

JEP – European Journal of Psychoanalysis ***Humanities, Philosophy, Psychotherapies***

Number 29 – 2009 II

SUBLIMATION

Robert Pfaller, Sublimation and “Schweinerei”.
Theoretical Place and Cultural-critical Function of a
Psychoanalytic Concept

Keywords: Sublimation – Aesthetics of the Sublime – Drive,
Society, Transgression – Cultural Narcissism – Renunciation
of Booty

Summary: *The concept of sublimation in its Freudian framing is problematic since it introduces assumptions that are foreign to Freud's own theory of sexuality: there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as an a-sexual aim of a sexual drive. Freud's view of the drive-conflict, on the contrary, describes various sexual drives encountering resistance from others ('organic repression') and these others receiving their support from culture. Sublimation has its theoretical place precisely in this image of the conflict. It comes to the aid of the initial, nascent drives jointly outlawed by nature and culture, and assists them in achieving a new, culture-conditioned, exceptional and triumphal appreciation. Sublimation demands what individuals would deny themselves, thus helping them to overcome their organic/cultural inhibitions. Seen thus, sublimation does not change the drive itself but rather its cultural estimation. It is work on culture. Yet the products (and the means of production) of this work are trophies from societal battle. Accordingly, they are very unequally distributed in different societies.*

Sergio Benvenuto, Sublimation and Compassion

Keywords: Freudian Sublimation – The Beautiful and the Sublime in Kant – Art as Care – Sublimation in Raphael

Summary: *The concept of sublimation in Freud is examined here as a corollary of the metaphysics underlying the bulk of his works: the human being as moved by Lust. The author focuses on artistic and literary sublimation seen – in contrast with the original theory – not only as a psychic process in the creator, but also as an experience by the spectator or reader. Tracing the paradoxical status that pleasure takes on in classic reflections on art – in Aristotle and Kant in particular – the author reinterprets the concept of Sublimierung, no longer exclusively in relation to Lust, to the dialectics of pleasure/displeasure, but as process leading to the Care (Sorge) for the world, the others and for the works of art. Sublimation, reinterpreted as an initiation to the Care, thus discloses its relationship to the inevitable absence of the thing, hence its “lacunose” quality.*

PSYCHOANALYSIS & PHILOSOPHY

Romano Madera, C. G. Jung: Forerunner of a Philosophy for the Soul

Keywords: Analytical Psychology – Philosophical Practices – Jung and Philosophy – History of Psychoanalysis

Summary: *The ambivalence of the word and concept of Philosophy in C. G. Jung's works is the main theme of the first part of this essay. On the one hand Jung distances his work from all kind of philosophy, asserting his aims and methods are only scientific and clinical ones; on the other hand in many works he uses the word "philosophy" in the sense of the ancient philosophers, like a synonym of a kind of wisdom to be practiced in everyday life. This is very similar to Hadot's reconstruction of the spiritual exercises in ancient philosophy. Jung may be taken as a forerunner of what the author has proposed to call "philosophically oriented biographic analysis". The analytical position should be regarded as the professional articulation of an existential vocation for a loving pursuit of wisdom, and this formulation implies important changes in analysis itself.*

Lorenzo Bernini, Vulnerability of the Subject, Opacity of Desire. Judith Butler Dislocating Psychoanalysis

Keywords: Heterosexism of Psychoanalysis – Gender and Queer Theories – Recognition – Pacifism – Ethics of Psychoanalysis

Summary: *Subject of Desire (1987) is Butler's PhD dissertation, dedicated to the reception of Hegel in the Twentieth-Century French philosophy. The author shows how crucial this book is for a proper understanding of the development of Butler's thought and how her argumentative method – indebted both to Michel Foucault's genealogy and Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis – is grounded on a theory of subjectivity which actually derives from Hegel. Particular attention is given on the complex relation between Butler and psychoanalysis, and in the conclusion some questions are posed about the pacifism of the late work of Butler that revolves around the ethics of psychoanalysis.*

Vasileios Termos, In the End Is Love: A Comment on Psychoanalytic Epistemology

Keywords: Epistemology of psychoanalysis – Neutrality of values – Truth – Love – Forgiveness.

Summary: *Reflections on the epistemological status of psychoanalysis in the context of contemporary sciences are expressed in this article. The peculiar psychoanalytic focus on singularity is considered as having the same function as the symptom in science. In this context, the notions of love and forgiveness are elaborated in terms of their being both the end and the aim of the psychoanalytic process. Lacanian and Kohutian ideas are recruited in order to articulate a mission*

for psychoanalysis that raises an alert, thus preventing it from degenerating into a technocracy of the unconscious. Besides, the strong bonds between truth and love are highlighted as well, which psychoanalysis needs to maintain if it wishes to resist both the illusion of the neutrality of values and the temptation of mere intellectual curiosity.

We have always lived elsewhere
And only when someone loves us
We come for a while.

(From a poem of Tassos Leivaditis (*A small book for big dreams*))

PSYCHOANALYSIS & NEUROSCIENCES

Federico Leoni, *The Meaning and the Mirror of Sense.*

Notes for an Archaeology of Neurosciences

Keywords: Mirror-neurons – Lacan, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty – Question/answer, Sense/meaning – Archaeology

Summary: *Mirror-neurons allow us to understand the other's action or intention. This is one of the most relevant discoveries of contemporary neurosciences. But how is this "mirroring" phenomenon to be understood? Is there a "content" being mirrored? If we "share" something with the other, as one of the leading researchers in this field puts it, is this shared content "in" one's mind or in the other's mind? Maybe one's mind isn't a box, within which we could find anything, but precisely the result of a mirroring phenomenon that takes place without any presupposed object (or subject). What about mirror-neurons if we re-read the whole series of empirical trials and results from this point of view – a non-mentalist, non subjectivist non-objectivistic, but a radically pragmatist and hermeneutical one?*

Franco Scalzone, Gemma Zontini, *Psychoanalysis in Time – Time in Psychoanalysis*

Keywords: *Après coup* – Delay – Heterochrony – Memory – Time

Summary: *Let's watch the initial scene of the well-known film Wild Strawberries, where it is possible to notice the absence of time in the unconscious system, unlike consciousness. The purpose of this paper is to look into some aspects of heterochrony, as a typically Freudian concept, paying particular attention to early Freudian thought. The underlying fil rouge is the relation between the functioning of mnemonic systems and human temporalities as dynamic structures/processes which can be represented as reciprocal complementary images. We may say that individual memory, temporality and phantasy (phylogenetic memory) function as a self-referential three-fold structure capable of generating a world and providing it with meaning. *Après coup* is its main mechanism, which with its constant functioning, just like the flying shuttle in a loom, continuously "corrects" the weaving through a temporalspatial to-and-fro movement. After analyzing the differences between the three classical dimensions of time: past, present and future, in their relation with consciousness, memory and waiting, it is clear that, according to psychoanalysis, man lives in*

*a multiplicity of temporalities, which intersect continuously
and show us a reality where a time is inscribed into another
time and the latter into yet another.*

Contributors