

## Jungian Dream Theory, Self-regulation and Contemporary Psychoanalysis:

### Introductory Remarks

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#### Introduction

First of all in this paper I will propose some considerations about cultural changes that have occurred in the last century. Then I will outline some ~~mutations~~-developments of “contemporary psychoanalysis” and the opportunity for dialogue between the Jungian school and current psychoanalytical research. In fact the spirit of our time encourages traditional Jungian openness because Freudian psychoanalysis underwent such substantial changes that points of intersection between the two schools are easier and more natural than before. That is why we were stimulated to create a specific Jungian study group Dialoghi di Psicologia Analitica .

#### The Crisis of Modernity – Freud and Jung

At the ~~outset~~-beginning of the 20th century many artists, intellectuals, and philosophers began to become aware of the first signs of the cultural and scientific crisis in which we still live today. They began to contemplate and to debate ~~that-which~~what has been named “the crisis of modernity” ~~by some, and “post-modernity” by others (Lyotard).~~

They criticised the faith in logical-instrumental reason, which had previously given birth to the age of science and technology and had torn the sacred from the world, which, as a result, had become an “iron cage” according to the celebrated definition given ~~it~~ by Max Weber. Reason, Science and Technology had condemned “human beings to live in a world without God and prophets” (Weber 1919 p.38). Accompanying the prevailing sense of decadence, a crisis of traditional religions and the refusal of positivist reason generated a need for new ideas that could somehow limit the supremacy of quantification and restore meaning to the world. In this climate, the French philosopher Bergson posits *lived time* as a value opposed to *quantifiable time*. The German philosopher Husserl writes “The Crisis of European Science” as an appeal for the rediscovery of direct experience of real things – real

things, that is, as opposed to scientific concepts. In this book, Husserl exhorts the reader to rediscover an authentic experience of the world, a direct access to the Lebenswelt (the world of life). He suggests that this world is something altogether different ~~to~~ from the ordered world of theoretical mathematics and modern science as founded by Galileo. In early 20th century literature, an overwhelming interest in the interior world replaces the romantic spirit and its exhortation of nature as a source of supreme truth. Literature I embarks on an exploration of the inner world and begins to perceive the non-unity, the non-singularity, but fundamental multiplicity of the self. Art does not try to capture human emotion as it is, but it becomes a truly creative impulse, as well as an exploration of subjectivity and even dissolution of the self. Art becomes an exploration of the ambiguity of being . As an example it is possible to see [on the slide] two paintings about the same theme and the difference between the modern style and post-modern one. Francis Bacon admired so much the Velasquez's painting (Pope Innocenzo X) that he wanted to paint the same subject, but he was a post-modern painter and this is the result.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, Psychoanalysis is born and grows begins to develop. But Freud is not among the intellectual avant-garde of his time; he still belongs to modernity. He firmly believes that science is capable of capturing absolute truths, and he is convinced that the discoveries of psychoanalytical science can both cure neurosis and better-improve society. As a man belonging to "modernity", he believes in the integrity and authority of knowledge: those colleagues who disagree with his scientific truth (Adler, Jung, Ferenczi) are brutally and irredeemably distanced expelled.

Jung represents something quite different. He no longer believes in modernity and is already among those who criticise it. He maintains that scientific truth may well be multiple and conditioned by historical circumstances (Jung 1921). He lucidly observes the hyper-rationalistic illness of his era. Besides he grasps the various religious crises and the malaise that the absence of meaning has created in modern man. Jung establishes a psychological science, but he does not limit himself to being a scientist, in fact he even speaks as a wise man to afflicted humanity. As modern society's therapist who tries to treat the illness of modern society Jung gives Jung's precepts which seem to go in the

direction of a “re-enchantment” of ~~the our world~~ as it had been in the past ~~world according to which~~ ~~so~~ ~~that~~ symbols and meanings are reanimated. ~~Positivistic reason~~ It will be the symbol and the unconscious, says Jung, that will restore meaning to the reality in which we live. Jung was a harsh critic of modernity and perhaps it is for this reason (and for the therapy that he suggested) that he was misunderstood and ~~countered-opposed~~ so stridently.

### **Psychoanalysis and Analytical Psychology Today**

Many years have passed since the foundation of Freudian psychoanalysis and the first breaches that gave birth to alternative schools of psychoanalysis (Jung, Adler). Today, Freudian psychoanalysis is no longer the homogenous *corpus* it once was. Indeed, there are now so many different psychoanalytical persuasions that the layperson may be surprised, perhaps even disconcerted, in the face of such diversity. There have been numerous creative, ~~prodigious~~ psychoanalysts who have ~~radically~~ reformulated ~~various~~ theoretical principles; ~~in a sense, detaching them from the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud~~ while remaining within the psychoanalytical movement. The most notable examples of this process in England have been provided by those authors ~~gathered-grouped~~ under the name “object-relational psychoanalysis”. In The United States there has been Ego psychology founded by Hartmann; the hermeneutic revisionism of Merton Gill and Roy Shafer; and the interpersonal contribution of Sullivan filtered by psychoanalysts such as Clara Thompson, Frieda From-Reichman and Erich From. Recently, there has been Heinz Kohut’s Self Psychology and Stephen Mitchell’s Relational Psychoanalysis.

All these psychoanalytical persuasions have continued to co-exist without any of them achieving its supremacy over the others. By now there are so many psychoanalytical truths ~~so~~ that Freud would have viewed such phenomena as an unforgivable confusion and a lack of scientific rigour and authority.

All this multiplicity is possible today because the current cultural climate is considerably different ~~from~~ that in which Freud was born. Modernity, by now, has become aware of its crises to ~~an~~ the extent that some ~~philosophers (Lyotard 1979)~~ now speak of a post-modernism ~~(Lyotard 1979)~~. The epoch in which we live replaces universal necessity with possibility, singular and absolute truth

with multiple truths, in our time we are taught by hermeneutic philosophy (Gadamer 1960) that every kind of knowledge is based on subjective premises (or “bias” as Gadamer would say). Even the natural sciences, the *opus magnum* of modernity, has exhausted its own absolute certainties and has been thrown off balance by the epistemological reflections of Kuhn, Lakatos, and Feyerabend. The spectre of relativism has conquered the city of science and has provoked a heated debate which ~~is still~~ has not been settled even to day. In short, theoretical multiplicity in the area of psychoanalysis is not the only case of “scientific illness”. The same “illness” has spread through every sphere of knowledge. Psychoanalytical multiplicity is nothing more than ~~an artefact~~ the result of the *zeitgeist* (spirit of the time).

Coming to us what about Jungians? What has happened to the Jungian movement? How does it relate to what is happening in Freudian psychoanalysis?

Firstly, being a critic of modernity and already having certain falsifiable and relativistic concepts regarding scientific truth Jung never imagined a unified, compact school. Therefore the Jungian movement has developed along different ~~threads~~ lines, so much so that when Samuels (1985) attempted to organise Jungian authors into defined groups he encountered some difficulties. The Jungian movement is as multiple today as it was from the very beginning.

The crisis of modernity did not overwhelm the Jungian movement, since this crisis had already been dealt with in the thoughts of its founder.

Nonetheless, Jungian movement in this situation can participate in the psychoanalytical debate from which it had previously been excluded. ~~Jung, P~~precisely because he was aware of the limits and the fallibility of theory Jung is master and mentor to all of us when we come to consider how this debate should begin and how it should proceed. Jungian thought, from this point of view, searches for terms that are common to contemporary psychoanalytical thought, seeking to underline theoretical similarities in order to find that psychological truth ~~that which~~ no single theory possesses. In addition, contemporary psychoanalytical thought is no longer founded on themes that in the past had been the cause of irreconcilable differences: for example, sex drive and reductivism. For ~~which this~~ reason the dialogue that was not possible in the past is possible now.

~~opposed~~ Another ~~camp-field with-in~~ which ~~it seems~~ comparison and dialogue can be fruitful is that of empirical research (infant research, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, evolutionary biology, etc.) in order to update the biological underpinnings of Analytical Psychology. In fact ~~Jung, having constructed~~in constructing the Analytical Psychology, Jung obviously wanted to give it a biological basis and to do this he used results from the biological sciences of the time. I ~~will~~would like to remind you, ~~by way of an example,~~ of the importance for Jungian thought of the evolutionary ideas of the biologist Haeckel, who sought to fuse evolutionary theory with vitalistic hypothesis, proposing a fundamental unity of spirit and matter.

~~Obviously, †~~The ideas of Haeckel ~~which were, and of his naturaphilosophie,~~ dear to the hearts and minds of Goethe, Schiller, Fichte and Schelling, ~~having flowed~~passed into several Jungian scientific theories such as archetype, collective unconscious, phylogenetic unconscious, finalism, nature conceived as union of matter and spirit. Today Haeckel's ideas no longer have the same scientific credibility that they had in Jung's time. Hence the necessity to compare Jungian hypothesis and concepts with new scientific ideas and results. Many Jungian colleagues have already worked in this field (some examples are Knox, Scars, Hogenson, Jacoby).

What I have said until now can explain why we wanted to create a Jungian study group dedicated to the relationship between Jungian thought, contemporary psychoanalysis and empirical research.

### **Dream, Self-Regulation, and Interactive Regulation**

At this panel, we would like to discuss Jungian dream theory and to compare it with several aspects of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, in particular with the concepts of self-regulation and interactive regulation. This is possible because Jung himself uses the concept of compensation which was synonymous with self-regulation. “ I conceive it [compensation] as functional adjustment, in general an inherent self-regulation of the psyche apparatus . . . . (Jung 1921 par.694).

The themes of self-regulation and interactive regulation, while being present in current psychoanalytical debate, were formulated in non-clinical ~~camp-fields~~ by researchers in the area of infant research.

Lou Sander has perhaps been the most influential psychiatrist and infant researcher in introducing theoretical concepts which belong to the theory of systems (by utilizing at the beginning Von Bertalanffy's works and more recently Thelen and Smith's works). According to Sander, the psyches of child and mother are "open systems" and, as such, tend to seek balance. This balance is sought by using both self-regulatory means and interactive regulatory ones (the mother-child relationship). The ~~design~~-experiment dedicated to the study of differences between a group of babies who were fed by their mothers according to a pre-established regimen and another group that was fed according to the babies' needs is by now well-known (Sander and coll. 1970). The group that was fed when the child wanted to eat was able to reach circadian sleep-wake patterns earlier than the other group. Sander maintains that this is true inasmuch as the babies were helped to find their own self-regulatory patterns by the interactive regulation that had been established with their mothers and that mother and child were able to find a balanced compromise. In the conceptualization proposed by Sander (and today also by Tronick, Beebe and Lachman) an organism searches for physiological and psychological balance<sup>1</sup>. According to Sander (and also by Tronick, Beebe and Lachman) the individual adult is also able to self-regulate her self psychologically both with-by means of very elementary modalities like rhythm and manipulation of the body, and with more complex activities that need the development of the symbolic activity. The more complex self-regulatory mechanisms are: introspection, creative activity, play, dreaming and considering one's own dreams.

Often self-regulation is not enough to renew the state of balance, and an interactive, relational contribution is required. Anger, for example, is too strong to be self-regulated and we need someone significant who can calm us, who can contain us. The situation is similar for other emotions (fear, shame, etc.). In these cases relations with the "Other" works towards creating a new balance.<sup>2</sup> Such concepts, today much debated in infant research, are also applicable to psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, as Jung had already understood ~~the term~~. In fact Jung was interested in systems, even if

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<sup>1</sup> Some aspects of physiological balance are: body temperature, sleep-wake patterns, hunger – satiety rhythms, etc. Some aspects of psychological balance may be: the feeling of cohesion and continuity, the feeling of self as an agent capable of initiative, regulation of the vital emotions (moods).

<sup>2</sup> While at other times self-regulation makes us more available to relationships. In these cases, it is the relationship with another that is fostered ~~e~~ by individual self-regulation.

he focused especially on self regulatory-mechanism. He maintained that the psyche is a system equipped with self-regulatory apparatus (Jung 1917 – 43 p62) in which the unconscious is responsible for balancing the conscious mind. From this point of view, the dream as a manifestation of the unconscious has therefore an extremely important role in the psychological health of the dreamer. The consciousness of the dreamer acquires a new point of view via the dream that allows her to rediscover a state of balance (Jung 1921 p 431). While pointing out the importance of self regulatory-mechanism, Jung even affirms much like a contemporary psychoanalyst, that the analyst as “mirror” has never existed; rather, the analyst is one half of a couple in which both parties are in analysis: "the doctor is as much “in the analysis” as the patient" ( Jung 1931 par.166) , "For two personalities to meet is like mixing two different chemical substances” (Jung 1931 par 166), “ a good half of every treatment that probes at all deeply consists in the doctor’s examining himself" (Jung 1951, par 239). When an impasse occurs according to Jung the analyst cannot attribute the impasse exclusively to the psychopathology of the patient, but must first attempt to become aware, ~~that is,~~ and to ~~attempt to~~ examine what doesn’t work in the her attitude towards the needs of the patient.

By now let’s have a look at the following clinical vignette. Jung (1935) is treating a young patient and at a certain point the analytical relationship did not get on and Jung himself feels bored and even disdainful of the patient. At this point, Jung had a dream in which the young patient appeared to him as a princess, leaning from the balcony of a castle, and he was below. In the dream, Jung was obliged to look up at the patient. The dream, says Jung, compensated for the devaluating feelings that he felt for the patient. ~~sufficiently~~ After the dream, Jung felt more comfortable in the relationship. He spoke with the patient about the dream, admitting that his attitude had been wrong: “That worked miracles, I can tell you! No trouble with the transference any more, because I simply got right with her and met her on the right level.” ( Jung 1935 p. 146)

Jung used this clinical vignette to point out the compensatory function of the dream (self-regulation), but we can use the vignette to illustrate even the relational stance of Jung and how the interactive-regulation works. In fact Jung was regulated (compensated) by his own dream, but later the patient was regulated by the relationship with Jung. Let’s read the vignette in this way.

The therapy of the young woman reached a therapeutic impasse, the patient's regulation of self-esteem failed, the therapist was emotionally influenced by this and experienced feelings that led him to undervalue the patient. During his own self-investigation, Jung has a dream that concerns the analytical situation. The dream plays its role as psychic self-regulator (or compensation as Jung called it) and Jung is able to change his own conscious point of view. After the dream, Jung's emotional tone changes and this allows him to speak openly with the patient about his own attitude and to define it as the result of a personal error (an example of self-disclosure). The therapeutic rapport performs the regulating function necessary for the disturbed self-esteem of the patient. The interactive regulation gives new balance to the patient so that as Jung says "No trouble with the transference any more, because I simply got right with her and met her on the right level." ( Jung 1935 p. 146)

After these introductory notes we ~~can~~will listen to my colleagues who ~~will~~will discuss more deeply the themes I have presented here: self-regulation and interactive regulation, Jung's dream theory and contemporary psychoanalysis.

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