deeply attached. All four depict the man as angry or enraged because he feels that the woman has betrayed him in some way. In the various *Hamlets* that state leads to multiple references to the possible murder of Gertrude; in *Othello*, to the actual murder of Desdemona. The closet scene in *Othello* helps shed light on the scenes in the various *Hamlets*.

The psychic process that I believe to be evident in Shakespeare's movement through the various versions of the closet scene is similar in many ways to the one that I described in O'Neill's twenty-one-month-long composition of *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1941) (Mandelbaum 2015). This is not meant to suggest that O'Neill was influenced by Shakespeare in composing *Journey* or that their minds were similar but that creative efforts in great drama sometimes seem to follow the same pattern. Within the pattern the playwright initially more or less directly dramatizes the derivative of a wish-fulfilling fantasy. He or she then detaches from the fantasy, accesses the psychic states that the fantasy wards off, and within the psychic space thereby created constructs lifelike characters. I have suggested that the pattern is similar in some ways to the psychoanalytic process itself (Mandelbaum 2015).

Like *Hamlet, Journey* went through three different versions. In the first, O'Neill—like, I believe, Shakespeare in Q1—directly dramatized the derivative of a wish-fulfilling fantasy in which he and his mother are closely aligned, in which she is always present for him and in which she belongs only to him. Edmund and his mother, Mary, are in the first version of *Journey* as tightly linked as Hamlet and Gertrude are in Q1. In the second version of *Journey*, O'Neill penetrated this defense, detached from the fantasy, and accessed the deep sense of loss that the fantasy warded off. In Q2, I propose, Shakespeare undertook a similar process, but he accessed the rage that the fantasy defended against. The results of these processes in the second and third version of *Journey*, I have argued, like the results in Q2 and F, were not the cartoon-like, two-dimensional characters enacting the derivative of the fantasy embodied in the initial version but autonomous, three-dimensional characters of enormous complexity.

I have proposed that a similar process is evident in Anton Chekhov's twenty-two-year-long, on-and-off reworking and transformation of a central scene that appears in almost all his plays, a scene based on a Russian translation of Shakespeare's F closet scene (Mandelbaum 2011). In the course of these revisions Chekhov detached from a fantasy very similar to the one evident in O'Neill and over two decades created a lifelike female character—a fully three-dimensional "Gertrude" figure. Chekhov's last version of Shakespeare's closet scene—the Lyubov–Trofimoff scene in the third act of *The Cherry Orchard*—has been called "one of the masterpieces of modern drama" (Valency 1968, p. 176). I have also suggested that the process evident in the works of Chekhov and O'Neill is not evident in the plays of Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's contemporary, or in the late plays of Tennessee Williams (Mandelbaum 2008, 2017). Jonson and Williams in his late plays appear unable to penetrate their fantasies or defenses and to access the psychic states that underpin their plays. As a result, the plays repeatedly dramatize the same kind of characters and interactions, and can be viewed as a form of acting out in an aesthetic context.

I wish to stress that my focus in this paper is not on Shakespeare's characters, all of whom I view as artistic constructs, but on Shakespeare. I also wish to note that I offer limited observations on him. I certainly do not mean to suggest that I have discovered the "psychoanalytic key" to Hamlet or to Shakespeare's unsurpassed mastery of the dramatic medium.

## THE FIRST QUARTO

The action in the Q1 closet scene follows the same sequence as the well-known one in Q2 and F. Shakespeare's initial version of the scene begins with Polonius—in Q1 called Corambis—hiding behind an arras. As in the later versions, Hamlet in Q1 enters, interacts with Gertrude, suddenly kills Polonius and then takes Gertrude to task for having married Claudius, at which point the ghost of Hamlet's father appears. The scene continues much as it does in the later versions, but for anyone familiar only with those versions the Q1 scene ends with a startling climax:

GERTRED: . . . as I have a soul, I swear by heaven,
I never knew of this most horrid murder [of Hamlet's father].
. . . . . .
HAMLET: O mother, if ever you did my dear father love,
Forebear the adulterous bed tonight
And win yourself by little as you may.
In time it may be you will loathe him quite.
And mother, but assist me in this revenge,
And in his [Claudius's] death your infamy shall die.
GERTRED: Hamlet, I vow by the majesty [i.e., God]
That knows our thoughts and looks into our hearts,
I will conceal, consent and do my best,
What stratagem so'er thou shalt devise.
HAMLET: It is enough. Mother, good night.
Come, sir [Polonius], I'll provide for you in a grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
*Exit Hamlet with the dead body* (1603, 11.83–101)

Unlike the closet scene in either of the later versions, this one ends with Gertrude firmly on Hamlet's side. And unlike the Gertrude in the later closet scenes, this Gertrude declares that she neither knew about nor participated in the murder of Hamlet's father, that she will assist Hamlet in whatever stratagem he has to avenge the murder and, by implication, that she will no longer sleep with Claudius.

The close, intensely loving relationship between Hamlet and Gertrude evident in this closet scene reappears in a later Q1 Horatio–Gertrude scene—a scene Shakespeare eliminated in Q2 and F. In the Q1

Horatio–Gertrude scene, which follows Hamlet's return from England, Horatio privately informs Gertrude that Claudius plotted to have Hamlet killed but that Hamlet escaped and is now back in Denmark. That news leads to the following exchange:

> GERTRED: Then I perceive there's treason in his [Claudius's] looks
> That seemed to sugar o'er his villainy.
> But I will soothe and please him [Claudius] for a time,
> For murderous minds are always jealous.
> But know not you, Horatio, where he [Hamlet] is?
> HORATIO: Yes, madam, and he hath appointed me
> To meet him on the east side of the city
> Tomorrow morning.
> GERTRED: O fail not, good Horatio,
> And withal, commend me a mother's care to him.
> Bid him a while be wary of his presence,
> Lest that he fail in that he goes about. (1603, 14.10–20)

The difference between the close Hamlet–Gertrude relationship in Shakespeare's first version of the play and the more detached and distanced relationship in the later versions has aroused the attention of a few, though not many, Shakespeare scholars. Jolly (2014), a proponent of the revision theory, argues, for example, that when authors use source material as the basis for a play, they hew closely to the source in the initial version and then feel free to depart from the source in subsequent revisions. Shakespeare, she argues, in depicting Gertrude on Hamlet's side in Q1 was following his source, François De Belleforest's *Histoire's Tragique* (1576), in which the mother promises to help her son to exact revenge. In the later versions of *Hamlet*, Jolly argues, Shakespeare felt free to depart from his source and establish more distance between mother and son.

Jolly's argument and others like it beg the question. As Bullough (1957–75) showed repeatedly in his *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, Shakespeare did not dramatize all the relationships or all the events in his sources, and he also crafted scenes not found in any source at all. He could then have chosen not to dramatize the source's depiction of the Hamlet–Gertrude relationship when he wrote the Q1 closet scene or the Horatio–Gertrude scene. The Hamlet–Gertrude relationship in

the two scenes is, moreover, something of a red herring leading nowhere and is unnecessary to the plot. Although many narratives in literature, drama, and film are initiated by a joining together of two characters who then carry out the narrative's action, that is not the case in Q1. Hamlet has no stratagem for revenge, nor does Gertrude join him in any stratagem. The Hamlet–Gertrude/Horatio–Gertrude scenes in Shakespeare's first version of *Hamlet* remain a puzzle.

The puzzle can be resolved, I propose, and a great deal else in Q1 can be illuminated, if we shift our focus from the characters to Shakespeare. One can interpret that when two close male or female friends appear in a narrative, they are often alter egos of each other—and at times of the author. They are one person divided in two, each containing attributes the other lacks. Such is the case with the explosive Hamlet and the restrained Horatio; they are each other's alter ego and each other's shadow. As Hamlet says when he first encounters Horatio in all three versions of the play, "(Horatio) or I much forget my self" (1603, 3.161). There would seem to be good reason, then, for a private scene between Hamlet and Gertrude as well as a private scene between Gertrude and Horatio, and there is good reason, moreover, why the same depiction of Gertrude's deep love for Hamlet is presented in each scene.

There is also good reason to believe that the Q1 Hamlet and Gertrude are transmutations of something existing in Shakespeare's inner life. As T. S. Eliot (1920) observed: "The creation of a work of art, we will say the creation of a character in a drama, consists in the process of transfusion of the personality, or, in a deeper sense, the life, of the author into the character" (p. 108). In the two Gertrude scenes in Q1, I propose, Shakespeare, like O'Neill in the first version of *Long Day's Journey into Night*, appears to tap into a derivative of his own fantasy about his mother. In that fantasy Shakespeare's mother, like Gertrude in relation to Hamlet, deeply loves only him, aligns herself only with him, and takes only his side.

To say that about Shakespeare is, unfortunately, not to say much at all. Many men love their mother, and many men also harbor a fantasy that their mother loves only them. Only one man, however, has written the F closet scene, and we want to know something about how he came to do so. We want to know more, then, about the transmutation involved in Shakespeare's movement from his initial effort to dramatize the derivative

of the fantasy that he is the apple of his mother's eye to his eventual creation of the closet scene in F.

Shakespeare's dramatization of the derivative of his fantasy about his mother in Q1 is from any point of view simplistic. The scene is an almost direct expression of that fantasy, and the fantasy as a result is transparent. Segal's (1957) observations on symbolization explains much of the scene's connection to the fantasy. As I have suggested elsewhere in discussing dramatic symbolization (Mandelbaum 2017), playwrights think through the dramatic medium; that medium is their symbolic language. When a play more or less directly expresses something of a playwright's inner life, I further suggested, then the play is what Segal termed a symbolic equivalent of that life. Full symbolization entails a neutralization and creative transformation of psychic material, and this we do not get in Q1. Instead, we get the fantasy's more or less direct dramatic equivalent.

The simplistic presentation of the mother fantasy in Q1 is also evident in the simplistic structure of its closet scene. That structure is illuminated through E. H. Gombrich's (1989) observations about schemata in art. Gombrich noted that when an artist creates a realistic painting, he begins with a schema, that is a preexisting pattern, and then modifies that pattern to fit the image he depicts. An artist who paints a face, for example, begins with a mental pictogram of an egg shape and modifies it in line with the actual face he sees.

The schema that underpins the Q1 closet scene is the schema of the "persuasion scene," found not only in Shakespeare's plays but throughout Western drama. In such a scene one character persuades another to believe or do something by evoking or activating something latent in the other. This activation then leads the other character to align with the persuader. Any resistance by the second character during the persuasion leads to an interaction between the two that culminates in change in the character being persuaded—or if the persuasion is unsuccessful, no change. Richard persuades Anne to marry him by depicting the important position she will have as his wife and the mother of his children, that is, by evoking her "womanly vanity" (*Richard III*, 1592/1593?, 1.2). Lady Macbeth persuades Macbeth to go through with the murder of Duncan by evoking his sense of manhood (*Macbeth*, 1603/1606?, 1.7). Volumnia

persuades Coriolanus not to attack Rome by evoking his sense of honor and his love of Rome (*Coriolanus*, 1608/1609?, 5.3.).

In the Q1 closet scene Hamlet persuades Gertrude to align herself with him in two clearly defined, albeit at times overlapping, steps. The first can be thought of as the initial, outer layer of the persuasion; the second, the inner one. Hamlet first gives Gertrude information she does not know, namely, that Claudius murdered her husband. He hammers home this information three different times in three different ways towards the beginning of the scene. The first time is in response to Gertrude's reaction to his killing of Polonius: "Hamlet, what has thou done?" His response broaches the fact of the murder: "Not so much harm, good mother / As to kill a king and marry with his brother" (11.14–16). He repeats the reference to the murder two more times in his subsequent speech comparing her first husband with Claudius. The speech organically divides into two segments:

[Segment 1]
See here, behold this picture:
It is the portraiture of your deceased husband.
See here a face to outface Mars himself,
An eye at which his foes did tremble at,
A front where all virtues are set down
For to adorn a king and gild his crown,
Whose heart went hand in hand even with that vow
He made to you in marriage, and he is dead,
Murdered, damnably murdered. This was your husband.

[Segment 2]
Look you now:
Here is your husband, with a face like Vulcan,
A look fit for a murder and a rape,
A dull, dead, hanging look, and a hell-bred eye
To affright children and amaze the world.
And this same have you left to change with this.
What devil thus has cozened you at hob-man blind?
Ah! Have you eyes, and can you look on him
That slew my father and your dear husband
To live in the incestuous pleasure of his bed? (11.23–41)

In this tightly organized speech, Shakespeare devotes the same number of lines to Hamlet's father as to Claudius. He also concludes the description of each man with a reference to the father's murder: "He `is dead, / Murdered, damnably murdered. This was your husband" (11.31–32); "Have you eyes and can look on him / That slew my father and your dear husband / To live in the incestuous pleasures of his bed?" (11.39–41).

Hamlet's second step in his persuasion is to evoke Gertrude's shame and disgust at the information he has given her. He expresses his own revulsion at her marrying and sleeping with her husband's murderer until she herself feels the full import of what she has done. He thus feels and expresses the affective state that should go with the fact of the murder as well as Gertrude's subsequent marriage until she feels the same affect and aligns herself with him.

Throughout the scene, Hamlet's energy—alloplastic in nature—is outwardly directed to effect change in Gertrude. His aim in doing so in the scene is clear, as his method of achieving it. Shakespeare's use of the persuasion scheme contains little, if anything, that does not fit in the scheme and little, if anything, out of the ordinary that would deepen Gertrude's or Hamlet's character.

Much of the scene's simplicity in shaping itself around the persuasion schema is evident in Gertrude's lack of resistance. She expresses no disbelief on hearing about the murder, nor does she ask for proof that a murder occurred. She immediately accepts what Hamlet says and quickly feels what he feels about what has happened. She is not therefore an autonomous character with a mind of her own but a simple figment of Shakespeare's imagination, a vehicle of his fantasy about his beloved and loving mother. The "face" Shakespeare "paints" in the scene shows remarkable craftsmanship, but it does not transcend craftsmanship and is a simple "egg shape."

Perhaps the most perplexing element in this first version of *Hamlet* and its closet scene entails a major inconsistency in Shakespeare's depiction of Gertrude. The inconsistency involves the difference between Gertrude's private and public statements to Hamlet and Claudius. Foster (1991) observed that Gertrude's love for Hamlet as well as her allegiance to him in Q1 is evident only in the private

Hamlet–Gertrude/Gertrude–Horatio scenes. In the public scenes in which Gertrude appears with Claudius, Foster observed, she evidences no aversion to him; instead, she actually aligns herself with him. Irace (1999) makes a similar point in her edition of Q1. She notes that toward the end of the play, when Laertes bursts in on Claudius and Gertrude and demands in all three versions to know who killed Polonius, his father, Gertrude in all versions declares, "Not by him [Claudius]" (1603, 13.52). Irace notes that Gertrude's "protection of the king [in Q1] . . . seems inconsistent with her apparent support of Hamlet" (1999, p. 110) in the earlier scenes. In public Gertrude in Q1 is thus clearly and forcefully aligned with Claudius; in private, just as clearly and forcefully, with Hamlet.

We might hypothesize that this contradictory depiction of the mother figure results from Shakespeare's effort to dramatize both what he knows and simultaneously does not know, a bifurcation Freud (1927) examined in detail in a very different context. Shakespeare apparently "knows" that his mother does not exclusively love only him; she actually loves—and sleeps—with another man, namely, his father. But he also apparently "does not know" or "does not want to know" what he takes to be this infidelity and therefore simultaneously "knows" she loves only him and does not sleep with the father at all. For Shakespeare, then, his mother loves and protects only him (in private) and at the same time loves and protects only the father (in public). It is not irrelevant to note that "[Claudius] in Q1 repeatedly addresses Hamlet as 'son'; Hamlet responds with father" (Irace 1999, p. 108).

In Q1 Shakespeare dramatized his knowing and not knowing separately. In *Othello* he merges the two.

## OTHELLO

Psychoanalytic discussion of *Othello* almost invariably involves a discussion of Iago's unconscious motivation for destroying its eponymous central character. Iago, it is argued, does so out of envy or out of homoerotic strivings for Othello. If we shift the focus from the characters to Shakespeare, however, we encounter a very different play.

Considering the play from Shakespeare's point of view suggests that in the *Othello* closet scene—as in the Q1 scene—Shakespeare dramatizes the derivative of a fantasy involving his mother. The fantasy in *Othello* does not, however, involve the coming together of mother and son, as it is in Q1; it is not a libidinal fantasy based on eros. Instead, the fantasy is an aggressive one based on outwardly directed thanatos, the death instinct. The fantasy, whose first extant dramatization appears in Aeschylus's *Oresteia* (458 BC), is a matricidal one: it is a fantasy, I suggest, of killing the mother, represented by the play's central female character, Desdemona.

I further suggest that the matricidal fantasy underpinning the closet scene in *Othello* also underpins the closet scene in Q1. However, the fantasy encounters different defenses in *Othello* than it does in Q1, and it is therefore dramatized in a different way. The Q1 and *Othello* closet scenes both rest on a young son's painful realization that his mother is not attached primarily to him but to the father, that she is not his exclusive ally, and that she cannot and will not sleep with him. A deep narcissistic injury, sense of loss, bitterness, intense jealousy, and murderous rage often accompany that realization. In the Q1 scene Shakespeare escapes into a fantasy denying that painful state as well the reality that produced it. Thus Gertrude in the closet scene will no longer align herself with or sleep with Claudius (Shakespeare's denial of reality), and there is no reason to feel murderous rage that she does so (Shakespeare's denial of affect).

This escape from pain through a self-soothing, wish-fulfilling fantasy in Q1 can be viewed as an escape into a manic defense and into the comedic world described by Shafer (1976). If we were dramatically to expand the coming together of lover and beloved in the Q1 closet scene and then veil it, we would enter the world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1594/1595?), *As You Like It* (1599/1600?), and *Twelfth Night or What You Will* (1600/1602?).

Holland (1966) noted that tragedy results from the breaking down of psychic defense mechanisms; comedy from their successful operation. The Q1 closet scene is comedic in these terms because it successfully defends against both painful reality and painful affect. The *Othello* closet scene, on the other hand, is tragic because it does not defend against

affect—jealousy, murderous rage—but admits it in the person of Othello. Yet while Shakespeare admits the affect in the play, he defends against the reality to which the affect is attached: Othello is enraged at having been sexually betrayed by Desdemona, but Desdemona is innocent of having betrayed him. Othello thus feels as he does, but there is no "real" reason for his feelings. In composing *Othello*, Shakespeare thus apparently separates internal from external reality and dramatizes the former while eliminating the latter, or, perhaps more accurately, he dramatizes the former but through Iago's interactions with Othello misleads us—and perhaps himself—about the nature of the latter.

The handkerchief Iago uses to persuade Othello of Desdemona's infidelity is the central symbol of the play's dual, seemingly contradictory attitude toward her. As the stolen handkerchief makes utterly and completely clear, Desdemona is guilty of sexually betraying Othello with Casio and deserves to die: the proof is obvious to anyone with eyes. Yet as the handkerchief also utterly and completely makes clear, Desdemona is innocent of having betrayed Othello with Casio and does not deserve to die at all. In the death scene, with its utterly guilty / utterly innocent Desdemona, we thus have the satisfaction of the matricidal fantasy as well as a defense against it. In the scene, in sum, Shakespeare simultaneously appears to know and not know that his mother is sexually attached to someone else.

The interplay between the knowing and not knowing—between an impelling murderous rage and a resisting belief in the sweet innocence of its object—is evident, I propose, throughout much of the death scene. There Shakespeare satisfies these internal impelling and resisting forces and simultaneously satisfies his needs as a dramatic artist:

> *Oth.* Thou art to die.
> *Des.* [Then Lord] have mercy on me!
> *Oth.* I say amen.
> *Des.* And have you mercy on me too! I never did
> Offend you in my life; never loved Casio
> But with such general warranty of heaven
> As I might love. I never gave him token.
> *Oth.* By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in's hand.

O perjur'd woman, thou doest stone my heart,
And [mak'st] me call what I intend to do
A murther, which I thought a sacrifice.
I saw the handkerchief.
*Des.* He found it then;
I never gave it him [*sic*]. (5.2.56–67)

The closet scene in *Othello* is emblematic of the play as a whole. Each step forward in the realization of the matricidal fantasy is also simultaneously a step forward in defending against it. The more certain and all-enveloping Othello's belief that Desdemona has betrayed him becomes, the clearer also becomes her innocence and the more deranged he seems in believing otherwise. The interplay of fantasy and defense in the play evidences Shakespeare's remarkable ability to access his own powerful, highly charged affective states, to present the unfolding of those states in a series of clearly defined steps and—while holding the full expression of those affects at bay—to create interactions between characters that give the affects a convincing and resonant dramatic cause.

The observations I have made about Shakespeare and the connection between his mind and his plays admittedly cannot be substantiated by biographical, much less clinical, data about him. But the observations gain some credence through the light they shed on other of Shakespeare's plays, for they were all produced by the same mind and would have emerged from the same deep layers of that mind. For example, a man's Othello-like belief that he has been sexually betrayed is one of the central elements of *Much Ado about Nothing* (1598/1599?) and *The Winter's Tale* (1609/1611?). In highly charged scenes in the first part of these plays, Claudio in *Much Ado* and Leontes in *Winter's Tale* heatedly accuse their wife (or future wife) of having sexually betrayed them with another man. As in *Othello*, moreover, each man believes that he has ocular proof of the infidelity, and each man's accusations leads to the death of each woman. It is publicly revealed in the second part of each play, however, that each woman is utterly innocent of sexual betrayal, and in comedic moments of pure dramatic magic each comes back to life and reunites with her husband (or future husband).

Shakespeare repeats and varies this wish-fulfilling comedic pattern in *The Winter's Tale* through its triangular Camilo–Paulina–Antigonus plot, an echo of the triangular Q1 Hamlet–Gertrude–Hamlet's father plot. At the end of the play, Shakespeare couples Camilo with Paulina after her husband, Antigonus, is killed by a bear, much as he couples Hamlet in Q1 with Gertrude after her husband is killed by having poison poured in his ear. In each case, the mother figure (Gertrude, Paulina) turns to the son (or son-figure) (Hamlet, Camillo) after the father (Hamlet's father, Antigonus) dies. In the first part of *Much Ado* and *Winter's Tale* Shakespeare thus taps into the Othello-like jealousy and murderous rage triggered by the sexual infidelity of a woman; in the second part, into the manic Q1 defense against that state.[2]

## THE SECOND QUARTO AND THE FOLIO

Among the substantial changes to *Hamlet* as Shakespeare moved from its first to its second version was his radical revision of the closet scene. We might perhaps ask what precipitated Shakespeare's return to his first version of the play, Q1, and his transformation of it into the second, Q2.

It may be, as some have argued (e.g., Greenblatt 2004; Mahon 2009), that Shakespeare was responding to the death of his son Hamnet in 1596.

[2] One is put in mind of an anecdote recounted by a contemporary of Shakespeare's and quoted and discussed by Schoenbaum (1970):

> In an entry in his Diary dated 13 March 1601 (1602 according to the modern calendar) John Manningham, then enrolled at the Middle Temple, records a story told him by his fellow student Edward Curle:
>
> Upon a time when Burbidge [the actor Richard Burbage] played Richard III there was a citizen grew so far in liking with him that, before she went from the play, she appointed him to come that night unto her by the name of Richard the Third. Shakespeare, overhearing their conclusion, went before, was entertained and at his game ere Burbidge came. Then, message being brought that Richard the Third was at the door, Shakespeare caused return to be made that William the Conqueror was before Richard the Third.
>
> So that the point may not be missed, Manningham helpfully adds, "Shakespeare's name was William." Whether the story is true we cannot say, although clearly Manningham knew that Burbage played Richard and that he had an association with Shakespeare at the Globe. The anecdote would embarrass some future biographers. [p. 17]

It may also be that he was responding to or anticipating the death of his father—who was born around 1531 and who died September 7, 1601. (His mother died in 1608).

It is generally believed that Shakespeare wrote Q2 "in or about the year 1600" (Hibbard 1987, p. 5). At that time Shakespeare's father was thus nearing the "three score years and ten" described by Psalm 90 as the span of a man's life: "The days of our age are threescore years and ten: and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow: so soon passeth it away, and we are gone" (Coverdale 1535, Sentence 10). Shakespeare certainly knew the Psalm, the only Psalm ascribed in its biblical introduction to Moses. Coverdale's translation of it into English had been recited every month as part of the monthly reading of the entire Psalter in the Church of England service ever since the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549 (Cummings 2011, p. 692n8). The character named Old Man in *Macbeth* (1603/1606?) declares that he is "three score years and ten" (2.4.1). It may well be, then, that Shakespeare wrote Q2 in part as response to his father's death or in the dawning knowledge of his father's mortality as well as in response to the certain fact that his mother did not turn to him as a romantic or sexual replacement for her dead, or perhaps soon to be dead, husband, much as she did not turn to him when he was a child.

Speculative biographical analysis of the precipitant of Q2, while perhaps intrinsically interesting, is not of much value, however, in this study of the closet scenes. It is the way of the world for all fathers and sometimes children to die. Shakespeare's losses do not, then, make him unique. What is unique about him is that he wrote the F closet scene, and what is of interest about him psychoanalytically is how he might have come to do so. The speculative precipitants of Q2 are, then, considerably less important than the creation of Q2 out of Q1 and what that creation may imply about Shakespeare.

I propose that in the second version of the closet scene, Shakespeare detached from the fantasy of the close and exclusive mother–son relationship evident in the first version, much as I have noted that O'Neill begins to detach from such a fantasy in the second versions of *Long Day's Journey into Night* (Mandelbaum 2015). Each playwright, having detached from a self-soothing fantasy, accesses the powerful affects that the fantasy wards

off. In Shakespeare's case the affect is the volcanic rage accompanying the now-acknowledged, hitherto denied, separation between himself and his mother. In the play's second version, he no longer denies affect—or reality. Instead, he accesses and dramatically symbolizes both.

None of this is to say that there are no defenses evident in Q2. Shakespeare does not rage at his mother; Hamlet does at Gertrude. The rage, moreover, does not involve Hamlet's father but his uncle. Nevertheless, Shakespeare accesses his rage, accesses the painful fact that his mother has betrayed him through her sexual relationship with another man, and accesses the knowledge that even when the father disappears, the mother will not turn to him but to someone else. He symbolizes all this, I suggest, within the dramatic medium to create the Q2 closet scene.

Shakespeare now shapes that scene by simultaneously drawing on and destroying the persuasion schema. He repeatedly invokes the schema as if it defines and encompasses the scene, but having momentarily put it into the foreground immediately shifts it into the background. He leads us to think that Hamlet is exerting alloplastic energy to effect a change in the external world—to persuade Gertrude—but then shows us Hamlet exerting autoplastic energy in an effort to adjust to what has happened. He creates a scene that is at once an exchange between two people and a soliloquy that focuses on Hamlet's inner state.

As in Q1, the Q2 killing of Polonius results in an exchange that broaches the issue of murder and that leads us to think that Hamlet will tell Gertrude what he now knows about that murder in an effort to persuade her to align herself with him:

> QUEEN: O, what a rash and bloody deed is this
> HAMLET: A bloody deed—almost as bad, good mother,
> As kill a king and marry with his brother.
> QUEEN: As kill a king?
> HAMLET: Ay, lady, it was my word. (1604, 3.4.25–28)

The exchange leads nowhere. Unlike Q1, Hamlet in Q2 and F does not follow up on his hint to Gertrude of his father's murder; he does not reveal the facts of the murder or use it to align Gertrude with himself.

Hamlet next compares his late father with Claudius, as if he now wanted to achieve an effect on Gertrude through the comparison. And as

in Q1, what he says does, in fact, appall her. But as the scene unfolds, it turns out that Hamlet's aim is not to achieve an effect at all, for even when he achieves it and arrives at what seems to be the climax of the scene, he continues his diatribe:

QUEEN: O Hamlet, speak no more.
Thou turn'st my very eyes into my soul
And there I see such black and grieved spots
As will leave there their tinct.
HAMLET: Nay but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty—
QUEEN: O speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter my ears.
No more, sweet Hamlet.
HAMLET: A murderer and a villain,
A slave that is not twentieth part the kith
Of your preceding lord, a vice of kings,
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole
And put it in his pocket—
QUEEN: No more!
HAMLET: —a king of shreds and patches—

*Enter* GHOST

Save me and hover o'er me with your wings
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious
figure? (1604, 3.4.86–101)

As is true of much of the initial part of the scene, this exchange initially leads us to believe that Hamlet's energy is outwardly directed at Gertrude. In the exchange, however, Hamlet attempts to adjust to the overwhelming pressure of what has happened; his energy quickly shifts from alloplatic to autoplastic as he becomes possessed by his rage. Only after the ghost's appearance does he emerge from that rage and begin to interact with his mother, but the interaction again leads nowhere. Gertrude in Q2 does not learn that Claudius murdered her husband, does not align herself with Hamlet, and only promises to be silent about what

has just transpired between them. The point of the scene is not to effect a change in Gertrude; it is to stop the forward movement of the play and open a window into Hamlet's mind.

Shakespeare heightens his depiction of Hamlet's rage through the four cuts of twenty-seven lines he made in Q2 as he revised the scene to create F. Of the first cut, Hibbard (1987) notes: "Like the three passages peculiar to Q2 that follow it, this one appears to have been cut from F for good aesthetic reasons. All four run to excess. They smack of self-indulgence on the part of the hero and, possibly, of the author also" (p. 359). The "excess" in Q2 that Shakespeare cut in the four passages is not, however, an excess of Hamlet's feeling; it is an excess of his explanations. Hamlet in the Q2 closet scene repeatedly elaborates on and clarifies ideas he touches on in his tirade against Gertrude. For example, in Q2 after he compares his father with Claudius and asks, "What judgement / Would step from this [his father] to this [his uncle]?" he continues to ponder her ability to choose:

> Sense sure you have—
> Else could you not have motion. But sure that sense
> Is apoplexed; for madness would not err,
> Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thralled
> But it reserved some quantity of choice
> To serve in such a difference. (1604, 3.4.69–74)

This convoluted elaboration, which suggests that Hamlet has enough self-possession to make psychological disquisitions in the midst of his emotional storm, is eliminated in F, much like Hamlet's other such disquisitions. Through the cuts he made in the Q2 closet scene as he created the play's final version, Shakespeare emphasized Hamlet's loss of self-control but maintained his own.

Shakespeare's shift from outwardly directed action to interiorization as he created the F closet scene is replicated in the other two major changes he made as he moved from Q1 to Q2 and then to F. The first is the addition of a soliloquy in F that is not found in either Q1 or Q2. That is the "How all occasions to inform against me" (1623, 4.4.35–69) soliloquy Hamlet makes when he sees Fortinbrass and his soldiers passing by.

This added F soliloquy once again stops the forward flow of action to focus on Hamlet's inner state.

The second, much more important change involves the change Shakespeare made in the action and structure of *Hamlet* as he moved from Q1 to Q2 and that he maintained in F. The overall action of *Hamlet* in all three versions is the same and is well known. Hamlet learns from his father's ghost that Claudius murdered him and uses the play-within-the-play to verify that Claudius is actually guilty. In doing so, Hamlet lets Claudius know that he knows about the murder, and Claudius responds by shipping Hamlet off to England to be killed. Hamlet however, escapes, returns to Denmark and along with Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes dies at the end. The structural change Shakespeare made within this narrative involves the placement of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy and his following "Get thee to a nunnery" scene with Ophelia. The changed placement of the two scenes transforms an initially simple structure into one that is remarkably complex.

In his first, Q1 version of the play, Shakespeare places the two scenes into the second act, immediately after Hamlet learns from the ghost that Claudius murdered his father. The placement of the two scenes toward the beginning of the play makes good dramatic sense. Through the ghost, Hamlet has just learned about the murder and suspects that his mother participated in it as well. There is therefore good reason for him now to respond with suicidal thoughts to what the ghost has revealed as well as to the burden of revenge he now bears. There is good reason as well for his hostile thoughts about all women, including Ophelia. The placement of the two scenes thus creates a simple psychological portrait of Hamlet's state of mind.

Moreover, as Forester (1991) and Irace (1998) observed, the placement of the two scenes toward the beginning of the play creates a direct and simple Q1 action. Shortly after the two scenes in Q1, Hamlet learns about the arrival of the players and hatches his plot to use the play-within-the-play to determine whether Claudius is actually guilty of murder. Once Hamlet sets this plot in motion, Q1 then moves in an uninterrupted, direct action to its first climax: the play-within-a-play is put on, and Hamlet discovers that Claudius is guilty of the murder; Hamlet kills Polonius. Claudius reacts by shipping Hamlet off to England to be killed and so on.

Perhaps not surprisingly for a twenty-three-year-old dramatist, just as the Q1 closet scene is a simple outwardly directed action, so too is Q1 as a whole.

In the second and third versions of *Hamlet*, Q2 and F, Shakespeare moves the "To be or not to be" soliloquy and subsequent "Get thee to a nunnery" scene into the middle of the play. The two scenes no longer appear *before* Hamlet meets the actors and *before* he sets the play-within-a play into motion: the two scenes appear *afterward*. The new placement of the two scenes in Q2 and F makes them confounding. About to develop the central action of the play, Shakespeare suddenly stops it to focus on Hamlet's state of mind, just as he stops the play's forward action to focus on that inner state in the Q2 and F closet scenes. And that state is now complex, multilayered—and puzzling. Why does Hamlet in Q2, suddenly energized by his plan to discover the truth about his father's death, fall into a deep depression in which he considers suicide? Why is he now enraged at Ophelia? The point is not to manufacture answers to these questions but to note that Shakespeare raises them through the structural change he made as he moved from Q1 to Q2.

In sum, in crafting the Q2 and F closet scenes as well as the Q2 and F structure, Shakespeare consciously—not absentmindedly—continually shifts our focus away from action to Hamlet's inner world, a world of murderous and near-murderous rage, suicidal thoughts, and intense self-recrimination. In the process he turns Hamlet into the Hamlet we know, a figure who constantly challenges us to connect his intense inner state with his external reality.

Shakespeare achieved at least one other effect through his revisions. In Q1, we know very clearly what Hamlet wants—to determine whether Claudius is guilty of murder, to get Gertrude on his side, and to avenge his father's death. And when we then see Hamlet going about to achieve what he wants, we can cognitively make sense of what he is doing and of what is happening in the play. There is little, if any, mystery in Q1, little, if any sense, that Shakespeare is working at the extreme outer edge—and perhaps beyond—of what he can dramatically encompass of his inner life. In Q2 and F Shakespeare focuses on Hamlet's inner states and repeatedly reduces or totally eliminates the precise precipitants for those states. He thereby deprives us of the ability cognitively fully to encompass

what drives Hamlet at any given moment. Stripped of cognition, our unconscious connects with Hamlet's. Attempting to make sense of Hamlet is, then, an effort to understand our own unconscious and perhaps the unconscious itself.

## CONCLUSIONS

Shakespeare's movement from his initial to this final version of the closet scene suggests several possible observations about the way he worked. One observation is that in crafting his plays he begins within a preexisting schema—the form of a persuasion scene, or of a revenge tragedy, or of a romantic comedy (Q1). He next transforms the schema by infusing its characters with his own affective states (Q2). He then refines the dramatic shape of those states (F). It may well be that other great playwrights engage in a similar process. No other playwright, however, draws on the vast number of emotional states Shakespeare does or to the same depths he does.

Another observation is that the psychic states Shakespeare dramatized in *Hamlet* were not fleeting or isolated, as some might argue. The late Oxford Shakespearean A. D. Nuttall (2007), for example, accepted Freud's (1900) observations—elaborated by Jones (1949)—on Hamlet's unresolved Oedipus complex. Nuttall, however, declared that "Shakespeare never committed himself to the lunatic idea that all male infants desire to have sex with their mother and to murder their father. Hamlet is a one-off, a manifestly peculiar case" (p. 200).

These and other such observations transform what Freud said about highly complex psychic states into intellectual concepts and overlook the powerful affects that accompany such states. Shakespeare's movement from Q1 to F and his unleashing and dramatization of affects as he did so suggest that the psychic states were deeply ingrained in him. We might speculate that those states and accompanying affects resulted from his realization early in life that he was not the center of his mother's world. Many others have come to the same realization; Shakespeare may have experienced it much more profoundly than most.

His efforts to deal with the narcissistic injury is evident not only in *Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Winter's Tale* but in many of the plays that

follow Q2. One of the central emotional states of characters in those plays is a feeling of having been deeply wronged and betrayed by someone whom they completely trusted and for whom they deeply cared. That state is evident not only in *Hamlet* and in *Othello*, but in *King Lear* (1605/1606?), with its betraying daughters, and in *Macbeth*, with its three witches who mislead its eponymous hero into believing he is invulnerable.

It is surely no accident that Shakespeare's two most formidable scenes, arguably the two most formidable scenes in Western drama—the *Hamlet* closet scene and the *King Lear* heath scene—both depict a man who experiences overwhelming rage because he feels betrayed by a woman to whom he is deeply attached through family ties. That emotional state is evident not only in Shakespeare's tragedies but also in many of the comedies following Q2, a good number of which revolve around whether one should forgive a betrayal and have been termed "comedies of forgiveness" (Hunter 1965).

Yet while this psychic constellation is clear, Shakespeare's continuing ability to access it as well as to dramatically mine and master it is even clearer. At times, he can access powerful affects and create action through which to deny their actual cause. At yet other times, he can penetrate his defenses and access much of the affect as well as its cause and infuse them into his characters and plays. He also can develop an alternate reality in which the trauma is nullified and more loving feelings of the kind evident in Q1 closet scene can be dramatized. It is difficult, for example, to think of a more poignant father–son scene than the two scenes between Talbot and John Talbot in *1 Henry VI* (1591/1592?) or a more tender, more lovingly sculpted love scene than the *Romeo and Juliet* (1591/1595?) balcony scene, a private, outdoor "closet scene" depicting the destruction of all the powerful social barriers—perhaps of all the social taboos—standing between the play's lover and beloved. That destruction is certainly different from but in some ways also similar to the destruction of social barriers between lover and beloved in the Q1 private indoor closet scene.

Shakespeare's plays, then, do not embody his continual evasions of his complex inner world, just as his life was not a continual effort to evade that world through massive acting out, one reason we know so little about him. Instead, he is dramatically curious about—and open to—his inner world and remarkably bold in accessing it in varied ways. It could

reasonably be argued that no one before him knew that world or accessed as much of it as Shakespeare did and that it would not be until Freud that it would be accessed to a similar extent. And Shakespeare, unlike Freud, had no one to lead the way.

Finally, Shakespeare might need to be viewed not only within the framework outlined by Freud (1908) and Sachs (1942) in describing the work of the creative artist. Freud argued that artists present their fantasies as well as the defenses against them so that the audience can then indulge in their own, similar fantasies. Shakespeare, however, not only dramatizes his fantasies and not only entices us to participate in them. He is also able to access and dramatically symbolize states that are in most people unverbalized and inchoate and thereby to bring new areas of human experience into dramatic focus. As the movement from Q1 to F suggests, he is the great alpha function of the Western psyche (Bion 1962). We continually turn to his plays in part because they crystallize, give dramatic shape to, and put us in touch with psychic states of which we are at best only dimly aware.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

MUTUALITY, RECOGNITION, AND THE SELF: PSYCHOANALYTIC REFLECTIONS. By Christine C. Kieffer. London: Karnac Books, 2014. 240 pp.

In the opening pages of *Mutuality, Recognition, and the Self*, Christine Kieffer tells us that her book is a reflection of the continuous process of integration that has marked the development of her thinking over the course of many years as a psychoanalytic clinician: "It will be evident to the reader that my approach to psychoanalytic intervention has evolved from a more Winnicottian and self-psychological perspective to one that has integrated intersubjective and relational perspectives on development, psychopathology, and therapeutic action" (p. xv). Kieffer not only demonstrates *that* this integration has taken place in her thinking but also shows us something of *how* it happened along the way. She makes certain that the reader knows where she is coming from as she presents, chapter by chapter, the offspring of this integrative process.

Read at another level, the book provides a model of how a psychoanalytic thinker may continue to grow as a result of many years of close engagement in clinical work. This should provide a special pleasure for anyone interested in the process of theory building in the field of psychoanalysis and also in the development of its practitioners' psychoanalytic minds.

In the prologue, Kieffer articulates certain dichotomies in psychoanalytic thinking (such as one- and two-person psychology, provision versus conflict, empathy versus authenticity, unitary self or multiple selves) that have led to polarization rather than integration. Her approach is to find "the truth of self-development and therapeutic action . . . within the dialectic tension between these various poles" (p. xix).

Kieffer's exploration centers on matters of mutuality and recognition in the development of the self. In the course of doing some background

reading for this review, I discovered the following passage in an early paper by Jessica Benjamin that may provide a conceptual framework for readers less familiar with the foundational intersubjective theory that informs this book:

> Object relations theories, even those interested in intersubjectivity, have not followed up on Winnicott's (1971)[1] crucial distinction between the subjectively conceived object and the objectively perceived, outside other . . . . Theorists have overlooked the core element of intersubjectivity, which is mutual recognition . . . . The subject gradually becomes able to recognize the other person's subjectivity, developing the capacity for attunement and tolerance of difference . . . . Intersubjective theory postulates that the other must be recognized as another subject in order for the self to fully experience his or her subjectivity in the other's presence. This means, first, that we have a need for recognition and second, that we have a capacity to recognize others in return—mutual recognition. [Benjamin (1990), pp. 33–34][2]

According to Kieffer, the overarching principle of therapeutic action informed by these principles is "aimed at helping the patient to develop a cohesive state that permits a sense of one's subjectivity while recognising the subjectivity of the other" (p. xxii). In each of the book's three parts, she applies this perspective to clinical work that illuminates, respectively, the contribution of family to development, the impact of the group on the individual's psychology, and the difficulties in working through impasses with individuals.

The opening chapter is titled "From Selfobjects to Mutual Recognition: Towards Optimal Responsiveness in Father and Daughter Relationships." In the course of exploring avenues by which pathological and healthy father–daughter relationships are arrived at, Kieffer demonstrates how her self-psychological perspective has been "enriched by integrating notions of mutuality and recognition of the other into its theory of optimal self-development" (p. 12). In the case of the daughter who is the

[1] Winnicott, D. W. (1971). Playing and Reality. New York: Basic Books.

[2] Benjamin, J. (1990). An outline of intersubjectivity: the development of recognition. *Psychoanal. Psychol.*, 7(suppl.):33–46.

oedipal victor, "the favoured daughter . . . may receive a high level of what may resemble 'recognition' in Benjamin's sense of the word—but which, in reality, occurs in a part-object context . . . . That is, she is not recognised as an autonomous subject but is utilised as an extension of the father" (p. 10).

Kieffer presents clinical material from her work with a male analysand who was highly dependent on his daughter's mirroring of his grandiosity. "He could not recognise her as an independent centre of her own initiative, and her autonomous strivings resulted in either his withdrawal or more active forms of retaliation" (pp. 11–12).

The transference-countertransference provided considerable challenge as Kieffer made efforts "to establish an empathic stance while still maintaining appropriate boundaries with a male who relied upon sexualisation in order to maintain a cohesive self" (p. 18). Kieffer's discussion of these concepts and her case material bring together a number of psychoanalytic thinkers (for example, Chasseguet-Smirgel, McDougall, Davies, Goldberg, Gilligan, Loewald, Winnicott, Frank Summers) to round out her "reflections on the transformations of narcissism that occur both in adolescence and in midlife" (p. 16).

In chapter 2, "On Siblings: Mutual Regulation and Mutual Recognition," Kieffer explores the role of the sibling relationship on personality development. She rightly points out that psychoanalysis has tended to focus its gaze on the impact of sibling *rivalry*, "which implicitly privileges the centrality of parents" (p. 21). She brings in experience of group and marital therapists that demonstrates the more complex ways in which sibling relationships affect individual development. I found Kieffer's discussion of sibling relationships and *recognition* especially informative. Her views on the co-construction of mirroring and regulation in the sibling bond have led me to reflect on how I may have missed important aspects of the sibling relationship in my own clinical work.

Kieffer closes the chapter with clinical material that focuses on the co-construction of siblingship in the analytic encounter. She speaks of the analyst's potential motivation for avoidance of the exploration of sibling transference and, especially, sibling countertransference

> because their recognition tends to "flatten" the hierarchical power structure inherent in dyadic treatment . . . [as analysts] may fall back upon the transference role of parent in an attempt to regulate competitive and envious reactions that are stimulated in the analytic encounter, and co-construction of "twinship" experiences may be comforting as well as potentiating to both dyadic partners. [p. 22]

In chapter 3, "On 'Psychoanalytic Siblings' and the 'Only Child': Expanding the Relational Context beyond the Parent–Child Dyad," Kieffer continues to explore the role of sibling relationships in healthy development by examining what is lost when there are no siblings to facilitate mutual recognition, to provide peer models for identification, and to assist in emotional regulation. Kieffer points out that self psychologists have long recognized the mirroring function as a contributor to the development of a solid sense of self. Her own work indicates that "twinship self-object experiences . . . might serve as way stations on the road to mutual recognition," as these experiences provided by siblings "might then allow for a more gradual disillusionment as the illusion of sameness via kinship falls away and as siblings have to be acknowledged as independent" subjects (p. 41). Kieffer presents material from work with a child analysand who was an only child and who made use of "psychoanalytic siblings" she encountered in the waiting room to negotiate this conflict and further her own development. Finally, in this chapter Kieffer speaks of the complex dynamics found among "psychoanalytic siblings" in psychoanalytic institutes, which both capture troublesome conflict and offer potential developmental benefit.

In chapter 4, "On Grandparents: Immigration, Trauma, Resilience, and the Telescoping of Generations," Kieffer takes on the ambitious goal of both exploring the influence of grandparents on the negotiation of the intergenerational transmission of trauma in immigrants and providing a general discussion of the grandparents' role in facilitating resilience. This chapter is a departure from the others in that Kieffer devotes nearly half of it to a report of the immigrant experience of her own family, beginning with her great-grandparents' and grandparents' emigration from southern Italy. Using her observations of and stories from her family, she speaks of the immigrant experience as being "steeped in a secret

history of immigration—loss, longing, and accommodation" (p. 69), which may contribute to unprocessed trauma and consequent "dissociation as a self-protective response to trauma in which self-cohesion comes at the price of emotional deadness" (p. 64). Here Kieffer presents the work of Haydée Faimberg on the telescoping of generations, which is grounded in classical theory, and expands this thinking in the light of Philip Bromberg's notion about multiple self-states and Donnel Stern's unformulated experience.

Kieffer begins part 2 of the book, "The Impact of Group," with chapter 5, "Phases of Group Development: A View from Self-Psychology," a helpful primer on group psychotherapy from a self-psychological perspective. Here she focuses her effort less on integrating her foundation in self psychology with relational and intersubjectivist views than on bringing recent advances in self psychology to her considerable experience in group work. In discussing four phases of group development, Kieffer presents Kohut's notion of a *groupself*, in which he "saw the group as a container both of each individual's grandiose self and the group's shared values" (p. 75). To this notion of the *group as a self*, she adds the concept of the *self as a group*, as the individual self as "developed from a network of relationships with other persons, which are internalised and become part of a self-matrix" (p. 76).

In the remaining chapter in part 2, "How Does Group Analysis Cure: An Exploration of Narcissistic Rage in Group Treatment," Kieffer provides a more extended case report that brings her approach to bear on the experience of narcissistic rage in group treatment when this phenomenon is viewed as a response to narcissistic injury rather than an expression of a basic drive. Kieffer presents the case of a narcissistically vulnerable man who asserted his conviction that he was Kieffer's favorite patient. She skillfully handled the consequent state of group disequilibrium such that the group could join her in empathizing with this patient's more vulnerable position in the new group, which had led him to the compensatory grandiosity of being the special patient. She feels that this experience was "structure-building for him in ways that his individual psychotherapy could not be" (p. 104).

In part 3, Kieffer demonstrates nuanced approaches to the treatment of developmental impasses. It is here that she is, perhaps, at her

integrative best. In chapter 7, "Restitutive Selfobject Function in the 'Entitled Victim': A Relational Self-Psychological Perspective," she presents a conceptual model for psychoanalytic work with patients described as *entitled victims*, whose pseudo-independent presentation to the analyst belies the presence of a carefully guarded reliance on a fragile idealized selfobject, something the patient feels entitled to as a result of her deprivation and long suffering. Kieffer indicates that the classical self-psychological model of "provision of selfobject experience, with interpretation of disappointment in empathic rupture, is necessary but not sufficient in order to be mutative" (p. 120). She augments this model with approaches of object relations theorists (especially Fairbairn) who describe the core schizoid solution of the fantasy of restitutive reunion. Both in the sections presenting a conceptual model for her integrative approach to treatment of this group of patients and in the clinical example, Kieffer persuasively communicates her facility in applying theory to practice. At the same time, here, as in certain other areas of the book, I found myself wanting more detailed material demonstrating the dialogue between analyst and patient, as it would further flesh out the manner in which Kieffer works sensitively with such a rigid character structure with underlying fragility and proneness to narcissistic rage.

In chapter 8, "On Empathy, Countertransference Disclosure, and Mutual Recognition," Kieffer presents the case of an analysand whose rage and insistence that Kieffer validate his every effort at omnipotent control of others reached the point that it led to "challenges to my narcissistic equilibrium as well as to the maintenance of the analytic frame" (p. ix). Judicious use of disclosure of countertransference experience (she had "a growing sense of being treated like a hand-puppet" [p. 133]) led to the resolution of a growing impasse through sensitive work that facilitated this patient's recognition of the analyst's subjectivity.

I found chapter 9, "Emergence and the Analytic Third: Working at the Edge of Chaos," to be the most intriguing chapter in this last part of the book. After outlining the fundamental principles of dynamic systems, or chaos, theory, Kieffer describes her revised view of self psychology, in which "an individual may be thought of as a self-system rather than having a 'core self' or multiple selves" (p. 141). In the light of chaos theory, she offers a new understanding of the analytic third as an emergent process:

"an emergent construct since its development often becomes manifest during the disorganised—even chaotic—period of a phase transition, during which neither analyst nor patient understand what is going on" (p. 147).

Kieffer envisions the psychoanalytic process "as facilitating reorganisation in functioning through empathic immersions by the therapist in the patient's subjective experience [whereby the] analytic encounter creates a new context and promotes reorganisation as a result of this new self-object bond" (p. 141). This is a process that is watchful for the "'tendrils' of new growth . . . a future-oriented emphasis on a patient's needs and goals . . . [rather than] an interpretive line that stresses unconscious archaic struggles and regression" (p. 145).

The lovely clinical vignette at the end of this chapter involving the treatment of an adolescent—one who displayed a "rapid oscillation between self-reflective thought and non-reflective action" (p. 141)—provides an especially fertile example of these concepts. Kieffer asserts the importance of the development in treatment of a capacity to play—"emblematic of an open system" (p. 149)—as, perhaps, "the most central and curative factor that leads to change and growth . . . that allow[s] for the emergence and integration of dissociated self-states, along with an increased capacity for symbolisation or 'mentalization'" (p. 149).

In the final chapter, "The Waiting-Room as Boundary and Bridge between Self-States and Unformulated Experience," Kieffer presents the analysis of a thirteen-year-old girl that was organized around the role of enactment in the articulation of unformulated emotional states. During a phase of this treatment, the patient would remain in the waiting room during a portion of the analytic hour while Kieffer sat on the other side of an open doorway connected to the waiting room, thus providing both a boundary and a connecting bridge between them. The material suggests that the girl was able, through this form of enactment, to achieve greater regulation of affect related to the analytic process and, ultimately, to achieve capacities for self-reflection. Kieffer made good use of her own creative space of reverie provided during these times to muse about her countertransference experience, which made it possible for her patient's emotional states to become represented within her. Finally, she found

language with which to articulate the dissociated states for which the patient had not yet been able to find words.

This book is an important contribution to the psychoanalytic literature in that it uniquely integrates self psychology and relational psychoanalysis to the mutual enrichment of both schools of thought. It is a remarkable achievement to write a book that introduces the complexity of advances in psychoanalytic thinking resulting from the integration of models of the mind that are often considered divergent and that, at the same time, clearly articulates the original conceptual frameworks. Throughout my reading of *Mutuality, Recognition, and the Self*, I felt myself to be in the good hands of a psychoanalytic scholar and master teacher.

**FRED L. GRIFFIN (DALLAS, TX)**

BODY–MIND DISSOCIATION IN PSYCHOANALYSIS: DEVELOPMENT AFTER BION. By Riccardo Lombardi. Abingdon, UK / New York: Routledge, 2017. 242 pp.

*Body–Mind Dissociation in Psychoanalysis: Development after Bion* by Riccardo Lombardi is a very important, challenging, and difficult book. At its heart is the author's belief that "psychoanalysis cannot survive except in a context that is open to the quest for new vertices that are in line with the experience of our most extreme analysands" (p. 168). He further asserts that "psychoanalytic research can acquire new impetus and explore new horizons *only* by starting from the pre-mental generative levels: the body" (p. 167, italics in original).

Lombardi's central thesis is that the body needs to be taken into account in psychoanalysis and psychic development as a concrete reality whose existence and limits must be integrated with and come into dialectical relationship with the infinite imaginative capacities of the mind. To do so, Lombardi contends, will require "*a radical shift of emphasis, such that the interest of the body is not limited to its symbolic meaning or to related unconscious phantasies*" (p. 38, italics in original). He sees the body as "*the container of subjective experience*" (p. 24, italics in

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original), the potential source of our very sense of being (p. 34), and argues that our psychic relationship with our body provides the first, last, and most important confrontation with reality: "the groundwork for mental functioning" (p. 38) and the foundation for psychic development.

As Freud (1911)[1] and Bion (1970)[2] asserted, psychic birth and development begin with freeing "ourselves from the restrictive conditioning of sensory data dominated by the pleasure principle" (p. 174). This must be followed by the activation of

> a functioning body–mind relationship, as a prerequisite for the setting in motion and continuation of mental functioning. This involvement of sensory data is necessary, both as a safeguard against the danger of self-referential and abstract thinking that loses all connection with the concrete levels of the personality, and as a protection of an orientation towards thinking in the presence of emotions. [p. 174]

It is Lombardi's contention that in contemporary psychoanalytic practice,

> the problem of conflict is now increasingly encountered in extremely radical forms, in which the body and the mind assume absolute roles, excluding each other entirely: when the body–mind conflict becomes intolerable, body–mind dissociation takes the upper hand. A psychoanalysis that takes the most primitive levels of inner integration for granted, concentrating too early on developed mental dynamics and object relations, is in danger of becoming anti-developmental and anti-therapeutic, and of turning into another of the many varieties of body–mind dissociation that are characteristic of contemporary life .... [p. 23]

> ... In the absence of the concrete internal referent of one's own body, the work done on symbols is in danger of remaining abstractly self-referential, empty of personal substance and anti-developmental. [p. 38]

[1] Freud, S. (1911). Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning. *S. E.*, 12.

[2] Bion, W. R. (1970). *Attention and Interpretation.* New York: Basic Books.

> If the analyst's theory does not recognize or take into account body–mind dissociation, Lombardi tells us, then the analyst's activity may reflect a tendency towards constant symbolization [that] represents a serious danger for the functioning of [even] a so-called normal mind . . . : when the analyst keeps himself constantly anchored to his knowledge and his symbol-forming ability, he or she falls into a "premature saturation," which impedes the experience of an unsaturated mind and the development of the normal process of symbol-formation. [p. 170]

Especially in psychotic and other primitive patients and mind-sets, the combination of severe body–mind dissociation met by an analyst who works predominantly or exclusively on an object-related mental level "could provoke a defensive pseudo-mentalization. What [is needed] is a systematic catalyzing of the body–mind relationship, from which the analysand can get a direct experience of his own real body" (p. 106). This last statement is evocative of André Green's (1980)[3] observation in the dead mother syndrome that significant disturbances in early maternal emotional availability, receptivity, and contact with the infant can precipitate development of a hyperintellectualism.

What Lombardi proposes and offers readers is nothing less than

> a clear theoretical status for the body in contemporary psychoanalysis . . . so that we can correct the misunderstanding by which the body is mistaken for its potential symbolic meanings, while its basic quality as a concrete object is quite neglected—whereas it is not a symbol but something real. [p. 107]

Once our analytic theory is broadened and this neglect is corrected, "situations that might have been viewed as examples of perversion, destructive acting out, erotic transference, etc., could instead reveal the emergence of the analysand's primitive needs connected to her existence and her ability to live" (pp. 107–108), or to feel vital and alive.

For example, in the case of Carlo, a deeply schizoid man in his fifties suffering from "phobic-obsessional symptoms and a general state of inertia" (p. 104), who embarks on a period of visiting female prostitutes and

[3] Green, A. (1980). The dead mother. In *On Private Madness*. London: Karnac, 1997, pp. 142-173.

relates openly homosexual dreams—e.g., of masturbating a famous politician who was preparing to "bugger his brother-in-law" (p. 104)—Lombardi delays commenting on the manifest perverse elements and potential homosexual transference implications. Instead, using Carlo's associations to the dream that included church dogma and the church's attempt to suppress paintings by Caravaggio, he observes that Carlo seems to be trying to use eroticism

> to revivify the body that his ideological terroristic violence spurred him to blot out in his own world. If a painting by Caravaggio is valuable, [Carlo's] body, his unique body, should be all the more so, but he had nevertheless effaced the very body that made it possible for him to live. [p. 105]

Even allowing for the suggestive possibility that the patient had been primed by previous comments of this kind, it is striking to hear Carlo say,

> "The main thing is that now, unlike before, I feel alive. The concentration camp [feelings are] still there, just a step away, but now I have a concrete reality I can turn to. The real pitfall is abstraction. With abstraction anything can happen and you never know how to hold subversive anxiety at bay. It's different with concrete reality: things exist and have definite boundaries. So I have room to live, while the other way it's just terror and nothing else." [p. 105]

Following the work of Freud, Bion, and Armando Ferrari,[4] Lombardi defines *body–mind dissociation* "as a discord that takes shape in the premental period and cannot be identified with any known classified disease, but is analyzable ... from a standpoint that focuses on the ways and forms of internal functioning" (pp. 6–7). The pathology of this mind–body split occurs prior to the psychic representation of part– or whole–object relationships, and so he insists that its address in the treatment must precede object relational transference interpretations.

The etiology of mind–body dissociation is a relative "scarcity, deformation, or absence of maternal care ... [which results in] a distortion of

[4] See, for example, Lombardi, R. (2009). Body, affect, thought: reflections on the work of Matte Blanco and Ferrari. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 78:123-160.

development that . . . undermines a harmonious body–mind relationship" (p. 23). Lombardi emphasizes that the maternal failure is relative to the infant's constitutionally determined state of need. This is not simply a function of failed or "ordinary" maternal capacity. The level and kind of maternal care required by any given infant can be seriously affected by whatever limitations may be imposed on the mother–infant dyad by the infant's genetic or other unique physical requirements or limitations. Thus, Lombardi is careful to note:

> When I speak of *body–mind dissociation*, I mean a situation in which the body in itself continues to exist concretely, but disappears from the mind's horizon, just as the actual baby, originally pure physicality, may not feel accepted onto the horizon of the person looking after it: a reaction that obviously intersects with constitutional factors, so that certain babies are more liable to it than others. [p. 24, italics in original]

The domain of body–mind dissociation, the consequences of which will later coexist in time with more ordinary object relational conflicts, involves levels of functioning that "are more primitive than the schizoid forms explored by Melanie Klein (1946)" (p. 7).[5] Remediation does not lead or lend itself to a reconstructive approach but will depend instead on the emotional quality of actual intersubjective here-and-now relational transactions, which help orient the patient to attend to the sensorial signals from his or her own body and the dimension of time. These transactions—which include the analyst's receptivity, emotional resonance in reverie, unconscious enactments, and other consequences of conscious and unconscious relational interaffectivity that focus first on the evolving development of the patient's recognition of and relationship with his or her own physical self—require a technical stance that offers

> a practical way of getting at the fracture in the patient's body–mind relationship by orienting the intersubjective exchange during the session . . . towards facilitating the sensory integration and body–mind dialogue that presumably could not be constructed in the subject's earliest phases because of such

[5] Klein, M. (1946). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. In *Envy and Gratitude*. London: Hogarth Press, 1975.

> circumstances as a distortion or absence of maternal *rêverie*. [p. 18, italics in original]

It is important for readers to keep in mind that while the etiology of this dissociation, especially as seen from an external, third-party point of view, takes place in an object relational, intersubjective context, from the perspective of the developing infant and young child—and in the adult patient once the body–mind dissociation has taken hold and become embedded in the adult's mode of functioning—the inattention to signals from the body is seen as a one-person problem that must be attended to before its source and implications in relationships can be effectively addressed. Winnicott (1974)[6] made a similar argument in his "Fear of Breakdown" paper, where, considering the matter of early trauma from the assumed perspective of the preverbal infant, he said that the events and feelings were "felt" but took place initially when there was no self there to experience them.

As one reads the many rich and complexly detailed clinical examples offered in this book, one recognizes that Lombardi believes that some degree of body–mind dissociation, which is especially relevant to primitive mental states and the disorders to which they give rise, will also be encountered in less severe forms of pathology. His theory of the clinical encounter adds to our repertoire and understanding of the concept of the *patient's transference onto his or her own body*. This is proposed as a *vertical transference* that occurs simultaneously with the more familiar, object-related *horizontal transference* with which analysts have become familiar over the years and which, when manifestations of body–mind dissociation are present, must take precedence in the hierarchy of analytic working-through in the analysis.

Recognition of the vertical transference, however, requires emotional availability and receptivity on the part of the analyst and may prove a challenge.

> This "vertical" transference of the analysand onto his own body could not take place without a *rêverie* (Bion, 1962) based on the

[6] Winnicott, D. W. (1974). Fear of breakdown. *Int. Rev. Psychoanal.,* 1:103-107.

> analyst's capacity for "listening" to her own sensory world: thus there comes about in the session a *double and parallel transference on the part of the participants each onto his or her own corporality.* [p. 34, italics in original][7]

This places great pressure on the analyst's subjectivity, intuition, and countertransference because it requires that "the analyst's body [function] like a receptor organ for the analysand's unconscious communications. The whole body becomes a sort of tympanic membrane for receiving purposes" (p. 35).

Being a "tympanic membrane" for a primitively dissociated other has its complexities and strains. It is a difficult process to describe in words because a great deal of its activity will take place unconsciously, beyond the range of empirical observation by oneself or others. We cannot say how we arrived at an intuition but can only indicate the result of that process, what it might have led to in the way of intervention or change in listening stance or level and kind of analyst activity and in the patient's presumed manifest responses to that intervention. As Bion (1970)[8] has argued, we cannot fully explain the experience of an analysis; the analyst and patient are the only ones who can have firsthand experience of any given analytic moment, and even that will be different for each of them. The most we can hope to do in trying to communicate to other analysts something of what goes on in an analysis is to say something that will remind them of their own firsthand experiences in their analyses.

In addition, being a "tympanic membrane" for the patient means that analysts must be prepared to identify deeply, sometimes painfully, with the patient in their countertransference and to overcome their own degrees of body–mind dissociation in order to approach and deal personally with

> those terrifying and evolutive characteristics that Bion assigned to O. We discover that *we*—inside ourselves—are the patient in front of us. This opening up of the analyst to an *otherness in herself* becomes the condition of the patient's being able, in his own turn, to *recognize himself within himself*: a condition that is necessary but not sufficient, given the possibility that the analysand may

[7] Bion, W. R. (1962). *Learning from Experience.* London: Heinemann.

[8] Bion, W. R. (1970). *Attention and Interpretation.* New York: Basic Books.

> balk at the attendant internal evolution. [pp. 175–176, italics in original]

But if the analyst can withstand what César Botella (2014)[9] has called the *regredience* of this process—a kind of formal regression in identification with and response to the patient's position—then the resultant analytic activity can catalyze with the patient

> a mobilization of experience characterized by sensory predominance and non-symbolic, pre-verbal levels, [in which] the analyst's intervention can be oriented towards concrete and non-symbolic levels, emphasizing the analysand's discovery of sensations and of his body, and helping to set up his internal body–mind relationship. [p. 180]

It is only when this connection is securely established and functional that the work of the more usual and expectable object relational transference interpretations can take hold and gain therapeutic traction.

Throughout this book, Lombardi illustrates and emphasizes that although the body–mind dissociation may originate in a failure of maternal reverie, in terms of technique

> the analyst does not [initially] interpret the maternal transference onto herself . . . . But instead she underlines *the patient's transference onto himself, . . . the transference onto one's own body . . .* and in particular his relationship to his sense organs as a starting point for a *consciousness connected to the sense organs.* [p. 49, italics in original]

In this sense, what he proposes challenges the more commonly encountered theoretical assumption that the patient's bodily symptoms will reflect and symbolize unconscious object relationships,[10] holding off object relational interpretations until a later phase of the treatment.

The clinical presentations of body–mind dissociation can vary widely, but many share the element of affective emptiness and emotional deadness.

[9] Botella, C. (2014). On remembering: the notion of *memory without recollection. Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 95:911-936.

[10] See Bronstein, C. (2011). On psychosomatics: the search for meaning. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 92:173-195; Bronstein, C. (2015). Finding unconscious phantasy in the session: recognizing form. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 96:925-944.

> When the words spoken in the sessions tend to reveal a world of meaningless "abstract figures intended to make one forget sensations" as [a psychotic patient of Lombardi's] observed in one session, the function of analysis is to lead the analysand back to a real lived dimension so as to generate fragments of authentic experience. [p. 91]

These experiences, born of the emotional recognition and resonance of the analytic encounter as actual experience, can begin to direct patients' attention to the existence and experience of their own bodies and serve as the unconscious, intersubjective reparative movements needed to reestablish, or sometimes even establish for the first time, a more secure connection and emotional/sensory commerce between body and mind. "Repeated experiences of sensory registration and 'significant correspondences' weave a mental fabric, which, with time and growth, will develop containing functions" (p. 91).[11]

The main thrust of Lombardi's work is in the expansion of analytic theory and technique in an attempt to better understand and address some of the complex problems with which analysts and patients struggle at the very limits of our therapeutic effectiveness and understanding. More traditionally oriented analysts may question his recommendations and technique, wondering if they are perhaps still another version of support for defenses, avoidance of addressing the more destructive and malignant features of unconscious phantasy, "interpretation upwards," and other very real and familiar pitfalls. However, in light of the work of innovators such as Bion, Green, Piera Aulagnier, Pierre Marty, and their successors—and as one who has labored long, hard, and, regrettably, sometimes unproductively at the limits of analyzability—I believe that one must carefully study Lombardi's contributions and give them serious consideration.

Varieties of psychic deadness and denial of and alienation from one's body have become central features of the complaints of patients in our time, as hysterical symptoms were in Freud's. To this, attention must be paid.

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[11] Ferrari, A. B. & Stella, A. (1998). *L'alba del pensiero.* Rome: Boria.

PSYCHOANALYTIC TECHNIQUE: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EGO PSYCHOLOGY (TÉCNICA PSICOANALÍTICA: APORTACIONES DE LA PSICOLOGÍA DEL YO). By Cecilio Paniagua. Madrid: Editorial Tébar Flores, 2014. 426 pp.

As many readers know, Cecilio Paniagua has been an important contributor to the resurgence of literature on ego psychology and its focus on the technical modifications advanced by the emergence of Freud's structural model. Along with Fred Busch, Paniagua has been on the forefront of amplifying the work of Paul Gray (1982),[1] who first called analysts' attention to a "developmental lag" in psychoanalytic technique between Freud's first and second models of the mind. In his latest work, Paniagua hopes to reach a larger audience of clinicians who, for reasons he describes, have held on to an outdated theory of technique that was scrubbed in principle, though never in action, by Freud (1923).[2] In *Psychoanalytic Technique: Contributions from Ego Psychology*, Paniagua invites the reader to consider the advantages and rationality of adopting a technique that is consistent with Freud's revised theory of the mind and that, for the author, is best suited for helping the patient make the most use of the psychoanalytic method.

This excellent book contains too much of value to adequately summarize in one review. But I will try. Paniagua's powers of persuasion are complemented by the abundant and rich clinical material he presents. The process notes are specific to the questions he raises and are brutally honest in their inclusion of missteps along with successes. All examples are immediately illustrative of the technical issue at hand and, although he does not always indicate the time frame, appear to span the range from more recent work to cases seen as far back as his candidacy. Thus, we get a sense of Paniagua's style at different moments in his career through session excerpts that read like unpolished records of complex analytic interactions. The conundrums gotten into by the analytic pair in his examples

[1] Gray, P. (1982). "Developmental lag" in the evolution of technique for psychoanalysis of neurotic conflict. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 30:621–655.

[2] Freud, S. (1923). *The Ego and the Id. S. E.*, 19.

will feel familiar to the reader, and the way Paniagua listens and responds to the material will feel fresh. Throughout the text, he connects his technical stance with Freud's theoretical modifications, and it is in fact Paniagua's succinct renditions of Freud that make this text such valuable reading for those familiar and unfamiliar with classical theory.

The book is composed of twenty chapters, each a previously published paper. Despite this fact, the chapters flow easily into one another, and throughout, Paniagua discusses relevant and timely psychoanalytic topics while keeping close to his central focus of making a case for the technique of what he calls *contemporary ego psychology* (CEP). While the reading can feel a bit repetitive—most topics tend to lead to a pitch for CEP technique—we get the picture of an analyst who is engaged with contemporary controversies and innovations while carefully delineating and thinking through his own stance. As such, this book takes the reader through and beyond the traditional subjects of ego psychology, such as defense and id analysis, to more nuanced discussions of the nature and types of interpretation, the analyst's surprise and authority, intersubjectivity, and countertransference. I will delve into his views on just a few of these.

Paniagua's starting point is Freud's shift from the topographic to the structural model of the mind. He reminds us how Freud originally thought neurotic symptoms formed as a result of conflict between unconscious instinctual wishes and the conscious demands of morality. In this first topography, the psyche was divided into two parts, the unconscious and the preconscious/conscious. It was only later that clinical experience with such phenomena as unconscious guilt forced him to modify his views so that a second topography—the structural model—was born, in which the mind was now divided into ego, id, and superego. In this model, the unconscious was no longer equivalent to the repressed, as parts of the ego and superego were also unconscious and were not considered repressed. So, not only id impulses but also ego defenses and superego demands and ideals could be unconscious. What this meant was that intrapsychic conflict—the central object of psychoanalytic attention—could be entirely unconscious.

Freud's revision of his theory of anxiety followed these new understandings. Now, instead of anxiety being the manifestation of repressed libido, anxiety was viewed as a function of the ego, a response to the

emergence of unpleasurable and threatening affect emanating from the unconscious and a signal for the deployment of mechanisms of defense. This evolution in thinking about the role of anxiety and the unconscious ego brought with it an important shift in how the analyst positions his listening vis-à-vis the patient's productions in session: resistances no longer would be thought of as merely obstructing free association but would be seen as signaling the emergence of unconscious defensive operations.

Because these defensive operations were those that the psychologically immature mind of the child had erected to manage fears and wishes—defenses that over time had hardened into character—the analyst was now focused on modifying these defenses so that the adult patient could find an instinctually more gratifying and less anxious life through more flexible compromises. Paraphrasing Waelder (1960),[3] Paniagua writes that the question evolved from "What are the patient's unconscious wishes?" to "What does the patient fear as a consequence of those wishes?" To understand this, the analyst must further ask, "When the patient experiences anxiety, to what strategies does he resort?"

This manner of listening orients the analyst to what he considers the "point of urgency," the point at which "the analyst perceives in the patient a tension that obliges the ego to interfere with the material emerging from the id, in an effort to impede the emergence in consciousness of an unconscious instinctual conflict" (p. 9). His immediate attention is drawn to the sequence of words, the flow of associations, tone, and affect in order to trace the path of instinctual derivatives thwarted in their aims by the ego. Empathy and experience act as beacons in how the analyst reads and formulates the clusters of material to himself and to the patient. Paniagua proposes that the analyst sensitize his listening to the manifestations of the patient's resistances with the aim of inducing the patient to do the same and, in that way, utilize his own ego capacities to observe his intrapsychic conflict. A detailed exploration, termed by Gray (1994)[4] *close process attention*, ensues, with the analyst cautiously showing the patient how signs of anxiety mobilize defenses against unpleasurable affects

[3] Waelder, R. (1960). *Basic Theory of Psychoanalysis.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

[4] Gray, P. (1994). *The Ego and Analysis of Defense.* Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson.

linked to troubling fantasies and memories. Despite the fact that many of these fantasies have a transferential dimension, the "data" of the session are, by and large, not limited to this and extend to the extratransferential dimension, which must be integrated with the former throughout the course of the analysis in the process known as *working through*.[5]

For Paniagua, it is crucial that the patient's observing ego be allied with the analyst in what he would think of as a joint exploration, but he is clear that CEP is far from anything even remotely bipersonal. In fact, the sturdiness of the author's approach lies in how he consistently pegs his technical recommendations to epistemological assumptions. For Paniagua, technique must flow naturally from the theory of mind that supports it. This is a theory of mind in which conflict is primarily intrapsychic, and psychic reality is verifiable. The technique is positivist as opposed to constructivist and unipolar as opposed to intersubjective. For the author, the fact that the patient is enlisted by the analyst to observe surface manifestations of conflict, through the joint use of cognition, minimizes the influence of suggestion and makes psychoanalytic technique more scientific. The author's perspective here is interesting: clinical psychoanalysis is the scientific study of meaning; psychic functions and their meanings are as directly observable and specifiable as are neural pathways or discharges; formulations on discernible meanings of clinical material constitute an adequate explanatory base on par with neurophysiological explanations, and so on.

In fact, throughout the book, Paniagua endeavors to portray psychoanalysis as a naturalistic theory and the technique of CEP, which flows from it, as objective and capable of discerning scientific facts about the mind. These are obtained through the systematic study of unconscious processes. These unconscious processes—the segment of nature that clinical psychoanalysis studies—are known through interpretations of clinical material. These interpretations are limited to inferences based on observable movement of dynamic forces in conflict and not on psychogenetic principles such as castration anxiety or penis envy, death drive or libido. Those types of "metapsychological excursions" (p. 12), as he calls them, engaged in by other schools of psychoanalysis, are unnecessary "heuristic contaminants" (p. 14) that take us far afield from scientific validation and

[5] Waelder, R. (1960). *Basic Theory of Psychoanalysis*. New York: Int. Univ. Press.

what can be experienced as clinically meaningful to the patient. Here, it is important to revisit Paniagua's claim that psychoanalysis is the scientific study of meanings: by this, he does not mean that psychoanalysis is a hermeneutic discipline. It is hermeneutic only inasmuch as it deals with reconstruction of the past, which is essentially unverifiable. For Paniagua, psychoanalysis is or should be concerned with intraclinical observable data that lend themselves to confirmable hypotheses from which scientific theories of the mind can be based.

Of course, the author explains, the observable data in themselves may be incomprehensible, and the clinical surface is often replete with non sequiturs, disconnected affects, and omissions, among any number of clinical mysteries. For this purpose, the analyst finds recourse in two methods of psychoanalytic investigation, the *algorithmic* and the *heuristic*. Paniagua sees proper analytic method as consisting of a combination of both. Where an algorithmic approach investigates inconsistencies and omissions in the material, a heuristic approach uses the patient's responses to the analyst's investigations—his associations—as further material in order to formulate a hypothesis and suggest something that the patient can assimilate as meaningful insight. An interpretation is always a hypothesis and should be presented as such to the patient. The key is the close connection to the mutually observable clinical material. While these might seem like straightforward ideas not unfamiliar to many analysts, they invite an interesting discussion by the author about the nature of hypothesis formulation in psychoanalysis and in science in general. In order to think through the usual criticism that psychoanalytic hypotheses are "speculations" (p. 29), he writes, one has to keep in mind that hypotheses form the basis of the process of inductive reasoning, incomplete by its very nature, as well as of the method of logical inference in traditional science.

Throughout the book, Paniagua continually reminds the reader that the analyst's attention and point of intervention must touch upon what is evident and demonstrable in the patient's spoken discourse, what he calls "nodal points" (p. 39), which make up the workable surface: thematic changes, omissions or vague and confusing communication, changes in affective tone, pauses and silences, parapraxis, slips, forgetting, mistakes, symptomatic acts, moments of "acting in," negations, and assumption of the analyst's familiarity with a subject or the opposite. The analyst may proceed algorithmically or

heuristically, and here Paniagua provides two pages of rich examples of what he means. Here is just a sample:

> P: "After my parent's fight, my mother began screaming hysterically" (muffled laughter). A *heuristic* interpretation would be: "Do you notice, like I do, that there is something that causes you pleasure in that memory of your mother's reaction?" An *algorithmic* interpretation would be: "Are you aware of what your laughter at this moment might mean?" [pp. 40–41, italics added]

For Paniagua, again, these two modes of interpreting constitute a scientific method because they are atheoretical, with the exception of the assumption of psychic determinism and the existence of conflict within and in between the psychic agencies (it is worth bearing in mind that this is no small exception). Following Anton Kris (1983),[6] he believes that one requirement for the analyst is to ensure that his method remain independent of theory in order to be in the best position to elucidate the specific nature of the psychic ingredients. Paniagua notes—and I think this is a very important point because it sets his approach apart from much of what is written today in terms of the analyst's disposition in relation to analytic technique—that both heuristic and algorithmic approaches relieve the analyst from the anxiety caused by imperfect knowledge, adding that the analyst is now free to dispense with Bion's *negative capability*, which he seems to regard as a sort of prison sentence for the analyst. It is here that Paniagua throws down the gauntlet: CEP, or psychoanalytic technique of the second topography, has no use for Freud's injunction that the analyst maintain an *evenly hovering attention*, which, in any case, "in a strict sense is humanly impossible" (p. 72). Equally undesirable is Reik's (listening with the) *third ear* (1948).[7] Furthermore, the Freudian "advice" that the analyst turn his own unconscious like a receptive organ toward the transmitting unconscious of the patient (1912)[8] is insufficient, antiquated, and not for "our century."

[6] Kris, A. O. (1983). The analyst's conceptual freedom in the method of free association. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 64:407–411.

[7] Reik, T. (1948). *Listening with the Third Ear: The Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst.* New York: Farrar, Straus.

[8] Freud, S. (1912). *Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis. S. E.*, 12.

Them's fightin' words, and Paniagua seems to enjoy delving into polemics. This makes the book a very engaging read. But there is a great deal in these chapters with which to argue, and this book seems almost designed for debate. I will try to be brief, but I think no review of this important work can be complete without at least addressing some of the charges the author lays out against other forms of working, since they compose a significant part of the edifice against which he promotes his central argument for the technique of contemporary ego psychology.

To start with, Paniagua makes statements such as the following when taking aim at practices that use countertransference and reverie as sources for interpretation: "Scientifically, it would make more sense to adhere to a technique where primary process is interpreted through secondary process, rather than by primary process itself" (p. 18). Appeals to authority (science, objectivity, nature) like these abound in the book and taint some of his arguments with a shade of logical fallacy and bias. But it is the oversimplification and dismissal of the theories he criticizes with which readers might find themselves at odds:

> We don't—or we shouldn't—find it too difficult to understand concepts like the Bionian bizarre object, the Jungian imago, the Lacanian signifier, the Hartmannian conflict-free zone of the ego. It's easy to learn that when Kleinian analysts speak of "psychotic parts of the mind," they are referring to primary process thinking, or that when a French colleague uses *fantasm*, he is referring to unconscious fantasies. [p. 113]

This statement can be true only superficially. Given the fact that Lacanian analysts mean something very different when they use the word *fantasm* from what non-Lacanian francophone analysts mean, or that the concept of unconscious fantasy lacks coherence and consistency within Freud's own writing (Scarfone 2017),[9] not to mention across psychoanalytic schools (Bohleber et al. 2015),[10] the author's

[9] Scarfone, D. (2017). Fantasy and the process of fantasy-building. Paper presented to the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, December 2, 2017.

[10] Bohleber, W., Jiménez, J. P., Scarfone, D., Varvin S. & Zysman, S. (2015). Unconscious phantasy and its conceptualizations: an attempt at conceptual integration. *Int. J. Psychoanal.*, 96:705–730.

claim that "all of these terms correspond with clinical realities and are more or less translatable from one psychoanalytic taxonomy to another" (p. 113) is dubious. Recent papers by Lucy LaFarge (2017),[11] Steven Cooper (2017),[12] and Rachel Blass (2017)[13] show just how contentious this issue of *translation* (Zimmer 2017, p. 822)[14] can in fact be. What is the ego psychological equivalent of *bizarre object*? Is the psychotic part of the mind, which may be seen as containing unrepresented, unprocessed elements, really equivalent to primary process thinking?

Paniagua's oversimplifications may also be seen in the way he tends to rely on some of the more extreme views of Owen Renik—in contrast to which CEP easily appears as a less dogmatic, more measured approach—as representative of intersubjective approaches in psychoanalysis. Additionally, techniques derived from Freud's first, topographic model are referred to as the "primitive technique" (p. 67) instead of, say, early technique. (In fact, Paniagua seems to divide the non-CEP world into the two broad camps, the primitives and the "radical subjectivists" [p. 158].) Cracks in Paniagua's otherwise smart and crisp rhetorical style can be seen when he indulges in the same type of deep interpreting he accuses others of, dismissing their technical choices as driven by unconscious exhibitionism, voyeurism, omniscience, authoritarianism, narcissism, and so forth.

Of course, Paniagua is on point in some of his examples, as can be easily appreciated in an excerpt he provides from Horacio Etchegoyen (pp. 68–69), painful to read in its heavy-handedness and obliviousness to the patient's process. But this example is taken as a specimen of modern work, even though it is slightly over twenty years old, and no one I know works in this way. It would be difficult to deny that there are extreme

[11] LaFarge, L. (2017). From "either/or" to "and": the analyst's use of multiple models in clinical work. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 65:829–844.

[12] Cooper, S. H. (2017). The analyst's "use" of theory or theories: the play of theory. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 65:859–882.

[13] Blass, R. B. (2017). Committed to a single model and open to reality. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 65:845–858.

[14] Zimmer, R. (2017). The analyst's use of multiple models in clinical work: introduction. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 65:819–827.

positions within the different schools of thought under the broad umbrella of intersubjectivity or that examples of bad technique across theories are not hard to find. But at times it feels as if Paniagua mistakes these for the norm. His critique of intersubjectivity suffers from this, as it builds a straw man from the "radical subjectivists" (p. 158), again, in this book represented almost exclusively by Renik (though in chapters 11 an 16, on intersubjectivity and countertransference, respectively, and in other parts he minimally engages with more contemporary analysts such as Thomas Ogden, Christopher Bollas, Robert Stolorow, Marilia Aisenstein, and Roosevelt Cassorla).

The idea that some contemporary clinicians may not feel close process monitoring to be sufficient—not *important* but *sufficient*—for establishing a meaningful psychoanalytic engagement with the patient, given everything a patient can bring to the hour, is not dealt with by Paniagua. Nor are the shortcomings of the psychodevelopmental model on which contemporary ego psychology stands. In fact, if one were to rely on the backing of science to determine the viability of techniques, some have suggested that it has been neuroscientific and infant developmental research that has stimulated intersubjective approaches modeled on the mother–infant/relational-interactive schema and has pointed toward implicit, nonverbal processes, while moving away from older models of "pursuing resolution of neurotic conflict by identifying causal factors" (Kirshner 2017, pp. 51–52).[15] Paniagua speculates on the unconscious, "irrational" resistances of other analysts but does not consider the rational advantages of their perspectives.

It is also not clear to me that the technique of CEP avoids the authoritarian stance that Paniagua criticizes in analysts of the "primitive technique," particularly in regard to selection of interpretable material. Bion, in his theory of transformations, also states that the analyst's main concern should be that of which he has "direct evidence" (Sandler 2005, p. 772).[16] The question, of course, becomes, What constitutes direct

[15] Kirshner, L. (2017). Intersubjectivity *in Psychoanalysis: A Model for Theory and Practice.* London: Routledge.

[16] Sandler, P. C. (2005). *The Language of Bion: A Dictionary of Concepts.* London: Karnac.

evidence, and according to whom? For instance, the patient may not perceive what to the analyst is obvious, for example, that a pause after a statement of aggression is related to the expression of that statement. And this may not simply be explained as the manifestation of another resistance to the emergence of unconscious material. The patient may in fact not share the analyst's basic assumption of psychic determinism or the assumption that his thoughts or nonverbal communications follow each other in sequences of impulse and defense. A certain degree of indoctrination has to be involved based on the authority of the analyst, no less than in any other school of psychoanalysis, but no more objective. In fact, the unacknowledged shadow of the analyst's authority also hangs over the question of analyzability, a topic I would like Paniagua to have spent more time with. For the author, *analyzable* seems to refer to those who can make use of the technique of CEP, which at a minimum requires of the patient the ability to therapeutically "split" his ego and a therapeutic/working/rational alliance with the analyst (pp. 90, 350). Paniagua believes that these analyzable patients are found, or "created," so to speak, through application of the structural technique (see his brief discussion on p. 344). But again, it is not difficult to see how in the age of "postmodern patients" (Kahn 2017)[17]—who live in the moment, distrust authority, and are temperamentally disinclined toward grand narratives and deterministic views of themselves—the technique of CEP might not feel clinically compelling. Are these patients unanalyzable? There is room in the book for Paniagua to be clearer on this issue.

Paniagua has written a masterful book that stimulates thinking and demands that the reader examine his own theories, explicit and implicit, underwriting his clinical work. The author's style, in written word and thought, is crisp and elegant, and the breadth of his knowledge, both historical and contemporary, is sweeping. His discussions of defense analysis and close process monitoring, Freud's two topographies, and the nature of interpretation are deep and comprehensive and make for indispensable reading for practitioners, classical Freudians in particular, who are interested in connecting the history of our field to how it is practiced

[17] Kahn, L. (2014). *Le Psychanalyste apathique et le patient postmoderne [The Apathetic Psychoanalyst and the Postmodern Patient]*. Paris: Éditions de l'Olivier.

today. The clinical material is rich and heuristically indispensable. The discussions of intersubjectivity, authority, and analyzability invite constructive debate. *Psychoanalytic Technique: Contributions from Ego Psychology* is highly recommended for candidates and seasoned psychoanalysts alike.

**RODRIGO BARAHONA (BROOKLINE, MA)**

IMMIGRATION IN PSYCHOANALYSIS: LOCATING OURSELVES. Edited by Julia Beltsiou. New York: Routledge, 2015. 244 pp.

The early émigré analysts, deeply traumatized by the cataclysmic events in mid-twentieth-century Europe, wrote little about their experience of dislocation. Hardly eager to draw attention to their ethnic origins, which had brought them nothing but persecution, they adapted to their new lands quickly and, with little modification, resumed psychoanalytic work with their culturally unfamiliar patients. This stance was curious, since the massive, protracted, and transgenerationally transmitted trauma of Holocaust had itself, once and for all, established that the human mind, even in its invisible depths, was affected by alterations in its sociopolitical surround. The idea that the stability of psychic structure is dependent on "stimulus nutriment" from external reality thus took root.[1] Coupled with the concepts of "average expectable environment,"[2] "reality constancy,"[3] and "waking screen,"[4] this laid the groundwork for the new wave of immigrant analysts to explore how a radical shift in ecology and culturally syntonic life patterns affects matters of identity, subjectivity, and belonging. Less traumatized than their elders and less dominated by the hegemony of psychic determinism, these analysts opened up a new realm of psychoanalytic theorizing. The fact that the demographic

[1] Rapaport, D. (1960). The structure of psychoanalytic theory. *Psychol. Issues*, 6:39–72.

[2] Hartmann, H. (1939). *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation*, trans. D. Rapaport. New York: Int. Univ. Press, 1958.

[3] Frosch, J. (1964). The psychotic character: clinical psychiatric considerations. *Psychiatric Q.*, 38:81–96.

[4] Pacella, B. (1980). The primal matrix configuration. In *Rapprochement: The Critical Subphase of Separation-Individuation*, ed. R. F. Lax, S. Bach, & J. A. Burland. New York: Jason Aronson, pp. 117–131.

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composition of the Western world was rapidly changing and that the monolithic shell of "classic" psychoanalytic theory was cracking also came to their aid.

Grinberg and Grinberg broke fresh ground in demonstrating how language, ethnic food, wedding and funeral rituals, and homo-ethnic friendships play an important role in managing the psychic pain and disorienting anxieties consequent on immigration.[5] Elovitz and Kahn then offered an impressive collection of subjective experiences of North American immigrants from diverse cultures.[6] My own work on immigration followed.[7] A spate of papers, book chapters, edited volumes, and solo-authored monographs subsequently appeared on the topics of immigration, cross-cultural treatment, and the broad palette of diversity in the formation, sustenance, growth, and relational participation of the human self.

A fresh addition to this burgeoning literature is *Immigration in Psychoanalysis*, edited by Julia Beltsiou. This book's sophistication is evident in the wide-ranging and diverse oeuvre of its contributors and their adamant avoidance of linearity and generalization. The contributors to this edited volume reside in the United States but come from many different regions of the world: Amman, Caribbean Islands, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, and South Africa, to name a few. The patients these clinicians report on are "American" but quite often with similarly diverse backgrounds. The religious, racial, historical, political, and linguistic differences that pervade these clinical narratives could, in lesser hands, have deteriorated in a self-congratulatory cacophony. Instead, these case presentations form a solid platform for explicating the existential figure–ground destabilization, the onset of stutter in the daily idiom of life, and the differential response of the host culture to different newcomers, in constituting the immigrants' subjective experience.

[5] Grinberg, L., & Grinberg, R. (1989). *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile*, trans. N. Festinger. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press.

[6] Elovitz, P., & Kahn, C. (1997). *Immigrant Experiences: Personal Narrative and Psychological Analysis*. Cranbury, NJ: Assoc. Univ. Presses.

[7] Akhtar, S. (1995). A third individuation: immigration, identity, and the psychoanalytic process. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.* 43:1051–1084; Akhtar, S. (1999). *Immigration and Identity: Turmoil, Treatment, and Transformation*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson; Akhtar, S. (2011). *Immigration and Acculturation: Mourning, Adaptation, and the Next Generation*. Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson.

The book also introduces us to a fresh lexicon, the representatives of which include "amputated self" (p. 41), "hyphenated space" (p. 56), "cultural insiderism" (p. 70), "third culture kids" (p. 98), "the cultural blindspot" (p. 172), and "the immigrants' neverland" (p. 189). It also opens up new vistas in the study of the psychological impact of immigration. One such novel concept pertains to the content (p. 52) and form (p. 64) of migration-related dreams. Another involves the role played by the "prehistory of places" (p. 27) in the subsequent experience of space, place, and land on the immigrant's part. Yet another fresh topic is the exploration of name changes after immigration (pp. 151–165). Instead of explicating these concepts further, I prefer to offer a few selected quotes from the book to whet its potential reader's appetite.

> The displacement necessarily occasioned by immigration—especially when forced by economic deprivation or political oppression—is unquestionably a tremendous challenge to subjectivity, but it is also the fertile ground of creativity, the strange place where something new can come into being. [p. 15]

> Our selves don't fall into any neat binaries of nationality and our experiences of, and responses to "otherness" are extremely variable. [p. 83]

> We move into the foreign in order to discover the foreign in us. [p. 89]

> Moving away from home may be the only way to give contours to our opaque sense that something is not quite right, an attempt to become intelligible to ourselves and others. [p. 96]

> Returning to a homeland has unexpectedly given me a new alertness to the present, to things said and unsaid. I think I can now act as a more forceful and outspoken witness to the pieces of history that still risk being ignored. [p. 133]

> A certain longing for one's culture, a certain homesickness, a wish to return for the purer form of what was left behind continues to be there, dimming the brightness of the present, no self-consciousness is required for having such feelings. They are simply the norm. [p. 183]

These passages give ample testimony to the profoundly empathic and humane nature of this book. It does contain some minor slipups, such as occasionally confusing the subjective and the heuristic, omitting important bibliographic citations, especially Erikson on the vicissitudes of identity,[8] Balint on the psychic uses of space and distance,[9] and Denford on the lasting impact of leaving home.[10] The editorial overenthusiasm of categorizing twelve chapters into eight different parts of the book (with five parts composed of only one chapter each) is also grating. The placement of bibliographic citations at the end of each chapter rather than pooling them together at the end of book leads to much repetition and also makes it difficult to assess at an easy glance what has and has not been covered in the book. The overly busy cover design with ten beginning points of lines with written text is also distracting. However, the book's strengths far exceed such weaknesses. The following passage, while anchored in the clinical idiom, conveys the breadth of thinking that pervades this book.

> Because all patients are multifaceted and multiplicitous, one cannot make any assumptions about the mix of nationality or cultural background that will yield a productive therapeutic alliance between a particular analyst and patient. All we analysts can do is tread lightly in our patients' private territory and try to register our assumptions about them, ourselves, their culture, and our culture. We can then attempt to learn the particular languages spoken in our patients' domains and collaborate with them to develop a lingua franca. [p. 83]

This message, as will be readily noted, is not only clinical but cultural and humanitarian as well. It is such blending of ethically guided subjectivity and pragmatically inclined wisdom that imparts to the book its well-deserved virtuosity.

**SALMAN AKHTAR (PHILADELPHIA, PA)**

[8] Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and Society.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1963.

[9] Balint, M. (1959). *Thrills and Regressions.* London: Hogarth Press.

[10] Denford, S. (1981). Going away. *Int. Rev. Psychoanal.* 59:325–332.

A CULTURAL CITIZEN OF THE WORLD: SIGMUND FREUD'S KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN WRITINGS. By S. S. Prawer. Abingdon, UK / New York: Modern Humanities Research Association / Routledge, 2009. 156 pp.

That Freud studied and was influenced by both Shakespeare and John Stuart Mill is well known, but Freud's Anglophilia—which began in his teens—and his interest in and love of many other British and American authors is less known. Therefore, *A Cultural Citizen of the World: Sigmund Freud's Knowledge and Use of British and American Writings*, by S. S. Prawer, is an important contribution to Freud's historiography.[1]

Freud had always wanted to be a part of the thought collective of cultured and educated Viennese and Germans and to share in their thought style. He worked hard at the gymnasium to which his father sent him so that he could acquire the educational bona fides of Viennese society. This required the acquisition of *Bildung*, the self-cultivation ideal institutionalized by Wilhelm von Humboldt in the German-speaking countries during the nineteenth century. To this end, Freud studied Latin and Greek, and he read Cervantes as well as the great figures of the German Enlightenment, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, and Heine.

Freud's English-language influences included the scientists John Tyndall, Thomas Huxley, Charles Lyell, Charles Darwin, and Norman Lockyer; the philosophers Bacon, Locke, and Hume; the anthropologists Sir James Fraser and Arthur Evans; the statesman Benjamin Disraeli; the economists Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus; and the Scottish historian of religion William Robertson Smith. Some of these names are familiar to us all from our reading of Freud's applied analytic work, including *Totem and Taboo, Civilization and Its Discontents, Moses and Monotheism*, and *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

The list of poets, novelists, and other contributors to the humanities whom Freud read and admired is also very long. It includes the Romantic

[1] S. S. Prawer was born to Jewish parents in Poland. The family fled the Nazi regime in 1939, immigrating to Britain. He was the Taylor Professor of German Language and Literature at the University of Oxford. His sister was the writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, the Academy Award–winning screenwriter.

poets Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley as well as Swift, Pope, Sir Walter Scott, Dickens, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, John Dryden, George Eliot, George Bernard Shaw, Joseph Conrad, Thomas Huxley, James Joyce, Rudyard Kipling, Herman Melville, Walter Pater, Virginia Woolf, and Oscar Wilde.

It may be that familiarity with British culture initially led to Freud's interest in English authors, as there was an English branch of the Freud family: the sons of his father's previous marriage immigrated to Manchester and did well financially. Benjamin refers to Freud's father as "a very dubious person. Nobody knows exactly how he made a living. He was kind of a dreamer." It is likely that after Jakob Freud left Moravia and his wool business and moved his young family to Vienna, when Sigmund was four years old, he depended entirely on the generosity of relatives to finance the family's large apartment and bourgeois Viennese lifestyle.

Freud's knowledge and use of anglophone authors in his work reflected only a part of his interest in and curiosity about the storehouse of world literature, ancient and modern, as it related to his clinical and theoretical interest and his own enjoyment and understanding of life. He frequently made literary associations in the analysis of his patients' dreams. The task the author of this book set for himself was to discover what can be learned about Freud's psychological dispositions and interests through his English literary references and to discern how these literary works informed Freud's treatment of his patients. Freud's wide reading is a reflection of his *Bildung*, in marked contrast with the educational backgrounds of American psychoanalysts, starting with the Austrian-born A. A. Brill, whose education and interests were predominantly medical and psychiatric. I have found that this educational tunnel vision is changing as more candidates enter training from nonmedical or psychological disciplines and hold degrees in literature and other humanities. The field of psychoanalysis can benefit only if we follow Freud's example and expect that all those whom we train be widely read.

The author devotes the final chapter to Bloomsbury British literary and lifestyle culture, with authors including Vita Sackville-West, Harold Nicolson, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, James and Alix Strachey, and James's brother Lytton Strachey. James Strachey went into analysis with Freud prior to his translating Freud's work. Virginia Woolf probably could

have benefited from psychoanalysis, but she was concerned it might damage her creativity. Her husband, Leonard, was more positive about Freudian psychoanalysis. In 1939, when Freud was close to death, Leonard and Virginia visited Freud in London. Leonard was impressed by Freud's personality, but Virginia saw only a "screwed up shrunk very old man" (p. 117).[2] Freud, on the other hand, saw Virginia as a narcissistic personality and gave her a narcissus flower. Later on, Virginia came to appreciate some of Freud's work, which she read in English translation. The chapter also includes a discussion of Freud's response to George Bernard Shaw, Shaw's response to Freud, and Freud's attention to the work of H. G. Wells.

In the closing, "Retrospect," the author suggests four questions Freud asked of literary works in general: What can we learn about the mental state of the author and the mood in which he or she wrote it? What are the psychological truths embodied in literary characters that we can analyze as though the characters existed in real life? What are the psychological truths in the nature and structure of a literary work? What impact can a literary work have on an audience? These questions line up with the different approaches to literary criticism: structuralism and formal study of the work, rather than the content; new criticism, the reading of the text without extrinsic information; psychoanalytic criticism; and reader response criticism. I would offer a fifth approach, based on the work of Ludwik Fleck, a Polish philosopher of science who published *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* in 1935. His view was that scientists—and, I would add, all creative individuals—are influenced by history, culture, society, and personality. This would apply to Freud's view of Shakespeare and our view of Freud.

The author used the example of *Hamlet* to show how Freud used all of these approaches. He looked at the play from the viewpoint of his own feelings and concerns, related *Hamlet* to what was going on in Shakespeare's life at the time, and connected the mood of the piece to the mood of Shakespeare himself at the time of writing. He viewed *Hamlet*

[2] Woolf, Virginia, diary entry, January 29, 1939, reprinted in Woolf, Virginia (1985). *The Diary of Virginia Woolf: Volume 5, 1936–1941*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Quotation is from p. 202.

from the lens of his psychoanalytic theory, the centrality of the Oedipus complex in development, and understood that the appeal of the play came from the audience's own fears and desires.

It is worth considering that the relationship between Freud and English literature was a two-way street in that so many English-speaking authors, novelists, poets, and philosophers were also influenced by Freud. One could offer another long list of those influenced by Marx and a third list of those influenced by both philosophers. In the third category would be the theorists of the Frankfurt School; although all were born in Germany, they came to America, specifically to New York's New School for Social Research, in the 1930s, and all wrote in English. All but Herbert Marcuse returned to Germany.

A recent philosopher who was influenced by Freud is Thomas Nagel, whom I met in the 1970s at a meeting of a research group chaired by Ben Rubinstein and Hartvig Dahl. Rubinstein and Dahl studied the analytic process using transcripts from a taped analysis. Nagel came with another philosopher, Saul Kripke, who left because he found the sexual material disturbing. Nagel remained and has written about the relationship of the mind–body to psychoanalysis.[3] More recently, there is Jonathan Lear, who is both a psychoanalyst and a philosopher.

My own list of authors indebted to Freud would include William Faulkner, with his stream of consciousness narration; Philip Roth ("Now vee may perhaps to begin. Yes?"); Saul Bellow; Bernard Malamud; the Trillings, Lionel and Diana; Steven Marcus; the playwrights Eugene O'Neill and Edward Albee; and both W. H. Auden, who wrote that Freud had become a "climate of opinion," and H. D., an American writer. Hilda Doolittle went to Vienna in the 1930s to be analyzed by Freud because of her writer's block. Her treatment was successful, and she went on to compose one of the most important epic poems of the twentieth century, *Helen in Egypt*.

*A Cultural Citizen of the World* makes a convincing case that English literature had an important influence on Freud's work and contributed to Freud's becoming a climate of opinion in the English-speaking world and

[3] Erreich, A. (2016). An exchange with Thomas Nagel: the mind–body problem and psychoanalysis. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 64:389–403.

the rest of the world as well. English authors in many fields influenced Freud, and he influenced many authors in turn. I think the outcome was felicitous for both Freud and the writers, and it continues to be so for us all.

**ARNOLD RICHARDS (NEW YORK, NY)**

GRETE BIBRING: A CULINARY BIOGRAPHY. By Daniel Jacobs. Boston: Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, 2015. 125 pp.

It is so easy to forget the psychoanalytic pioneers of yesteryear, as we plunge ahead during the ongoing evolution of our profession. The Hanns Sachs Library and Archives of the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, on the other hand, represents an effort to keep the memory of our collegial forebears alive as we move forward and away from them. It is, among other things, a repository of an enormous collection of books, letters, photographs, and memorabilia that can keep us in contact with those who inhabit the historical world of psychoanalysis.

It is only intermittently, and far too infrequently, that BPSI brings our attention to some of the contents of its treasure trove. Ten years ago, I reported on such an event, namely, the publication of a slim volume containing photographs taken by Edward Bibring, which had remained hidden in the BPSI Archives until 2005.[1] In my review of the book, I expressed the pleasure I had experienced from having made the acquaintance of a good number of the very earliest contributors to the profession that I feel so privileged to have been part of during its more recent decades. I closed by expressing hope that we would be given additional opportunities to meet those early progenitors of psychoanalysis.

Dan Jacobs has granted my request—by once again affording us entry into that world. It is in the form of excerpts from the meticulous records that Grete Bibring, Edward's wife and fellow analyst, kept of the guest lists and menus (and even some of her recipes) of dinner parties and some

[1] Silverman, M. (2008). Review of *Edward Bibring's Photographs of the Psychoanalysts of His Time* (2005), ed. Daniel Jacobs and Vivien Goldman, *Psychoanal. Q.*, 77:1305–1307.

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larger "Strawberry Punch Parties" she organized over the many years she worked as a psychoanalyst and a psychiatrist. Jacobs's text, accompanied by photographs of the Bibrings and some of their illustrious guests, brings them to life as the complex, very human people they indeed were. I am grateful to him for inviting me to those parties as an extra guest.

Grete Bibring was born, in 1899, in Hapsburg Vienna, into a prosperous family that was steeped in culture and was social democratic in its political outlook. As an intelligent, intellectually adventurous, determined, and courageous girl and woman, she defied the time's cultural mores that would relegate her to the status of no more than a wife and mother. She excelled at the Gymnasium, where, among other things, she studied Greek and Latin. Then she became one of the very few, first female medical students in Vienna. This was to be only the first of a lifelong series of invasions into male-only territory. She made the acquaintance of a group of fellow Jewish students who were interested in the mind as well as the body, and, together with some of them, she went on to become one of the earliest women in the burgeoning field of psychoanalysis. True to her upper-middle-class roots, she dressed elegantly and threw carefully planned and executed dinner parties for her psychoanalytic friends and colleagues.

Conditions in Austro-Hungary grew steadily worse, especially for its Jewish population, as the Nazis acquired power in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s. The Bibrings, together with the other members of what was to be the émigré, largely ego psychological, psychoanalytic aristocracy in England and, especially in the United States, fled Europe. Grete and Edward went to Boston, along with others who became an illustrious group of influential psychoanalytic educators there. Once again, she established herself as a trailblazer as she persistently insinuated herself into male-dominated professional ranks. She became the first woman ever to join the psychiatry department of the Harvard Medical School, and she eventually became its first female chairperson. One can only imagine her outrage when she discovered that her salary as chair of the department was identical to that of one of her fifth-year residents! She fought, quietly but insistently, to have it progressively raised to a more respectful level.

There were other battles to be fought as well. Not all of American psychiatry welcomed either psychoanalysts or Jews into their midst. Not all of them, or of her fellow analysts for that matter, welcomed outspoken, hardheaded, opinionated women into their midst. She had to weather storms of professional, political strife that came from multiple directions. She patiently but persistently held her own, smoothing the way in part via the intimate, elegant dinner parties and the periodic, large, departmental punch parties that she organized, and into which American cuisine gradually crept, albeit only to a limited extent. She established herself as a very successful, very much appreciated teacher, both in the psychiatric and in the psychoanalytic worlds.

Serious illness put a crimp into the successful life the Bibrings led after their arrival in the United States. By 1950 Edward was showing signs of advancing Parkinsonism, which progressed steadily until it finally took his life in 1959. This was extremely difficult for Grete, but she continued to engage in demanding professional activities. In 1961, she was elected to the presidency of the American Psychoanalytic Association. In that same year, she became the first woman to be named a full professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She worked indefatigably, despite increasingly debilitating illness that she herself incurred. She had such severe osteoporosis that, beginning in 1963, she developed increasingly frequent, serious bone fractures after seemingly innocuous exertion. Later on, in 1975, her life was threatened by a dissecting aortic aneurysm. In combination with the severe damage done to her spine by the osteoporosis-induced vertebral fractures, it induced bouts of left laryngeal nerve palsy, resulting in an almost total loss of her ability to speak.

Although less frequently and to a lesser degree of sumptuousness, she continued to entertain her friends and colleagues with dinner parties. The last one she organized, shortly before her death, in 1977, was for the ENT surgeon who had restored her ability to speak by inserting Teflon into her injured vocal cords. She truly was someone who pursued health and celebrated life!

I am extremely grateful to Dan Jacobs (and to the BPSI librarian, Olga Umansky) for this professional and culinary glimpse into the life of Grete Bibring. I find it not only informative but also inspirational. Her

strength of character and her insistence on surviving and thriving despite lifelong, periodic adversity, at times against difficult odds—while maintaining dignity and elegance throughout all of it—stands as a testimonial to her impressive personal attributes. It also serves as an admonition to the field of psychoanalysis to stand firm, fight the good fight, and never bow to unfair or ignorant opposition. Thank you, Dan and Olga, and, above all, thank you, Grete.

**MARTIN A. SILVERMAN (MAPLEWOOD, NJ)**

LEARNING ABOUT HUMAN NATURE AND ANALYTIC TECHNIQUE FROM MOTHERS AND BABIES. By Nara Amália Caron, Rita Sobreira Lopes. London: Karnac Books, 2017. 282 pp.

In 1936, Esther Bick, a contemporary of Winnicott's, wrote her doctoral dissertation on the development of twins, which instilled in her the belief that in order to understand the development of the human personality, she should study the daily life of the infant in its home environment. This led to the method of infant observation that was then developed by the authors of this volume and Daniel Stern, among others.

Nara Amalia Caron is a medical doctor and a child, adolescent, and adult psychoanalyst; Rita Sobreira Lopes teaches developmental psychology. The psychoanalytic method of infant observation is "a royal road to the primitive in human beings," they write, and an opportunity for analysts treating people at any age to develop the sensitive listening capacities necessary "to establish contact with the psychic phenomena of early life" (p. 7). But the beauty of their book is that they extend Bick's method, via sonograms, to intrauterine development, and the reactions to it of the prospective parents. The book consists largely of narratives that follow six infants, two singles and two sets of twins, from gestation through the third year of life.

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# Learning about Human Nature and Analytic Technique from Mothers and Babies

Marcia Cavell

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The authors reveal a world that is at once familiar and eerily strange. We know, for example, that the two-month-old fetus has ten fingers and ten toes, that it has a clearly discernible head, mouth, eyes, and external

genitalia; but we may not have known that it can yawn, make faces, taste, swallow, go to sleep and wake up, and even, according to the authors, dream. (I am curious to know what observations reveal this.) Indeed, one of the author's conclusions is that features we attribute to postnatal life are already present in the fetus, and that fetal twins behave differently from each other, even perhaps with a dim awareness of each other's presence.

And of course we know that the fetus in every mammal is a creature nestled inside another creature, that there are, literally, two creatures in one; but we may not have registered just how remarkable a fact this is, requiring of an infant the process of individuation and separation that is inherent not only in postnatal development but also in birth itself, the initial "cut."

This book teaches us much that is new. But to my mind, the greatest achievement of its journey into "the cave" of the pregnant womb, as the authors call it, is to bring home the extraordinary character of these ordinary facts. It is no part of the authors' intention to engage in the debate about abortion, but their observations emphasize how complicated the issue is.

I quote the following passage as one of many instances of the authors' compassionate attention to detail and their grace in reporting it.

> At the first ultrasound examination, the father asks, "Is there any connection between when the mother sleeps and the babies sleep?" The sonographer says there is not, because normally babies establish their own separate rhythm. The mother pays close attention to the monitor . . . . Her glance is an internal search that involves her body, too: she sees with her mouth, her eyebrows, and her muscles that strain to reach something . . . . The babies begin to move. The baby on the bottom moves first, in waves like a dolphin diving in and out of the water . . . . While this one is very active and agile, the other one at the top remains quiet and still. [p. 51]

The book reveals also the continuity between intrauterine and postnatal life, and the ways in which parents often make assumptions about the personality of the fetus, assumptions that presumably affect their attitudes to their developing infants as well.

I am not sure, however, that the book delivers on one of its promises: it consists almost entirely of the six narratives, with little discussion of analytic technique. I also note that the authors frequently engage in what I would call overinterpretation; for example, about one of the sets of twins at the age of seventeen weeks, they write: "The babies begin to communicate formally by making gestures, moving their bodies, and touching. They seem aware of each other. The girl faces her brother as if looking at him. She moves down a little, and he runs his hand over her head" (p. 55). But these are minor flaws, if that, in an illuminating book that is a pleasure to read.

**MARCIA CAVELL (RHINEBECK, NY)**

PSYCHOANALYSIS, IDENTITY, AND THE INTERNET: EXPLORATIONS INTO CYBERSPACE. Edited by Andrea Marzi. London: Karnac Books, 2016. 268 pp.

Andrea Marzi has done an excellent job in his writing—in the introduction and in his contributed chapter—and as editor of this groundbreaking book. Psychoanalysis, Identity, and the Internet: Explorations into Cyberspace explores the interface between psychoanalysis and cyberspace. The book's thought-provoking text (introduction and seven chapters) was written by well-known psychoanalysts: Giuseppina Antinucci, Antonino Ferro, Marcus Johns, Marco Longo, Valeria Egidi Morpurgo, David Rosenfeld, Michele G. Sforza, and Riccardo Sorrenti.

The book contains theoretical and clinical chapters; the clinical chapters provide an informed illustration of key concepts set forth in the theoretical chapters. It was written by psychoanalysts for psychoanalysts and other mental health clinicians who in their clinical work increasingly encounter patients with "Internet addictions," but it may also be of interest to anyone curious about this newest paradigm of virtuality, cyberspace.

Cyberspace is a dimensionless space without magnitude or velocity, consisting of cognitive and imaginative representations made possible by more than a half century of interrelated technological innovations. During the past forty years, the great innovations in cyberspace have been the computer and associated applications including the internet, artificial

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Cyberspace is a dimensionless space without magnitude or velocity, consisting of cognitive and imaginative representations made possible by more than a half century of interrelated technological innovations. During the past forty years, the great innovations in cyberspace have been the computer and associated applications including the internet, artificial

intelligence, virtual reality, and, I would add, robotics: technologies that are intertwined and have experienced tremendous expansion.

Alan Turing, one of the founding fathers of cyberspace, proposed the Turing test in 1950.[1] He referred to this test as the "imitation game." The Turing test is a cognitive version of an automaton. Automata, dating back to ancient Greece and China, were precursor mechanical devices that imitated persons or animals engaged in specific activities. The Turing test was specifically designed to determine whether a person could distinguish between communication with another person and communication with a computer.

The Turing test is interesting from a psychoanalytic point of view because it is about communication and the longing for a personal relationship. In my view, the greatest challenge, if not impossibility, to meeting the demands of the Turing test would involve the full simulation of a person in the form of an android (humanoid robot) having the capacity through algorithms to convincingly imitate free communication and action.

In the book's first chapter, "Cyberspace: The Metaphor of Metaphors," Riccardo Sorrenti discusses the origins of the term *cyberspace*, beginning with Plato's use of *cybernetic*: "The Greek term Κυβερνήτης (kybernetes) literally means 'the art of guiding a ship' or the 'art of ruling'" (p. 3). The American mathematician and Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Norbert Wiener carried forward and reapplied this term in *Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* (1948). This technical manual described informational relays and self-regulating mechanisms, establishing much of the foundational concept of what would later be named *cyberspace*—a word coined by the science fiction writer William Ford Gibson in his dystopias "Burning Chrome" and *Neuromancer*.

The concept of virtuality has a long history. The *Oxford English Dictionary* refers to the original meaning of the term as "something endowed with virtue," such as a sculpture or a painting in the representational arts or a virtuous person in ethics. The modern definition of *virtuality* includes "a virtual (as opposed to an actual) thing, capacity, etc; a potentiality."

Giuseppina Antinucci, in "Identity Work in the Time of Cyberspace," cites Freud's use of the term *virtual*: "Everything that can be an object of

[1] Turing, A. M. (1950). "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." *Mind: A Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*, 59:433–460.

our internal perception is *virtual*, like the image produced in a telescope by the passage of light-rays" (p. 83, italics in original).[2] Cautioning against a tendency toward reification, Freud's descriptions of the psychical apparatus are decidedly virtual and metaphorical, as distinguished from the brain, which is actual, or real.

There have been mocking efforts purporting to have met the requirements of the Turing test, such as the virtual psychiatrist Dr. Sbaitso[3] and the Solomon Project.[4] The Solomon Project preposterously claimed that it could eliminate the problem of judicial bias by exchanging judges with computers and artificial intelligence.

But there have also been serious efforts in artificial intelligence, positive and negative, that are not hoaxes. Anyone who has played chess with a computer knows that it can seem as though one is playing against an actual person, a very smart person. In a negative direction, we observe an eroticized obsession with androids equipped with different personality settings, such as "domestic" and "sexy."[5]

One might expect that psychoanalysis and cyberspace would have much in common: sharing virtuality, an interest in longed-for relationships, and an interest in sexuality (including paraphilias). But many psychoanalysts have expressed considered reservations, sometimes condemnations, attributing to cyberspace the reinforcement of narcissism, regressive behaviors, and difficulties in the formation of individual and group identities. Other psychoanalysts, however, including Glen Gabbard, have adopted an open approach, drawing a psychoanalytic connection between email and the concept of a transitional space.[6] As evidenced by the authors of this book, a shift may be occurring in the direction of intrigue about cyberspace.

[2] Antinucci is quoting from Freud, S. (1900). *The Interpretation of Dreams. S. E.,* 4/5.

[3] See http://www.goodolddays.net/apps/id,35/.

[4] See http://www.joeyskaggs.com/works/solomon-project.

[5] Gee, T. J. (2017). Would you invite a sexbot into your bedroom? *South Africa Sunday Times,* June 5, https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/health-and-sex/2017-06-05-would-you-invite-a-sexbot-into-your-bedroom.

[6] Gabbard, G. O. (2001). Cyberpassion: e-rotic transference on the Internet. *Psychoanal. Q.,* 70:719–737. See also Bonaminio, V., Gabbard, G. & Moreno, J. (2010). Panel: psychoanalysis and virtuality. 46th IPA Congress, July 31, 2009, Chicago. *Int. J. Psychoanal.,* 91:985–988.

Discerning the difference between reality and virtuality is a critical developmental milestone. Further, it matters greatly in terms of immersion in cyberspace whether the virtuality is primarily representational—an imitation of reality, as in the case of communications and epistemophilic pursuits—or is regressive and addictive.

The murkier virtuality ceases to imitate reality and is powered more by regression and infantile fantasies. It defends against reality by adopting an "as if" view of identity. Marco Longo, in "Exploring the Subtle Mental Boundary between the Real and the Virtual," alludes to the difference between imitative and fantasy-driven functions of cyberspace:

> I believe it is a good idea to begin with the often uncertain and not always clear relationship between reality and fantasy, and especially with the relationship between realistic representation and imaginary devising: two parallel dimensions that very often coexist, are superimposed and advance synergetically, but that equally frequently seem to diverge or even to be in conflict or openly opposed. [p. 51]

In "From Prometheus to Big Brother: A Prosthetic God, Truly Magnificent," Valeria Egidi Morpurgo cites Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*: "Man has, as it were, become a kind of prosthetic God. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs he is truly magnificent .... Nevertheless ... present-day man does not feel happy in his God-like character" (p. 37).[7] But if the prosthetic God of the Mechanical Age needed to defend against delusions of grandeur and unhappiness, there should be a greater worry about the Cyber God of the Information Age, who besides omnipotence must also contend with the illusion of omniscience. The Cyber God, like the prosthetic God, *does not feel happy in his God-like character.*

Marzi quotes Morpurgo in the introduction: "The life of the young generation today is carried out almost more in the world of the internet than in the 'real' world" (p. xxxvii). The question arises about the impact on identity of this immersion when it derives from reality and real relationships, versus a cyberspace that imitates reality and serves as a mode of communication, versus a cyberspace that exchanges reality for the

[7] Freud, S. (1930). *Civilization and Its Discontents. S. E.,* 21. See also Ferreira, A. J. (1961). Empathy and the bridge function of the ego. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.,* 9:91–105.

solipsism "There is nothing larger than myself." Morpurgo writes: "These forms of anxiety, as José Bleger has argued (1967), imply that incapacity to recognise basic differentiations, including sex and gender, precedes the onset of schizo-paranoid and depressive forms of anxiety and impinges on identity itself" (p. 35). In the formation of identity, it is impossible to make complex differentiations without first getting beyond basic differentiations.

One should be careful in cyberspace. The work of identity is to understand a proper relationship between reality, identity, and virtuality. Cyberspace has developmental and regressive aspects that can be either creative or destructive to identity formation. Giuseppina Antinucci cites Russo:

> I believe it is useful to conceptualise subjective identity [primary identity] as the "nucleus" which is retained by the Ego's self-awareness of inevitably being contaminated and enriched by collective memory, by others and by the elements in the psyche which predate the individual's being. [p. 90][8]

In addition to primary identity, there is a cyberspace identity, a virtual persona, the residue of years of uploads to Facebook and similar social networks. The two identities often conflict and vie for dominance. Problems naturally arise when there is a discontinuity between the "as if" cyberspace identity and the primary identity. A loss of internal reality testing can occur when a person prefers a cyberspace identity over the primary identity, a virtuality over the internal reality.

In "Cyberghosts from the Depths," Marzi concludes the theoretical chapters by addressing the work of identity in terms of psychoanalytic concepts such as the mirroring function and the central structuring function of the maternal–infant gaze. Perhaps the longing to re-create this gaze is in part the impetus behind automata and the imitation game—a longing to have control over the "identity of perception."[9]

Andrea Marzi discusses the determinants of identity formation in biology, genealogy, history, society, and culture. He writes:

[8] Antinucci is quoting from Russo, L. (2009). *Destini delle Identità*. Rome: Borla.

[9] Freud, S. (1900). *The Interpretation of Dreams. S. E.,* 4.

> The group dimension is indeed of great importance when reflecting on the digital world, on [virtual reality], and on whatever occurs there. It can, in fact, represent a chance for genuine individual and group (and intragroup) mental growth—as really does occur when these computer opportunities are used appropriately and creatively—but also a moment of pathological group agglutination that has involutional and destructive characteristics. [p. 117]

The thoughtful concepts and clinical examples presented by the authors of this book will help focus future discussions of the relationship between psychoanalysis and cyberspace. In the dynamic triad of reality, identity, and cyberspace, some patients get tangled in cyberspace at a cost to their sense of reality and identity.[10] Understanding such patients and finding effective preventions and treatments will be challenging, but Andrea Marzi and the other renowned authors of *Psychoanalysis, Identity, and the Internet: Explorations into Cyberspace* have achieved an important foundation.

**GRAHAM SPRUIELL (MANDEVILLE, LA)**

[10] Arlow, J. A. (2008). Unconscious fantasy and disturbances of conscious experience. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 77:21–46.