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A QUEST FOR A PSYCHOANALYTICALLY INFORMED METHOD IN CULTURAL STUDIES

Background. *The article discusses the possibility and necessity of using a psychoanalytically informed approach as a method for studying cultural phenomena. The author believes that the focus on researching particular cultural traditions, which goes back to ethnography and cultural anthropology, where culture is viewed as a warehouse of skills, leads to a conceptual deficit as its side effect. The basic concepts of cultural studies, including the concept of 'culture,' are used intuitively and thus lose their conceptual potential. Therefore, lots of cultural phenomena remain only recognisable but not understood. The idea of what the concept is and what it is actually based upon remains largely unconscious, cultural theories being logically and phenomenologically incomplete. Thus an instrument is needed that allows us to work with unconscious content that is the ground for both the conceptual apparatus of cultural theory and the ways in which its notions are used. Psychoanalysis is the first and perhaps the only tool specially developed for understanding the unconscious content.*

Methods. *The author uses a careful reading of primary sources and some of the selected comments on them as a research technique. The focus is mainly on the practical side of both psychoanalytic theory itself and its use as a therapeutic method.*

Results. *The author shows that, as a method, psychoanalysis is in many ways identical to the study of cultural sources (texts). It was understood by cultural anthropologists, since psychoanalysis was able to add a rational understanding of human nature to ethnographic studies, thus transforming them into cultural studies. In general, the significance of unconscious meanings contained in texts (artefacts) was appreciated before psychoanalysis, but it was psychoanalysis that proposed a method for understanding unconscious meanings. The psychoanalytically informed method should be not a method of choice, but the method to understand the implicit ontologies on which any cultural text is based and which it ultimately expresses.*

Conclusions. *The critical attitude towards psychoanalysis that has developed in the humanities can be explained by historical and cultural preconditions and, in this sense, it can be understood and overcome. The author draws attention to the fact that psychoanalysis as a method needs to be (re)constructed and offers, as a conclusion, the main points necessary for such a reconstruction.*

Keywords: *cultural studies, conceptual deficit, unconscious, psychoanalysis, method*

Background

Apart from the descriptive approach to cultural phenomena, there is sometimes a need to move from experientially tinted fragments to the study of culture itself as a whole, in its own right. This is especially true when we encounter words in our research that describe some obvious things but do not allow for their precise definitions, and when we have to rely on a sort of apparent acquaintance rather than on our understanding of the things in question. Thanks to this ostensible knowledge, what we get are a multiplicity of descriptions and a multitude of cultures; what we lack is a conceptual understanding of what we are talking about. It appears that technical conventions to define some sort of cultural things are not enough.

Music is a good example. No doubt one can find several other concepts that cultural scholars use in the same naïve and experiential mode¹, relying solely on technical definitions, but music is the most prominent. The cultural essence of music is traded either for formulae styled after natural sciences or for ethnographically delimited descriptions of how people create, perform, and consume music. We have already discussed the conceptual deficit in the field elsewhere. Rather than conceptualizing phenomena, we tend to focus on their roles, functions, and uses.

As critical as it may sound, this situation reflects, or at least points to, the real complexity of music. We know almost nothing about it, not because we are not sufficiently trained

in our usual research methods, but because the methods are not enough to show us what we still prefer not to see. Speaking about music, we are conscious subjects of our conversations, but most of what we talk about goes beyond our consciousness.

Tacitly, in some implicit way, we are aware that there is something beyond everyday words and theoretical constructs, and even beyond our practical skills and feelings – something on which our concepts and feelings are grounded. Linguists talk about something like that²; logicians try to formalize the thing³. Christopher Peacocke chooses to talk about "implicit conceptions" in the spirit of modern cognitive science (Peacocke, 2008, p.122), but this idea is not that new. Since Romanticism⁴ at the very least, people have been feeling that there is something we have no means to adequately express because we do not actually know what it is, and throughout the long 19th century, the view was developed that something important in people is not simply hidden from the sight, but still undiscovered, and therefore it remains beyond the reach of consciousness.

Johann Friedrich Herbart wrote, for instance, in 1821: "Jedes Individuum trägt eine unermeßliche Mangifaltigkeit von Vorstellungen in sich, die unter einander vielfach entgegengesetzt sind; eben wegen dieses Gegensatzes verdrängen die Gedanken einander aus dem Bewußtseyn – Every human being carries within him an innumerable variety of ideas, which often contradict each other; it is

¹ "For everyone thinks he knows what language is: a meaningful sound, a sociable noise, a passing to and from of signs, which men make chiefly with the mouth and take it through the ears and by means of which they communicate with each other – through gestures, hands, eyes, etc., also help. No one denies that behind this shifting pattern something is at work that may be called Force, or Meaning, or Will, or Mind, or Body and Soul of Man, or anything else. But as soon as we inquire what is this something is, opinions begin to diverge widely" (Vossler, 1951, p.1).

² See, e.g., Natalia Waights Hickman: "what I shall call implicit reasons, reasons that guide action without being consciously dwelt upon or offered as reasons by the agent, are ubiquitous" (Hickman, 2021, p.718).

³ See, e.g., Hector Levesque: "...[A] sentence is explicitly believed when it is actively held to be true by an agent and implicitly believed when it follows from what is believed" (Levesque, 1984, p.198)

⁴ "The romantic project of exploring the non-conscious of sub-conscious stretched, incidentally, from some notes of the poet-philosopher Friedrich von Hardenberg (otherwise known as Novalis, 1772–1801) on psychological phenomena..." (Görner, 2010, pp.121–122).

because of this contradiction that thoughts displace each other from the mind" (Herbart, 1890, pp. 29–30), thus formulating the idea of unconscious contents, and even the defence mechanism of repression that Sigmund Freud would later discuss.

Oxymoronic formulations such as "music is the language of the inexpressible" – for example, "Ce qu'on ne peut dire et ce qu'on ne peut taire, la musique l'exprime – What cannot be said and what cannot be silenced, music expresses", as in William Shakespeare by Victor Hugo (Hugo, 1880, p.80), and "After silence, that which comes closest to expressing the inexpressible is music", as in *The Rest is Silence* by Aldous Huxley (Huxley, 1931, p.17), are nothing more than doomed attempts to avoid inevitable logical defeat by means of abusing poetic liberties.

Thus, we obviously need a method for understanding this unconscious layer of cultural phenomena if our understanding of them is to be complete, both phenomenologically and logically. Freud had provided us with such a method.

Methods

By reading closely the relevant primary sources and research publications in the field, we (re)construct the key aspects of psychoanalytic method as an instrument for cultural scholars.

Results

Freud's psychoanalysis was born out of medical necessity (Freud, 1957, pp. 309–333). Ernest Jones, describing what psychoanalysis is, defines the term as follows: "a special method of medical treatment devised by Professor Freud of Vienna for the cure of a certain class of nervous disorders" (Jones, 1949, p. 8). Freud himself summarised his life in an interview with the BBC in November 1938: "I started my professional activity as a neurologist, trying to bring relief to my neurotic patients <...> I discovered some new and important facts about the unconscious in psychic life <...> Out of these findings grew a new science, Psycho-analysis, a part of psychology and a new method of treatment of the neuroses" (Freud's BBC Speech).

It was a real revolution in the field of mental health. To appreciate the extent of the changes brought about by Freud, it should be borne in mind that the term "neurosis was understood quite differently at the end of the nineteenth century, when Freud began his work, than it is today. Now we understand neurosis as an outdated and unfashionable term for minor mental health problems – as a "mild nervous disorder" that does not pose a particular risk, unlike psychosis, the classic characteristic of which is a loss of contact with reality. This is how, for example, the contemporary Danish dictionary defines neurosis: "Neurose er et fagudtryk indenfor psykiatri og psykologi, som stort set har samme betydning som 'lettere sindslidelser', modsat de 'alvorlige sindslidelser' – psykose – Neurosis is a technical term in psychiatry and psychology that has roughly the same meaning as 'mild mental illness', as opposed to the 'severe mental illness' – psychosis" (Neurose).

However, in the 19th century, medical opinion was different. Back then, the term "neurosis" was used to describe a variety of conditions, often severe and difficult to cure. If left untreated, neurosis could lead to disability in the patient. William Cullen, who first⁵ introduced the concept of neurosis in his 1769 *Synopsis Nosologiae Methodicae*, used the term to describe a class of diseases characterised as "sensus et motus laesi, sine pyrexia idiopathica, et sine morbo locali – a lesion of the senses and movements, without unexplained fever and without a specific localised disease" (Cullen, 1827, p.66). This meant that it was a disturbance of nervous function, not a physical injury, or, for computer-savvy readers, not a hardware failure, but a critical operating system malfunction.

Carl Friedrich Canstatt regarded neurosis, defined as a disturbance of the nervous function, to be a generic concept in relation to psychoses. "Auch die Psychosen, wie alle Neurosen, sind im Beginnen meist nur Krankheitsformen, die aber bei einiger Dauer sich zu Individualitätskrankheiten umgestalten – In the beginning, psychoses, like all neuroses, are usually only forms of illness, but over time they transform into diseases of individuality" (Canstatt, 1843, S.367). One's own individuality suffers; thus, *Geisteskrankheit*, a disease of the mind, enters. The usual ideas about the causes, mechanisms, and progression of diseases adopted from general practice simply did not work (as they do not work much now) for these conditions.

Although doctors, as always, had to somehow correct physical problems, they were not as successful in treating pathologies of the soul. So, as Canstatt says, "Je weiter wir in der ätiologischen Kenntniss der Neurosen (und sie ist gewiss die wichtigere!) vordringen werden, desto weniger werden wir an diesen Räthseln zu kauen haben – The further we advance in the aetiological study of neuroses (and this is undoubtedly the most important!), the less we will have to puzzle over these riddles" (Canstatt, 1843, S.337).

Thus, since the mid-19th century, physicians have been faced with a practical problem that could not be solved within the framework of biological, i.e., natural science concepts of disease and health. The province wanted philosophers⁶. That is why we have been seeing an *entente cordiale* between philosophers and psychiatrists for centuries. This is probably because philosophers are better equipped to face questions about human nature than specialists who see people as given data rather than as a problem to be explored. Therefore, it is not surprising that Baron Ernst von Feuchtersleben, for example, in the second, historical chapter of his *Lehrbuch der ärztlichen Seelenkunde* (Feuchtersleben, 1845) discusses Locke, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Herbart et al. However, even recognising the significance and potentially the practical value of what those philosophers had said, it can hardly be maintained that the problems of diseases of the soul have come any closer to being solved, even if only from a hands-on, therapeutic point of view. Again, it was not because their ideas were that wrong, but because their model of a human being was still phenomenologically and logically incomplete.

⁵ There is some debate as to whether Dr. Cullen was truly the first: Felix Platter (1526–1614) from Switzerland is credited because of his idea of 'functionem laesionem' – functional disorders.

⁶ Alfredo Civita tells us: "... troviamo spinti ora ad affermare che la malattia mentale colpisce la mente. Questa banale affermazione dischiude la deminzione filosofica del nostro problema a partire da una domanda tanto semplice in apparenza quanto insidiosa nella sostanza: in cosa consiste e dove si trova la mente, la quale si ammala nella malattia mentale? <...> che cos'è la mente da un punto di vista ontologico? Con quali metodi essa può essere studiata...? <...> Non è disponibile una metodologia scientifica in grado non di risolvere ma anche solo di affrontare razionalmente i <...> quesiti – ... we are now have to state that mental illness affects the mind. This trivial statement reveals the philosophical dimension of the problem, starting from a question that appears to be as simple, as it essentially is insidious: what is the mind, which becomes ill in mental illness, and where is it located? <...> what is the mind from an ontological point of view? What methods can be used to study it...? <...> There is no scientific methodology available that is capable not only of resolving but even of rationally addressing these questions" (Pagnini, 2010, p. 338).

These observations make the scope of the Freudian revolution clear. Psychoanalysis offered a cure for neurosis; according to Jones, "this limited sense was the one in which it (the term "Psychoanalysis" – A.K.) was first used" (Jones, 1949, p.8). But treatment aetiologically based on making unconscious content conscious has moved beyond the province of biological neurology and into the realm of problems of consciousness, that is, into the non-biological realm, that is, into the human world. The realm traditionally belonged to the *Geisteswissenschaften*, the sciences of the mind.

Having gone beyond the narrow naturalistic ideas of medical practice, psychoanalysis has thus acquired a completely new meaning. According to Jones, it now also meant "a special technique for investigating the deeper layers of the mind" (Jones, 1949, p.8). It is in this way that Lacanians Henrik Jøker Bjerre et al. believe that "...even for Freud, it was never just an individual lying before him on the couch but also the very question of the subject..." (Bjerre et al., 2020, pp.1-2). However, the more Freudian Ilse Grubrich-Simitis' formulation seems to us more correct: "...the psychoanalytic method is by far the most subtle and powerful tool ever for investigating the unconscious inner world of man, and in general of human subjectivity..." (Grubrich-Simitis, 1997, p. 6).

The problem of subjectivity is precisely what has always been at the heart of the *Geisteswissenschaften*; it was at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that modernists finally began to recognise it as their own problem. Subjectivity, i.e., the ability to be (or not to be) the subject of one's own activity, is the source of culture⁷. In a sense, the history of culture is the history of subjectivity. Thus, psychoanalysis is much more closely entwined with culture than is commonly assumed.

Cultural society at the beginning of the 20th century actively embraced the ideas of psychoanalysis. Veronika Fuechtner, naming her book *Berlin Psychoanalytic*, states: "...with the adjective psychoanalytic I intend to convey that this book addresses not only 'psychoanalysis' but also a particular interdisciplinary network of intellectuals that included psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, sexual scientists, writers, artists, journalists, and figures who would describe themselves as all of the above..." (Fuechtner, 2011, p. 2). In the same sense, by the slightest extension, we can say that with the discovery of the psychoanalytic method, the human world has become psychoanalytic.

Since the days of Freud and onwards, our understanding of human Being has changed significantly, regardless of how acquainted we are with psychoanalysis. Whether we accept or reject the psychoanalytic basic metaphors, whether we agree with or resist the results obtained in psychoanalytic research ("the truths it (psychoanalysis – A.K.) announces as important discoveries are unwelcome, wounding, or repugnant, so one cannot be surprised when they meet with general repudiation" (Jones, 1949, p.8)), we are speaking of

all things human from within the reality that Freud made accessible for us. Even for the most determined critics of the psychoanalytic approach, psychoanalysis has decisively changed the dimensionality of human existence – it has restored depth to man. The human self has already become more complex, and there is no escape from the fact⁸.

And the point here, incidentally, is not that psychoanalysis has challenged the Cartesian model of 'cogito' and, in this sense, contributed to the destruction of the very concept of the subject. On the contrary, having demonstrated the not-so-simple nature of the self, psychoanalysis follows Kant's path in distinguishing between the empirical and the transcendental in the subject. After Freud, as it was after Kant, what we believe about our perceived self requires careful reflection, which, in turn, requires understanding ourselves like others. Now it became impossible to reduce the subject to a mere "subject of knowledge", as the early modern philosophers, infatuated with natural science, did⁹. We have to distinguish *cogitatio* from *conscientia*, cognition from consciousness. Consciousness differs qualitatively from its cognitivist counterpart, at least in the same way as the verb "to know" differs from the verb "to understand". Without going into much detail here, let us only note that we always know something, but understand someone. Knowledge is inherently impersonal and non-human; it implies a relation towards an object; understanding is always personal and implies interaction between the subjects. In the very literal root of it, understanding suggests the ability to stand under the context of the other, to be fully aware of the otherness with all its differences. However, the process of understanding is grounded in the ability to see human nature, which is the same for all, behind the peculiarities, no matter how important those peculiarities may seem. Unlike cognition, understanding is affectively and contextually loaded and is therefore not done in the name of collecting data, but ultimately for the sake of an action. In 1909 Freud tells us: "a psychoanalysis is not an impartial scientific investigation, but a therapeutic measure. Its essence is not to prove anything, but merely to alter something" (Freud, 1955a, p. 104). Similarly, there is a difference between the clinical mindset of a doctor at the bedside of a patient and the statistical mindset of a healthcare administrator. These attitudes are not antagonistic but are fundamentally different. Clinical thinking and its corresponding clinical method seek to preserve the unique and special, in contrast to inductive, statistically orientated information gathering. It is no coincidence that Clyde Kluckhohn draws our attention to the clinical way of thinking in the *Geisteswissenschaften* (Kluckhohn, 1948, p. 440).

It is also worth remembering that the task of psychoanalysis was to make a person master in his own house by freeing him from the domination of unconscious impulses ("Wo es war, soll ich werden – Where Id was, Ego must become" (Freud, 1963, p. 80)). It is quite consistent

⁷ Definitely it is if, of course, we consider culture to be "all things human".

⁸ Attempts are made, tough. Here is, maybe, one of the most deeply personal one, that of the infamous revolutionary as quoted by Clara Zetkin: "The extension of Freudian hypotheses seems 'educated', even scientific, but it is ignorant, bungling. Freudian theory is the modern fashion. I mistrust the sexual theories of the articles, dissertations, pamphlets, etc., in short, of that particular kind of literature which flourishes luxuriantly in the dirty soil of bourgeois society. I mistrust those who are always contemplating the several questions, like the Indian saint his navel. It seems to me that these flourishing sexual theories which are mainly hypothetical, and often quite arbitrary hypotheses, arise from the personal need to justify personal abnormality or hypertrophy in sexual life before bourgeois morality, and to entreat its patience" (Zetkin, 1934, p.45). The quote shows the paradox of reading: in whatever text, everyone reads and understands only that what one wants and is ready to read and understand.

⁹ This peculiar approach of looking for a cognitive function in any movement of human mind and thus reducing subjectivity to the "subject of knowledge" was also adopted in different socio-political and historical contexts to prevent subjective realisation and to promote the conquest of the world through objective knowledge.

with the idea that the subject is the goal of psychoanalytic efforts ("to give the patient's ego freedom to decide one way or the other" (Freud, 1957, p. 50n)).

This orientation of psychoanalysis towards the subject is the crux of the matter; it is through this orientation that psychoanalysis comes into the Geisteswissenschaften.

The mechanism of this coming in was well described by Kluckhohn. He draws our attention to the fact that an anthropologist, at least for his professional purposes, needs a theory of human nature (Kluckhohn, 1948, p. 440), and it was psychoanalysis that "provided anthropology with a general theory that was susceptible of cross-cultural testing by empirical means and with clues that could be investigated as to the psychological causes of cultural phenomena" (Kluckhohn, 1948, p. 440.).

The notion of human nature is extremely important here: this notion separates the human in its invariant form from the natural. In fact, the conception of human nature is the doctrine of the cultural subject; even the biological characteristics of a representative of the species *Homo sapiens* cease to be the exclusive property of biology and become the subject of cultural studies. Look at Othello, for an example: "...her name, that was as fresh // As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black // As my own face..." (Act III, Scene III) (Shakespeare, 1909, p.92). Its seemingly purely biological characteristics are functioning as a metaphor, that is, they begin to exist not as a biological fact but as a cultural artefact.

In this vein, since everything we know about the unconscious, we know only insofar as we are made aware of it, and thereby the unconscious has become conscious, the unconscious exists as an element of the semantic space of the cultural subject, as an element of the space of mind, der Raum des Geistes.

However, what seems much more important to us is that Kluckhohn sees a connection between anthropology and psychoanalysis in terms of the ways they work, and therefore in terms of their methods. The anthropologist "recognised certain similarities which confronted him in describing and interpreting a culture with those encountered by the psychoanalyst in diagnosing a personality: the relationships between forms and meanings, between content and organisation, between stability and change: "the relations between forms and meanings, between content and organisation, between stability and change" (Kluckhohn, 1948, p. 441).

Kluckhohn succeeded in what many who write about psychoanalysis from within the humanities fail to do: he was able to see a way psychoanalysis engages with the subject matter of humanistic research – namely, a method that is the very essence of psychoanalysis and which, according to Grubrich-Simitis, is the part of Freud's legacy that, "unlike some areas of theory, has lost none of its relevance today" (Grubrich-Simitis, 1997, p. 6). It is the method that unites psychoanalysts regardless of their group preferences (Grubrich-Simitis, 1997, p. 6.).

Several important things become clear from the above.

First, it was the clinical orientation of the psychoanalytic method to the understanding of a unique phenomenon that ensured its success among the representatives of the Geisteswissenschaften.

Second, it seems to be clear that psychoanalysis is not so much an outlook one adheres to, a system to be followed, or a

theory one can deliberately choose to use or abuse¹⁰. Even less, to borrow a word from the PR field, psychoanalysis is an "optics". First and foremost, it is a method.

Third, the ways of thinking, i.e., the method, of the psychoanalyst and of the cultural scholar are essentially identical.

This third observation finds interesting confirmation. In Jacob Burckhardt's History of Greek Culture we read: "Die Kulturgeschichte dagegen hat primum gradum certitudinis, denn die lebt wichtigerenteils von dem, was Quellen und Denkmäler unabsichtlich und uneigennüssig, ja unfreiwillig, unbewusst und andererseits sogar durch Erdichtungen verkünden, ganz abgesehen von demjenigen Sachlichen welches sie absichtlich melden, verfechten und verherrlichen mögen... Cultural history, on the other hand, has primum gradum certitudinis, for it lives largely from what sources and monuments proclaim involuntarily and unselfishly, indeed involuntarily, unconsciously and, on the other hand, even through the fiction, to say nothing of the factual information which they may deliberately report, defend and glorify" (Burckhardt, 1900, p. 3). This fragment is easy to overlook: when reading works on cultural history, we are usually interested in the material and style, without noticing methodological hints. Freud, however, was familiar with this passage.

In general, Grubrich-Simitis' remark that "careful, critical reading of the representative texts of psychoanalysis, on the one hand, and clinical work proper, on the other, are now the preserve of the few" (Grubrich-Simitis, 1997, p.10) applies not only to readers of psychoanalytic literature but equally to those in the humanities.

The humanities scholars, who are used to careful analysis of closely read texts, place psychoanalysts' writings in appropriate historical and sociocultural contexts, suggest a periodisation of the history of psychoanalysis, retell the main points of classic analytical texts, and talk about different trends and schools. However, these important and necessary efforts are not typically guided by the requirement of reading from within the text itself; instead, psychoanalytic texts and theories are discussed as self-sufficient cultural objects that form interesting constellations.

The context in which psychoanalytic texts are placed is still an external one. It doesn't come from the texts being studied but surrounds them; this context isn't organised in terms of the meaning and purpose of the praxis discussed in these texts. For the humanities reader of psychoanalytic literature, psychoanalysis has thereby transformed from a clinically oriented therapeutic approach into another fin-de-siècle phenomenon; another modernist philosophical concept; another episode from the history of ideas; another literary or linguistic game.

The result of such readings is a sort of more or less smoothly arranged system, but by no means a method. We are told about ancient Greek myths in much the same way.

The closest and simplest example of such a reading of Freud is the more or less correct presentation of his structural model, which we find in all modern textbooks: the Id (Es), which lies at the base, the Ego (Ich), which lies in the middle, and the Super-Ego (Über-Ich). Intuitively, this is perceived as a structure with a certain hierarchy. This perception does not correspond at all to the content or, more importantly, the meaning of Freud's clinical beliefs. The

¹⁰ Vossler puts it very closely: "...the philosophy of language is not the application of this or that Weltanschauung to science; it means independent thought and research into the nature of language. By deepening and clearly following up these thoughts, a definite Weltanschauung will grow up as the natural reward of work. Empiricism can be separated from metaphysics as little as research from thought. <...> Above all we wish to combat that much favoured division of labour, whereby the philosopher undertakes to think and the empiricist to collect and to "know". (Vossler, 1951, p. 6).

described 'structures of the psyche' are not structural elements in the strict sense – the psyche does not consist of them in the same way that a house consists of a foundation, rooms, and a roof. These are a special kind of entities that Freud calls 'instances (die Instanzen)', specifically avoiding associations with objectified and naturalised 'things'¹¹. Die Instanz means an agency or service that, for example, regulates a road junction. It is neither a city nor a building, nor even a physical entity – it is a switching field where different paths converge, and different processes meet. 'Instances' undoubtedly exist, but they exist in much the same way as what is known in linguistics as a 'subject', 'predicate', or 'preposition'.

These instances do not show reliable correspondence to the structural or functional elements of the brain, despite all the efforts of neuroscience to prove otherwise. "If it ('any direct relation' between our psyche and the brain – A.K.) existed, it would at the most afford an exact localization of the processes of consciousness and would give us no help towards understanding them" – warns Freud (Freud, 1964b, pp.144–145).

In so saying, Freud takes his reader beyond the realm of material things and thus effectively delineates the frame within which his texts should be interpreted. Here we are – or should be – dealing with the ontology of conceivable rather than perceivable entities. But this is exactly the sort of reality cultural scholars are talking about¹² when they talk, for example, about cultural phenomena like music, literature, myths, rites, as well as meanings, values, ways of thinking – that is, about culture in general.

The sort of reality which psychoanalysis deals with, it turns out, becomes reality, begins to be insofar as it is the result of interpretation and exists in the process of interpretation¹³.

Freud's theory, therefore, describes inherently hermeneutic, interpretative processes that occur in the human psyche. It is this hermeneutic shift that moves psychoanalysis beyond the natural sciences into the realm of the sciences of the mind. Psychoanalytic theory and its therapeutic metaphors, which emerged as an interpretation of practical discoveries, cannot be evaluated in the same way as a standard theory of mathematized natural science. From this ground, the widespread accusations of psychoanalysis being "unscientific" are at the very least irrelevant; at the very best, they show the failure of the positivistic methodology to handle the ontology that is to emerge from psychoanalytic clinical practice.

Thus, the logical quality of the arguments of opponents of psychoanalysis is roughly equivalent to the quality of the argument that God does not exist because astronauts have not seen him. This is not surprising, since the resistance to psychoanalysis has reasons other than scientific or logical. Grubrich-Simitis says about that: "In a nutshell, the situation

is as follows. ...the universalistic ideas of the Enlightenment, to which Freud owed allegiance, have been indiscriminately discredited. The rise of a new nationalism and particularism has eroded tolerance of anything that is alien or different. Freud's image of the "citizen of the civilized world", whose passing with the barbarism of the First World War he lamented, is once again hardly in vogue" (Grubrich-Simitis, 1996, p. 283).

These developments make it all the more important to turn to psychoanalysis as a method of studying cultural phenomena. Of course, this cannot be the retrospective approach used by early psychoanalysts when they searched, for example, for manifestations of basic patterns established in the clinical practice of psychoanalysis in works of art¹⁴. Psychoanalysts move from the analysis of a work to the analysis of the subject of that particular subject's creativity and are essentially limited by this intention. Says Freud in 1925: "What Psychoanalysis was able to do was to take interrelations between the impressions of the artist's life, his chance experience, and his works and from them construct his [mental] constitution and the instinctual impulses at work in it..." (Freud, 1953, p.65).

The interest of early psychoanalysts in creativity was thus an interest in yet another way in which the unconscious is expressed. Attempts had certainly been made to go beyond the psychography (or pathography) of the analysand author to generalisations concerning general aesthetic theory, and this had led to the creation of psychoanalytic criticism. However, while this approach does lead to an understanding of the individual creator, it is hardly satisfactory for understanding creativity: "Whence it is that the artist derives his creative capacity is not a question for psychology" (Freud, 1955b, p.187). Otto Rank and Hanns Sachs clearly demonstrate this when, speaking of philosophical creativity, they are forced to limit themselves to describing psychological types of philosophers, depending on the elements of mental pathology that prevail in them, and refuse to talk about psychoanalysis of the philosophical work itself (Rank and Sachs, 1916, pp.108–120). This retrospective approach to creativity shows us the very possibility of considering the text as a point of access to unconscious meanings. Herein lies its importance and merit. However, what is a retrospective view for clinical practitioners can, if used carelessly, turn into another reduction of the phenomenon of culture to pseudo-biological half-bases for culture scholars. Jones informs: "It has been estimated that the number of ideas in the unconscious that can be symbolized is at most a hundred, and that they are all concerned with ideas of the self and the immediate blood relations or of the phenomena of birth, love, and death" (Jones, 1949, p.39). Even though Jones speaks of what might be called existentials, or basic experiences of every human being, their limited number can easily lead to the

¹¹ Dr Eric Graham Howe says in Discussion Two of Carl Gustav Jung's Tavistock Lectures: "According to Freudians, there is a place, a thing, an entity called the unconscious. According to Professor Jung, as I understand him, there is no such thing. He is moving in a fluid medium of relationship and Freud in a static medium of unrelated entities" (Jung, 1968, p.65). Jung was good enough as to have responded disapprovingly.

¹² An instance from quite another field is the notion of force in science. Force(s) do(es) exist, and we can even have a formula to calculate the strength, but, as they say, "we judge the force from the result of action". It means, in fact, that force exists by judgement, by conclusion.

¹³ Thus, a bicycle maintains its balance and moves – 'rides' – insofar as we pedal: the reality of the bicycle's movement exists only through our efforts.

¹⁴ In the byways of those early attempts there lies another way of using psychoanalysis in the realm of culture studies. Max Graf writes about Richard Strauss: "Just a few years previously Sigmund Freud had been the first to peer in the dark of the 'unconscious' where frustration and erotic desires transform themselves into psychalgia. That is what Richard Strauss set to music in 'Elektra'. Like Freud he was able to say of himself: 'Acheronta movebo' (I will move Hades), that being the motto of Freud's 'dream interpretation'. (Graf 1978, p.80). And more: 'A Freud would opine that in this libretto a repression complex develops into an opera (Richard Strauss's 'Guntram' – A.K.)" (Graf 1978, p.70). We shall not bother the reader with our commenting upon this nonsensical indigestion of psychoanalytic terms, partly invented and partly misplaced. Being received in Freud's house does not make the man competent automatically.

possibility that instead of trying to understand a phenomenon of culture, a scholar will receive another catalogue of tropes, which can be done in quite structuralist ways without resorting to psychoanalysis. Those, shall we say, laboratory findings had proved the viability of psychoanalysis for research into cultural phenomena. Since psychoanalysis is essentially a theory of method, the quest for this method properly understood is to come by.

Discussion and conclusions

We started from the problem of conceptual deficit. It appears to be especially important right now, when lots of things have to be defined again. In cultural studies, a grid of strong concepts is needed to avoid getting lost. However, some things – we think music as an example – are perceived experientially, that is, unconsciously, and thought of correspondingly. It means we shall have a method to handle this unconscious, implicit level of our conceptions and concepts to make them be understood more completely¹⁵. That is why we think the method of cultural studies should be psychoanalytically informed. We mean method, not a theory, because it is not what we are free to choose as an explanatory instrument when working with notions that so far defy strong definitions. We turned to Freudian texts on the same ground as we would turn to Kant's text to understand the idea of the transcendental subject. We have found it relevant for our task to address mostly the clinical works, because the psychoanalytic method was and still is a therapeutic method that works. Culture scholars seldom read into this segment¹⁶. It means we would have either no ready-made products we can simply apply, or the application would be a reductionist imitation of Freud's *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. Wherefrom comes the quest for the method.

The psychoanalytic method in the study of cultural phenomena should be reconstructed (Freud would say – "constructed" (Freud, 1964a, pp.255–270)) not from the elements of the system, but from the ethos of the method. In this way, the psychoanalytic method for cultural studies should conceivably have the following features.

First, the method should not be linked rigidly to any systemic school of psychoanalytic practice or to any variation of secondary theories such as Tiefenpsychologie or retour à Freud. Belonging to a school or trend, as it has already been mentioned, gives only a specific linguistic style that gives the reader the impression of erudition and novelty¹⁷. One should go by the example of Alessandra Lemma, who says: "I am mindful here of Sandler's (1983)¹⁸ helpful, if challenging, distinction between public and private theories. Private theories, according to Sandler, are preconscious and relate more directly to clinical work. He suggests that they do not logically follow from the stated public theories that we consciously subscribe to" (Lemma, 2003, p.XII).

Second, it should be remembered that the method in psychoanalysis is different from that in many other fields. Neither is psychoanalysis conducted according to a manual

nor is it directed in its process towards a known outcome. Rather, the psychoanalytic method is a way of thinking, a special attitude of a specialist to the disclosure of meanings that are currently hidden not only from the analyst but also from the analysand. But it is precisely this preparedness to uncover hidden and implicit meanings that is essential for a scholar engaged in cultural studies.

Third, and perhaps most important: the psychoanalytically informed culture scholar is interested not (only) in what the text under analysis tells her or him about, but (above all) in what exactly it says. The difference here is roughly the same as between the Rankian "wie es eigentlich gewesen war – as it truly was", and "was ist eigentlich das – what it essentially is". This approach will allow us to come up with a reconstruction of the meanings on which the text we read actually rests; it means creating an ontology of the subjective world from which the text we read becomes possible¹⁹.

This ontological work would complete, both logically and phenomenologically, the picture of the cultural world and thus would allow us to talk about cultural phenomena not as a set of impressions, but through capturing their essence in concepts – that is, through true understanding.

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¹⁵ It would be, for instance, very much useful to understand what is the unconscious model of a human being that underlies someone's conscious belief psychoanalysis is a messianic religion or simply a fraud, because our conscious beliefs express, inter alia, their unconscious ground, which informs the concepts and images we consciously operate with, and therefore this unconscious layer has to be accounted for in our interpretations.

¹⁶ Alessandro Pagnini, prefacing *Filosofia della medicina*, affirms: " ...il librario, o anche il bibliotecario, vi ha detto, e non per mancanza di zelo, che non c'era quasi nelle che facesse al caso vostro – ...the bookseller, or even the librarian, told you, and not for lack of zeal, that there was almost nothing that suited your needs" (Pagnini, 2010, p.15). Meanwhile it would be of a value for culture scholars to read into, for example, Edward Glover's "The Therapeutic Effect of Inexact Interpretation" (Glover, 1931).

¹⁷ There always are, of course, different sets of basic theoretical metaphors. But as for the method, Jung mentions in his Tavistock Lectures: "... I have patients with whom I have to make a Freudian analysis and go into all the details which Freud has correctly described" (Jung, 1968, p.140).

¹⁸ Lemma refers here to J. Sandler (1983).

¹⁹ As Levesque puts it: "We examine not what an agent believes directly, but what the world would be like if what he believed were true" (Levesque, 1984, p.198).

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У ПОШУКАХ ПСИХОАНАЛІТИЧНО ІНФОРМОВАНОГО МЕТОДУ В КУЛЬТУРНИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯХ

Вступ. У статті розглядається можливість і необхідність використання психоаналітично інформованого методу як методу дослідження феноменів культури. Автор вважає, що орієнтація на дослідження окремих культурних традицій, що сходять до етнографії та культурної антропології, коли культура розглядається лише як сховище навичок для соціалізації індивіда, призводить, як побічний ефект, до концептуального дефіциту. Базові поняття культурології, в тому числі й поняття "культура", починають використовуватися інтуїтивно і як поняття втрачають таким чином свій концептуальний потенціал. Тому багато феноменів культури залишаються впізнаваними, але не зрозумілими по суті, залишаються несвідомими. Це призводить до логічної та феноменологічної неповноти в теорії культури. Для усунення цієї неповноти необхідний інструмент, що дозволяє працювати з несвідомими змістами. Психоаналіз є можливо єдиним та, зрозуміло, першим спеціальним інструментом, розробленим для усвідомлення несвідомих змістів.

Методи. Застосовано ретельне прочитання первинних джерел та деяких з обраних коментарів до них як головної дослідницької техніки. Автор спирається головним чином на практичну сторону як самої психоаналітичної теорії, так і її використання і в якості терапевтичного методу, і в якості основи для практичної діяльності дослідників культури.

Результати. Автор показує, що з точки зору методу психоаналітичне дослідження багато в чому тотожне дослідженню культурологічних джерел (текстів). Це було відомо ще деяким представникам культурної антропології, оскільки сам психоаналіз додає раціональне уявлення про природу людини до етнографічних студій, перетворюючи їх на студії культури. Взагалі, значення несвідомих змістів, які містяться у текстах та інших пам'ятках культури, було зрозуміло навіть до психоаналізу, але саме психоаналіз запропонував метод задля розуміння цих змістів. Психоаналітично інформований метод має стати не методом за вибором, а методом розуміння імпліцитних онтологій, на яких базується і які, в решті решт, виражає будь який текст культури. Критичне ставлення до психоаналізу в галузі гуманітарних наук, яке було сформовано протягом останніх десятиріч, може бути пояснене з історико-культурних передумов і в цьому сенсі усвідомлене та подолане.

Висновки. Автор звертає увагу на те, що психоаналіз як метод потребує (ре)конструкції і пропонує як висновок основні моменти, необхідні для такої реконструкції.

Ключові слова: культурологія, концептуальний дефіцит, несвідоме, психоаналіз, метод.

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