

CONTENTS

About the Texts

ix

Introduction: Rethinking Mind in the Age of the Brain

3

Axioms

23

Prolegomena to a System

33

1

Spacings of the Abyss

61

2

Deciphering the “Genesis Problem”:
On the Origins of Psychic Reality

89

3

Mind as Projective Identification

145

4	
Unconscious Semiotics	
171	
5	
Ego and the Abyss	
207	
Acknowledgments	
259	
Notes	
261	
Bibliography	
277	
Subject Index	
297	
Author Index	
302	

ABOUT THE TEXTS

From the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, M.J. Petry, ed., outlines Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit* in *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, vol. 1: *Introductions*; vol. 2: *Anthropology*; and vol. 3: *Phenomenology and Psychology* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978). Petry's edition provides a photographic reproduction of Hegel's original text published in the 1830 revision, along with the *Zusätze*, or *Additions*, supplied by Boumann when the material was republished in 1845. Petry's edition also indicates variations between the 1827 and 1830 editions of the *Encyclopaedia*. His edition has several decisive advantages over A.V. Miller's edition of the *Philosophie des Geistes*, which was translated as the *Philosophy of Mind*. In addition to having the original German text and his notations of the variations between the 1827 and 1830 editions, Petry also provides notes from the *Griesheim* and *Kehler* manuscripts. Further, he accurately translates the word *bewußtlos* as "unconscious," whereas Miller translates it as "subconscious." For these reasons, Petry's edition is a superior text to the Miller translation. For comparison, I have also examined Hegel's 1827–28 lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit: *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1994). I have mainly relied on Petry's translation but provide my own in places that warrant changes. Hereafter, references to the *Philosophy of Spirit* (*Die Philosophie des Geistes*), which is the third part of Hegel's *Enzyklopädia*, will customarily be referred to as *EG* followed by the section number. References to the *Zusätze* are identified as such.

All references to Freud's texts refer to the original German monographs compiled in his *Gesammelte Werke, Chronologisch Geordnet*, 18 vols., ed. Anna Freud, Edward Bibring, Willi Hoffer, Ernst Kris, and Otto Isakower, in collaboration with Marie Bonaparte (London: Imago Pub-

lishing Co., Ltd., 1968 [1940–52]). Most translations are mine. Because most English-speaking psychoanalysts neither own nor readily have access to these original texts, I have cited *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols. (1886–1940), trans. and gen. ed. James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson (London: Hogarth Press, 1966–95 [1886–1940]). References to quotations are designated by *SE* followed by the appropriate volume and page numbers.

I have made little effort to engage the secondary source literature in this book. I have always found it an illegitimate precedent, set forth in psychological writings, to assume that an author should address and cite the secondary literature on a particular topic when many published monographs often tend to gloss over or entirely omit a close reading of the original texts under inquiry. Here I do not engage other psychoanalysts who summarize previous knowledge, especially when they do not meticulously examine original sources. For this reason, I primarily focus on the texts of Freud and Hegel and a few notable analysts while deliberately ignoring the conventional imposition to cite other authors who have written on these topics beforehand. In this way, I approach the text with a fresh perspective, from my own reading and interpretation, without the need to offer the reader a banal literature review. This is a scholarly standard I wish to emphasize in order to obviate criticism from analysts who may object to my lack of observed convention.

Attempts have been made to use gender-neutral referents. Most references cited in the text refer to the following abbreviations followed by their volume, section, and/or page numbers. For complete details, see the Bibliography:

<i>BN</i>	<i>Being and Nothingness</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>Being and Time</i>
<i>CP</i>	<i>Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce</i> , 6 vols.
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>Écrits: A Selection</i>
<i>EG</i>	<i>Philosophie des Geistes</i> , trans. <i>The Philosophy of Spirit</i> , part 3 of the <i>Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences</i>
<i>EL</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Logic</i> , vol. 1 of the <i>Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences</i>
<i>FC</i>	<i>The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis</i>

- GW *Gesammelte Werke, Chronologisch Geordnet*, 18 vols.
PN *Philosophy of Nature*, vol. 2 of the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*
PR *Process and Reality*
PS *Phenomenology of Spirit*
RH *Reason in History*, the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*
SE *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols.
SL *Science of Logic*
STI *System of Transcendental Idealism*
W *Wissenschaftslehre*, trans. *The Science of Knowledge*

תישארב

ORIGINS

INTRODUCTION

Rethinking Mind in the Age of the Brain

This book is a treatise on the unconscious mind. It attempts to reclaim and clarify many key elements from classical psychoanalytic doctrine through a Hegelian revisionist perspective I have called *dialectical psychoanalysis*, or *process psychology*. Although process psychology has potential applications for theoretical, clinical, and applied psychoanalysis, here I am mainly concerned with explicating its conceptual explanatory power. It is my hope that this work will be received as a fresh paragon for the advancement of psychoanalytic inquiry grounded in a solid philosophical foundation. If it finds verification among the social and behavioural sciences it stands a chance of enjoying greater receptivity across disciplines; but this work ultimately rests on philosophical justification alone. Thus, my approach is founded in a theory-based practice that further informs methodological considerations. Here I am concerned with first principles, namely, the ontological configurations of mind and the logical precepts that lend cohesion and intelligibility to human experience.

Because I am preoccupied with articulating the basic constituents of psychic reality derived from process thought, some readers may find this work to be tedious and/or irrelevant to therapeutic practice. It is my intention, however, to introduce a conceptual shift in addressing the axiomatic principles that inform our presuppositions of mental functioning on the most fundamental level, a subject matter that has been uniformly neglected within the psychoanalytic literature since Freud and Lacan. It is largely for this reason that I attempt to show how psychoanalysis is ultimately a metaphysical enterprise.

Since Freud's (1933) denunciation of psychoanalysis as a *Weltanschauung*, psychoanalysis has largely remained sceptical towards philosophic

speculation while favouring a scientific attitude. But with increasing attention paid to philosophical paradigms within contemporary psychoanalysis, new vistas emerge for mutual dialogue and theoretical advance. Throughout this project, I attempt to offer the first systematic account of a psychoanalytic metaphysics grounded in process philosophy largely derived from Hegel's dialectical logic. After rectifying many misconceptions about Hegel's dialectic, I endeavour to provide a process account of the coming into being of unconscious agency that conditions the subsequent emergence and organization of all other forms of psychic reality. This naturally includes the nature and structure of the ego, consciousness, object relations and intrapsychic defence, semiotics, intersubjective dynamics, and the higher tiers of psychical life that belong to the cultivated mind. Of course, mind cannot exist independently of social life, which informs and to some degree defines our cultural ontology, so the reader should not be misled into thinking that the intrapsychic and the intersubjective are mutually exclusive categories. Rather, they are dialectically, hence ontologically, wed; yet, they are capable, in theory, of being phenomenologically analyzed as distinct objects of study from various contingent, intervening perspectives. The main point is that – whether we speak of subject or object, inner or outer – perspective, phenomenon, and reality are ontologically conjoined within a complex process holism that permeates all forms of mentation, both individually and collectively realized. Here it is my hope that process psychology will stimulate new directions in psychoanalytic inquiry.

In *The Unconscious Abyss: Hegel's Anticipation of Psychoanalysis* (2002), I provide the first systematic application of Hegel's philosophy of mind to psychoanalytic thought.¹ This is where I comprehensively point towards a process account of psychoanalysis grounded in dialectical logic and show how it has the potential to advance the discipline itself. While many psychoanalysts, psychologists, behavioural scientists, and clinicians of all kinds may find this approach to be highly abstruse and esoteric, I nevertheless believe that psychoanalysis stands everything to gain from philosophical fortification.

It should be noted that this project is principally directed towards the psychoanalytic community, but I hope academic philosophers will find it of interest. Hegel scholars in particular may find it appealing for its applied value. I realize that a book of this kind is bound to be very strange to psychoanalytic audiences, especially psychoanalytic practitioners who

pride themselves on clinical work rather than on theory. I must apologize for not satisfying their expectations. Psychoanalysts who merely critique ideas based on clinical applications will be sorely disappointed – if not lost – in wading through such complex theory. But appealing to the practitioner is not the intention of this book. I follow a structural format that is attentive to the philosophical parameters of clinical theory rather than centring on clinical material itself. Here I am concerned with speculative metaphysics, a subject matter that cannot elude the behavioural sciences, humanities, or even the natural sciences (such as quantum physics). What I optimistically hope for is that the clinician will learn to see and appreciate value in theoretical sophistication and accept it for its own intrinsic benefit, if for no other reason for the sake of advancing our critical science. If practitioners can apply philopschoanalytic theory in the consulting room, then all the better.

Because psychoanalysis conceptually addresses all aspects of the human condition, including the nature and structure of mind, society, and culture, it is by definition a philosophical enterprise. Although perhaps unintended by Freud and his followers, or seen as a corollary to the psychological observations advanced by psychoanalysis as a behavioural science, psychoanalysis as a discipline is a mode of philosophical inquiry by virtue of the fact that it critically examines and speculates on the ontological, epistemological, and phenomenological aspects of human existence through the puissance of reason,² or what Freud (1927b, 1930, 1933a) refers to as *Logos* – the scientific intellect. The criterion of reason, however, does not preclude the study, role, or value of the emotions, the passions, moral sentiment, and irrationality; rather, it only insists that we must respect the need for intelligibility governing our conception and comprehension of these polarities and divergent processes that animate human existence.

These three aspects of philosophical inquiry, namely, ontology, epistemology, and phenomenology, cannot be divorced from the broader rubric of metaphysics, for all propositions are ultimately claims about what is real: it is for descriptive purposes that I briefly highlight their distinctions here. Psychoanalysis makes fundamental assumptions concerning each of these philosophical domains, including (1) the ontological – the nature of psychic reality; (2) the epistemological – how we justify our knowledge claims and clinical practices; and (3) the phenomenological – the disclosure, appearance, and quality of lived experience.

While psychoanalytic process psychology has implications for all of these philosophical traditions, I mainly focus on its conceptual application for understanding the ontology of the unconscious. Like Plato, Freud saw psychoanalysis as the science of the life of the soul (*Seelenleben*). Through philosophical inquiry into the nature and operations of the psyche, psychoanalysis is first and foremost an inquest into the quandaries of the unconscious mind. Dialectical psychoanalysis is therefore concerned with expatiating the ontological conditions that make knowledge and experience possible, and this has its root and etiology in the dialectic of process.

I must inform the reader that dialectical psychoanalysis, or process psychology, is differentiated from the tradition of process philosophy based upon the influential work of Alfred North Whitehead and the contemporaneous ideas of Charles Hartshorne and Samuel Alexander.³ It also diverges from Jung's dialectic of opposites and, more contemporarily, Arnold Mindell's process-oriented psychology. Despite similarities and shared affinities with these respective philosophies, dialectical psychoanalysis is primarily derived from Hegel's dialectical ontology. For Hegel, mind is an active process of becoming forged through negation and conflict. His metaphysical system is a grand and dauntless attempt to derive unity from disunity, order from disorder, and purpose from pattern by highlighting particularity and contextuality within a dynamic self-elucidated and complex universality. Process psychology amends certain facets of Hegel's system, as I expatiate in my prolegomena, but without abandoning the primacy and structural organization of the dialectic. Of course any metaphysical system is bound to be inadequate from the standpoint of phenomenology. I hope that phenomenologists will at least appreciate the effort to begin to question – let alone articulate – how experience is even made possible.

Our dialectical system is teleological, but it has no proper beginning or end. That is, there is a purposeful, persistent, and meaningful order that is not predetermined or predesigned, nor is it superimposed; rather, it is determinate and procreative as it progressively unfolds through various maturational contingencies that are derived from its own interior constitution. The system is unifying, not unified: it is always maintained in a state of flux and process, which can never be complete or static, yet everything is intertwined. One can enter the system at any given point and still remain ontologically bound to the whole despite highlighting a

particular piece of activity, perspective, or experience of mind and, by extension, collective social life. The structure of the system is non-linear, hence privileging a unifying matrix of intercessions that assume a web-like development and presupposes the whole system at the very start. This may appear rather contradictory given that we are to be preoccupied with the origins of psychic life (hence beginnings) and particularly with what I call the “genesis problem” (hence the ground of becoming), namely, the coming into being of psychic existence. But this contradiction soon dissolves when you realize that everything is interconnected. Although the system is holistically encompassing and coherently circular, thus presupposing multiple complexities and processes at once that stand in ontic relation to one another,⁴ in order to minimize opacity for the reader, I attempt to present this book in linear and progressive terms by providing a successive treatment of the subject matter.

Joseph Newirth (2003) recently reminds us that the unconscious is generative, a thesis that was originally promulgated by the German idealist F.W.J. von Schelling (1800), a contemporary of Hegel.⁵ What I am interested in exploring throughout this project is not only how the unconscious is generative but also how it generates being, that is, how psychic reality is constituted. Reality is constituted by mind as agentic process that emerges, grows, and matures from its basal primitive form to more robust configurations of conscious life, self-reflection, and social order. Psychic reality begins as unconscious experience constituted through presubjective events that collectively organize into an unconscious sense of agency. The coming into being of this agentic function signals the coming into being of subjectivity, which becomes the fountainhead for future forms of psychic life to materialize and thrive. What this means is that, before we can speak of the infant, before we can speak of the mother or the attachment system, before we can speak of culture or language, we have to account for the internally derived activity that makes consciousness, attachment, and social relations possible.

Process psychology shows how internally mediated relations become the ground and prototype for all external relations as well as how the structures of unconscious subjectivity allow for intersubjective dynamics to unfold and transpire. Put laconically, what *Origins* endeavours to explicate is the domain, scope, and limits to unconscious mentation prior to the birth of the human subject, culture, and language. Of course this assumes that psychic life is endogenously organized from the start

(*endon*, within) and prepares the organism to experience and acquire information from any mode of information-emitting sources, including exogenous channels – but mind is not solipsistic. Even in the womb, the foetus finds itself socially embedded in a matrix of embodied form that receives many types of communication. These communications are multifaceted and spring from diverse sources – biologic, perinatal, environmental, anaclitic, etc. – but they are also prefigured by an objective cultural society that predates the birth of the human subject and, hence, commands an ontological facticity that cannot be annulled or ignored.

In order to avoid a hopelessly infinite regress, I forgo the temptation to insist on the ontological primacy of the object over that of the subject, or vice versa. The question of whether a social ontology exists prior to the birth of the human subject is not as important as the question of *how* the unborn and incipient mind, uninitiated in the experiential world of consciousness, becomes internally organized and receptive to events it processes from all modes of information emittance. Therefore, we must centre our inquiry from the speculative standpoint of an unconscious phenomenology, phenomena we cannot directly observe or measure, despite the fact that what we are positing is based in ontological discourse. This makes our inquiry a metaphysical enterprise and not an empirical one; for how can one measure that which cannot be observed? Instead, we are forced to rely on logic and on logic alone. Here we must summon the principle of sufficient reason: Is there a ground to every mental event, a ground from which all else emerges, even if that ground is amorphous, unrefined, incomplete, unobservable, ungrounded?

“I,” or, more appropriately, the “sense of I,” is not a declarative we make from the start, unlike Fichte’s (1794) notion of the absolute I (*Ich*) that posits itself into existence and declares its being *ex nihilo*.⁶ The I develops naturally and organically proceeds as an epigenetic architectonic, self-organizing achievement. It must emerge from the organic contingencies in which it finds itself, and this process logically must be prepared from a priori structures the field of psychoanalysis has customarily called the unconscious. What would it be like for mind to know itself upon birth, to know it is an entity that is sentient, that feels, that thinks, and that is self-conscious of itself as a knowing self-reflective being? Would this not be fantastic, merely a fantasy, merely a creative stretch of imagination? But what if there were some small modicum of thought,

of self-certainty, of self-awareness – abandoned to the naked facticity in which mind originally finds itself?

The unconscious, properly understood, is not an archaeological find; rather, it is a *series of spacings*. Although the archaeology metaphor may have a certain legitimacy when we consider the purpose of psychoanalytic method, there is never truly a pristine uncovering of an artefact as the pure deposit of psychic occurrence or event, as if it were some buried relic of the discovered past. Rather, whatever psychic events that are roused, dislodged, or realized are necessarily subject to translation and transmogrification by virtue of the fact that consciousness mediates, and therefore a fortiori transforms unconscious process. Because all psychic events are processes, they never remain static or unaltered. Any conscious recollection or awareness of the past will undergo alteration to various degrees by the mere fact that we posit them, hence bringing the past into a new mediated dynamic. When we envision psychoanalysis as an archaeological endeavour, our subject matter becomes history – the past – accompanied by an interpretive, often speculative, explanation about what preceded the present and went on originally (hence, in the *arkhē*). What becomes important to reemphasize is our quest for understanding the most rudimentary structures of mind as a return to the most original or, more appropriately, aboriginal (*ab-*, from + *origine*, beginning) motifs that govern unconscious life. Just as the term ἄβυσσος refers to the being (οὐ) of the unfathomable, boundless abyss – the infinite void of the underworld – so does ἀρχή (origin) refer to a first principle, element, or source of action. This first element as pure activity is unconscious genesis.

The unconscious is real although it is not an entity. It is more appropriately understood as a spacing or presencing of certain facets of psychic reality having loci, shape, and force in the indefinite ways in which they manifest as both the interiorization and external expression of agentic events. Here we are mainly concerned with the reality of the unseen and the ontological invisibility of the abyss. Process psychology displaces the primacy of language over the primacy and ubiquity of unconscious mentation, instead radicalizing an unconscious agency that modifies and differentiates itself, and disperses its essence throughout its dialectical activities. Here we must begin with prebeginnings, with addressing the philosophical notion of how agency first emerges from the psyche's unconditional embodiment. This requires us to address the mind/body

question from the inception of unconscious life before the ego of consciousness is aware that it is embodied. Here it is necessary to explore the notion of *Trieb* as a pulsional bodily organization.⁷ The specific question of how agency emerges from drive and, even more specifically, how self-directed teleological processes emerge from teleonomic pressures inherent to the bodily pulsions,⁸ is closely examined.

Following a naturally organic and developmental process of dialectical unfoldings, the unconscious soul erupts from its corporeality to find itself as a sentient affective life that is desirous and driven by lack – a lacking or absence it wishes to satiate. But, unlike a wish or a drive, desire cannot be sated. It is an endless striving that seeks fulfilment through many circuitous routes and endless forms of content-specific appetite. In the initiation and wake of desire lies the causal force behind the dialectic, namely, the engine of appetitive motivational longing within which mind finds itself immersed. Here lies the gestation of a certain form of pre-reflective self-consciousness we may call *unconscious apperception*. Unconscious mind becomes pre-reflectively aware of its self-certainty as a desirous apperceptive being that wants, that craves, that becomes. This dialectical progression traces the coming into being of the unconscious ego that emerges from its desirous rupture to experience and transcend its confinement to its mere corporeal nature while remaining an embodied experiential subject. This dialectical and architectonic process potentially explains the initial origins of psychic reality.

In this age of the brain, the notion of mind has largely become relegated to a reductive category subsumed under some form of materialism spearheaded by cognitive neuroscience and philosophies of mind. Indeed, some developments in cognitive science and neurobiology are content with displacing a dynamic unconscious altogether, instead substituting the language of dissociation, attachment processes, and the implicit forms of memory that are, in turn, shaped by corresponding brain asymmetry (see Siegel 1999). With the focus on neuroimaging technologies, as they observe the functions of the brain, many researchers are enticed by the lure of material reduction and commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness or simple location.⁹ Here they illegitimately conclude that unconscious processes are *caused* by brain events and are reducible to brain activity rather than that they are merely *correlated*. In other words, scientists often mistake observable, measurable phenomena for their simple location and make inconclusive causal claims. This fal-

lacy is committed when observable physical locality, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) or positron emission tomography (PET) scans, are equated with the mental functions and representational content we ontologically *infer* to be causal rather than correspondent and, therefore, hastily conclude that mind equals brain.

I am sympathetic to advances in the neurosciences and value consistency, complementarity, and symmetry between theoretical and empirical work. In fact, process psychology needs to account for empirical science if it is to have any theoretical currency. On the face of things, this is not hard to support: in the hard and soft sciences, including anthropology, sociology, and the humanities, mind and culture are mainly conceived as a plurality and series of interactive systemic processes. Some of these processes are cohesive and harmonious, while some are chaotic and destructive and, hence, governed by unpredictable possibilities. Each process, however, has its own psychophysical correlates and social order. In other words, we can never abolish the fact that we are embodied in space and time within a biological, cultural, and linguistic milieu that informs our being in the world. And to a large degree this is observable, measurable, and quantified. But let us not fool ourselves into thinking that empiricism holds a privileged touchstone to truth or is of superior value when, by its very nature, it is limited in scope and in what it can control and measure. By definition and design, empiricism observes Occam's razor and follows the law of parsimony. As a corollary, it is unable to control for, manipulate, and observe all phenomena it sets out to study. Therefore, it must artificially contrive a "laboratory," or a "controlled" set of experimental "variables," that discards other variables and dislocates its operations from the original phenomena being "observed." Any conclusions and generalizations made cannot ignore the parameters within which empiricism limits its activity and, hence, at best can only offer limited inferences based on its circumscribed method and object of study. In other words, unlike metaphysical inquiry, empiricism certainly cannot address questions outside its realm of experimentation, measurement, data manipulation, and statistical analysis.

Certain conclusions made by contemporary theoreticians and researchers – such as that there is no dynamic unconscious or that non-conscious encoded events implicit in memory structure displace our previous understanding of unconscious activity (see Iannuzzi 2006) – do not hold up to logical scrutiny when they fall under a category mistake or are

guilty of the fallacy of simple location. Furthermore, this line of thinking, namely, that the brain is the cause of mind and all mental activity, is what, in neuroscience, Bennett and Hacker (2003) refer to as the “mereological fallacy.” This is a fundamental attribution error where one ascribes the acts or characteristics of a whole to its parts. This argument is derived from Aristotle’s notion of formal causality: one cannot reduce the complexity of a whole system or design (e.g., selfhood, personality) to its material substance (e.g., brain). But this is precisely what neuroscience attempts to accomplish: the human being, personhood, or mind devolves into material-efficient reductive forces. From this paradigm, mind is nothing but brain. So, contra John Searle (1992), who insists on consciousness as a property of the brain, or Daniel Dennett (1991), who ascribes psychological processes to parts of the brain, these explananda are mereological errors because they do not take into account the psychical acts that constitute the person as a whole; rather, they reduce the human being to a subsystem of parts that fracture the supraordinate nature of a complex system.

What we can legitimately say is that mental processes (particularly neural states that are inductively well correlated) correspond to brain events, but we cannot epistemologically ascertain that they are unequivocally causal or that they are identical in composition. Furthermore, there are qualitative variations in what we experience, believe, and feel from what we observe and know. Psychoanalysts who advocate for a sufficient conceptualization of the unconscious from the standpoint of neuroscience displace the allegorical, metaphorical, aesthetic, and spiritual expressions of human subjectivity and the qualia of lived experience that cannot be adequately captured by biologicistic language. Although neurobiology is a necessary condition of our embodiment, it is not a sufficient condition to explain the complexifications of lived experiential reality. For these reasons, the mind/body conundrum needs to be bracketed from the materialist enterprise and engaged from the standpoint of ontology that is compatible with the language of embodiment and the interstices of human experience without evoking a causally reductive argument under the banner of science and at the expense of philosophical sophistication.

We are accustomed to think of mind and self as being largely defined by conscious experience (such as the impact of early childhood attachment and interactional patterns with others, culture, and the linguistic forces

operative within our social ontology) as well as being biologic organisms that encounter these environmental influences. In psychoanalysis, little attention is paid to the philosophic notion of how embodied organizations derive and modify from their material nature as desirous-ideational units of agentic order within social and linguistic parameters without devolving into biological and/or linguistic determinism. Mind remains embodied but it supersedes material reduction by virtue of the fact that it becomes uniquely ideational, emotive, and valuational. It is from its embodied thrownness and sentient impingements that it emerges as a self-articulated, self-defining developmental agency. Modified from its original pulsional constellations, mind is oriented towards instituting action, processing events, and experiencing itself as being-in-becoming. When I speak of mind, I do not mean some panpsychism or invisible spiritual-immaterial force that inhabits and animates the universe; rather, I am speaking of the universal aspects of mental functioning that all people to some degree possess regardless of gender, race, or historicity. Contra postmodern psychoanalytic theories that displace metaphysics, process psychology attempts to situate phenomena, contingency, and contextual complexity within a subjective universality that accounts for individual variance and plurality within an encompassing holistic governing totality, despite the concession that this totality is never complete, united, or unified. Conflict, negation, and strife are its very essence, the engines propelling development, the positive significance of the negative.

Just as our recognition of the unconscious as an entity is an antiquated notion, so the postmodern collapse of the subject and subjectivity for the reification of language is a misguided project. Because psychic reality is process oriented, and initially derived from its own internal constitution, the linguistic turn only partially accounts for unconscious dynamics. That is, before the breach into consciousness, the dialectical unfolding of the psyche originally constitutes itself as the coming into being of the unconscious ego, which acquires agency as a teleologic determinate being-for-self. In its generative activity of self-enactment, unconscious agency institutes its own network of semiotics as the original mode of signification and meaning *relata*. Desire as being-in-relation-to-lack interjects its own semiotic markers within its unconscious interior, which structurally prepares a priori the capacity for linguistic receptivity and production encountered in the field of consciousness. Rather than adopt the postmodern turn, process psychology attempts to articulate

the functional structures of semiotic meaning relations that unfold prior to the conscious birth of the ego. What this means is that unconscious signification precedes linguistic signification. In other words, language is conditioned on unconscious precipitants.

Unconscious semiotics initially materialize and unfold as agentically assigned and often segregated units of embodied affective sentience that disperse yet simultaneously coalesce as a plurality of unconscious schemata under the rubric of the unconscious ego. Unconscious schemata take their incipient forms as somatic and emotional organizations that may be partially autonomous from one another and comprise nonconceptual pre-reflective representations of internal experience that further execute and convey their own meaning relations through a combinatorial of signifiers within its embodied affective resonance states. Schemas start off as primitive process systems derived from immediate bodily impulses and sensations, such as those belonging to the psychophysicality of teleonomic-somatic and affective reverberations, and later become more organized through perception and the higher-order conceptual capacities afforded through linguistic cognition, which lend cohesion, clarity, and vitality to inarticulate unconscious experience.

Schemata comprise the building blocks of psychic reality. They may be viewed as microcosmic units or self-states that have various characteristics or properties peculiar to their own internally derived constitutions, such as specific contours, impressions, affect, or desirous-riddled content that compose the microdynamic processes relative to a particular schema. These microcosmic units can communicate with other individual schemata that exist within the plurality of unconscious process and may form interrelationships between other schematic entities. Schemata may take on more zest in organization and structure and can form elaborate phantasy systems fuelled by unconscious intent, restraints, and pressures.¹⁰ These process systems infiltrate unconscious life and can hold a certain dominion over the underworld. Furthermore, groups that are aligned in terms of their internal structures may form communities of schemata that can further colonize other schemata that are more susceptible to being annexed or overthrown. In other words, lesser organized or weaker schemata can be incorporated within more dominant and vibrant communal structures. Despite the capacity for the subexistence of competing mental units within the abyss, the plurality of schemata that populate mental life fall within the overarching supraordinate, gov-

erning totality of the dialectic. Therefore the dialectic is the macrocosmic unifying suprastructure that provides organization, order, and direction to the infinite flux of events that comprise psychic reality.

Schemata are information-emitting and information processing *microagents*, or self-states, that form communication channels and linkages through their semiotic relations. They may facilitate or oppose linkages by ingressing into – hence incorporating – one another or by negating one another through defensive fortifications, of course depending upon which movement of the dialectic is operative at any given moment within each schema's internal structure. Phantasy systems are forged or aborted through the way in which semiotic relata are formed and reinforced. This ensures that, potentially, there will always be quasi-autonomous activity performed by each schema that conform to or resist the greater pressures of the dialectic. Not only does this independent functionality of schematic action account for variation in different and distinct modes of expression, but it also accounts for agentic choice and the bid for freedom each schema intrinsically possesses. In more common language, drives, affect, and phantasies may take on their own unique autonomous existence within the abyss despite the fact that other phantasy systems – what we commonly call defences – negate or subsume them within their internal constitutions.

Unconscious schemata are infinite by virtue of the fact that psychic reality multiplies and produces an innumerable deferral of signifiers within its interiority. Of course, infinity is always operative within the constants of finitude (i.e., when organic nature dies or expires). Until then, all schemata are subject to the overarching governance and sublimating movements of the dialectic, but they are also capable of resisting sublimation and may even regress or stay ossified in unconscious points of fixation or stagnation. This is why at times somatic and affective schemata express themselves as bodily symptoms and emotional dysregulation (e.g., as compromise formations) that are recalcitrant to conceptual mediation or understanding. In effect, conflicted affects, traumas, and phantasies are confined to earlier forms of embodiment that characterize unconscious schematic structure and resist articulation through linguistic media. Instead, they remain embedded within their original modes of signification and appear as symptoms with overdetermined attributes, properties, and expressive value. For example, what the fields of psychoanalysis, psychiatry, and psychology call mental disorders

(i.e., hysteria) are fuelled by disordered states of unconscious schemata. The autonomous nature of schematic structure and designation point towards how symptom formation is under the influence of earlier forms of unconscious representation. The fate of each schema is contingent upon the dominate processes at work in the mind and the supraordinate directionality and mediatory operations of the dialectic. Some schemata will flourish while others will perish; however, all schematic activity is subject to the synthetic functions of the dialectic. Here psychopathology would largely result from autonomous self-states resisting integration or warring schemata that subvert the synthetic and sublating features of mind.

The underworld of unconscious semiotics ontologically prepares the psyche for the acquisition and production of language, which is filtered through, mediated, assimilated, and amalgamated within the psychic register. This, of course, is initiated at actual birth when the infantile ego encounters the external world. The unconscious emergence and breach of the ego into consciousness signals a second awakening of the ego, which now has as its task the role of mediating objects of conscious cognition and all its new-found experiences. Ego development now becomes a flourishing and robust process in the ontogenesis of the self because it is no longer constricted to unconscious embodiment and non-linguistic schematic representation. Here the nature of maternal attachment, nurturance, affective attunement, and empathic responsiveness from the relational milieu within the broader parameters of the subject's social ontology provide the contents, patterns, and forms of experience that condition the contours of the ego's burgeoning personality and characterological habits of defence. As conscious cognition expands ego boundaries and functional operations inherent to perceptual consciousness and self-experience, schematic representation and signification naturally progress to acquire higher-order organizations such as perception, imagination, and conceptual thought.

Reality is constituted by mind by virtue of the fact that we can only have commerce with reality as we conceive it to be. This ensures that ego and reality will always be informed by the abyss. The ego of consciousness now must encounter the manifold of sense experience and form meaning relations that help define its adaptation, functionality, and self-identity within the plurality of competing objects it encounters. The dialectic of internal modification that characterizes the developmental

epigenesis of the unconscious ego is now extended to the mediatory modifications it must perform in its external relations to objects. Here the ego must set itself over against its objects of experience in its quest for achieving being-for-self as a fully self-articulated individuated agent within the intersubjective contexts that define its being in the world. This is facilitated through the mediation of the m/other as both the original attachment figure and as the symbolic cultural signifier.

In its labour for self-definition, the ego must execute another series of dialectical movements in which it distinguishes and separates off various portions of the external world from its own immediate unity. That is, the ego is originally not aware of itself as a subject, which it has the developmental task of becoming. Because it takes its immediate sense experience to be all-encompassing and totalizing, this basic simple unity with reality must undergo inner division, separation, differentiation, and restructuring. Here the infantile ego must differentiate out the various elements of its experience, which it takes for its totality as an immediate universality, and, through dialectical operations peculiar to its contingent thought processes, it interjects difference, categorization, and discreteness into concrete elements of particularity that comprise the plurality and flux of the competing phenomena it encounters. One task the emergent conscious ego must execute involves differentiating out self from others, and this specifically includes familial attachment figures. This includes differentiating out language as a distinct medium of communicative relations from the maternal environment, which the ego at first takes to be merged in its symbiotic union with the mother. This is where a sense of I, or personal identity, is rudimentarily formed in relation to difference. More precisely, the ego differentiates out a sense of self from the mother through her affective attunement and responsiveness, which facilitates the emergence of an autonomous sense of self while remaining in relation to the reciprocal dyadic system.

The institution of pre-reflective judgments (such as division, negation, universalizing, determining similarity and difference, etc.) allow the ego's experience of reality to proliferate in magnitude and qualitative depth. Over its developmental maturation, mediated by its intersubjective relations with psychosocial life, the ego forges various fluid boundaries between inner and outer, particularity and universality, self and other, being and the world. This dialectical process unfolds within the larger movements of progression from unconscious apperception to con-

sciousness and then to self-consciousness as capacities in self-reflectivity allow for cultivation of the ego. The generic movement of the self that splits and divides itself, projects or externalizes parts of its interior onto the external world, which it then gathers and reincorporates back into its interiority, constitutes the antediluvian cycle we have come to call projective identification. Here mind is conceived as a trajectory of dynamic pattern that unfolds as projective identification, which is none other than the sublating animating force of the dialectic that vanquishes new shapes in its quest for self-consciousness and wholeness. The multiple, overdetermined dialectical processes that are operative in generating higher forms and shapes of mind and social structures through this generic sublating dynamic point towards the logical universal laws of generative process that govern the evolution of mind and society. In its pilgrimage towards self-actualization, fulfilment, and betterment, the general thrust of the human intellect instantiated in subjective personality and cultural conscience seeks to fulfil and become its possibilities.

Mind, or, more generally, the human spirit (*anima*), can never fully complete itself, whether this be reflective of the individual or collective society as a whole. To imagine such a state would necessarily entail the death of the dialectic: mind would no longer strive to surpass itself, to better itself, to create and achieve higher tiers of unification, satisfaction, and experiential complexity. It simply would no longer desire. The human psyche is inherently restless and seeks to cultivate and advance itself in novel ways governed by the idiosyncratic aims of freedom and choice that each individual or collective group executes for itself. This is an orienting principle for the dialectic that naturally strives towards ascendance within the face of decent, fruition within decay, and harmony within chaos that saturates our concrete lives and communal world. This orienting principle exemplifies the self-articulated complex holism that we may more properly observe in civilization as the concrete universals that define a collectively shared social value system based upon the identification with and fulfilment of objective human ideals.

The crusade for holism is a struggle through metaphysical labour and existential suffering that is both individually and collectively borne. Although individual people and societies will only partially attain such exalted ideals, it is the striving that signifies the value of human desire. This quest belongs to the higher faculties of self-consciousness that are embedded in our social valuation practices and that govern our educa-

tional systems; economic, social, and political structures; policing and law; religious institutions; cultural centres; and works of artistic expression. The pursuit of an intellectual contemplative life will naturally lead one to engage the question and meaning of the ethical, of religion, and of aesthetic taste and judgment. These human ideals and values are connected to the greater whole, where reason, emotion, aesthetics, and justice participate in spiritual communion with nature and the universe as being in the world with self and others. While the masses are mainly preoccupied with the pragmatics of daily life, self-preservation and survival, and the pursuit of enjoyment, gratification, and pleasure, the higher shapes of self-consciousness are only attained by few. However, they are nonetheless embodied in our communal cultural practices, which define modern society and, hence, speak to the upward acclivity of the dialectic. Of course, any progressive achievement of civilization occurs within the context of death, trauma, and despair, which fall short of attaining such ideals. Here the dialectic stagnates, regresses, or resists sublating itself. Multiple complexities and pluralities of experience and social array exist within a systemic unifying network that governs process dialectics. Of course negativity and chaos saturate progression, even when a discernable pattern or purpose emerges as we look back at the process of its own becoming. Among so much death and decay, which saturates our daily world preoccupations, here we may enjoy some optimism that all this suffering is a necessary and meaningful dimension of the dialectic, which is part and parcel of the positive significance of the negative that brings about a better world. Without conflict there can be neither growth nor betterment. To reappropriate Leibniz, this is the best of all reasonable worlds.

But what do we make of this striving of the ego to sublimate itself? What is its motivation? What is its object? There is a deep structural impetus that is ontologically constituted within the rotary motion of the dialectic in order to satisfy its longings, its *telos*. Is there an overarching teleology towards which the ego strives? Perhaps this question is only legitimate within the nature of contingent choice each subject encounters. But contingency is never devoid of universality, which structures the dialectic. What I fundamentally believe the human psyche strives for in all its unadulterated instantiations is the wish for unity and peace, free of trauma and violence – whether externally imposed or self-implosive. What resonates within us all is a wish to be free of negativity, of our suf-

fering, or *pathos* (πάθος), which is none other than a dialectical renunciation of, yet paradoxical call for, death – for termination, the desire to end the lack. This fundamental desire to expurgate the lack, this gap in being, the lacuna that informs the abyss, is simultaneously the wish to recapture the symbiotic reunion with our original natural sentient slumber from which unconscious subjectivity first awakens. Here lies the conundrum of how the desire for holism is simultaneously a desire to recapitulate its original totality, to repossess its original undifferentiated unity through reintegrated unification, at once a return and a sublation, where being and nothing are the same.

And so begins our sojourn into the abyss.

In the beginning (Ἐν ἀρχῇ) ... darkness covered the abyss (ἄβυσσος).

—Genesis 1:1

origin (ôfə-jĭn) *n.* **1. a.** A point of origination. **b.** Source. **c.** First cause. **2. a.** Ancestry. **b.** derivation. **3.** A coming into being. **4.** Beginning, *arkhē*. **5. a.** Ground. **b.** Foundation. **6. a.** An abyss. **b.** under-ground. **c.** fathomless. [ME *origine*, ancestry < Lat. *origo* < *oriri*, to rise; Gk. ἀρχή, opening]