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PhD dissertation review

*„REPOSITIONING JUNG’S ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY: A PARADIGM SHIFT FROM A
CRITICAL SCIENCE TO AN INTER-SUBJECTIVE PRACTICE IN THE EDUCATION OF
THE INDIVIDUAL IN LATE MODERNITY”*

by

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1. Opening remarks

The review has been done as part of a written commission made by the Board of the Faculty of Education at the University of Warsaw. In accordance with the Government Order of the 15th January 2004 (Journal of Laws No 15 of 2004, item 128 as amended), its aim is to justify the scientific value of the dissertation and give opinion on meeting the conditions defined in the article 13 of the Act of the 14th March 2003 on the academic degrees and title and on the degrees and title within the scope of arts (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1852 as amended). In accordance with the ministerial guidelines, the review contains a general evaluation of the contents and structure of the dissertation with special emphasis on its substantive value. It shows potential and possible extensions and limitations, provides the assessment of the definitions and theories applied by the PhD student and also the assessment of the analyses carried out and the agreement between the academic dimension of the work and its application. The review also evaluates the results obtained with special attention to their innovation and contribution to the development of the presented scientific discipline.

In accordance with the Act of the 14th March 2003 on the academic degrees and title and on the degrees and title within the scope of arts (Article 13), the PhD dissertation shall constitute an original solution to the scientific problem and reveal candidate's general theoretical knowledge in the given scientific discipline, prove the ability to carry out independent scientific work. This formal requirement has been met by Evangelos Tsempelis in the dissertation in accordance with the conditions formulated for research work within the scope of social sciences in the discipline: pedagogy. The main value of the dissertation under review is first of all the originality of the subject of research and the effort the author has undertaken to transfer this subject to the field of pedagogy both in the theoretical and cognitive perspective and practice described here through particular reflection within the scope of humanities.

3. Formal structure of the dissertation

The PhD dissertation under review comprises 152 pages. It consists of an introduction, seven chapters, conclusions and bibliography (98 items). In accordance with the recommendations for reporting research in PhD dissertations of qualitative character, the extensiveness of each part of the dissertation increases proportionally to the original contribution of the PhD student to the state of knowledge of the subject of research. The structure, the formal layout of the PhD dissertation, the logical distribution and the contents authorize the reviewer to state that the PhD dissertation under review meets the basic formal criteria adopted for dissertations written in order to obtain the academic degree of PhD in social sciences.

4. Substantive evaluation

Evangelos Tsempelis's Doctoral Dissertation, *Repositioning Jung's Analytical Psychology: A Paradigm Shift from a Critical Science to an Inter-subjective Practice in the Education of the Individual in Late Modernity* situates analytical psychology as an inter-subjective practice in the education of the individual in late modernity. After examining the epistemological premises that inform Jung's analytical psychology, Tsempelis argues that Jung's claims to have been an empirical scientist who can describe objectively psychic phenomena, as well as the contention that there is a collective unconscious imbued with the perennial archetypal images that underpin the interior experiences of individuals and collectives alike in the form of religion, myth and culture writ large, are untenable without the implicit

operation in the background of an un-avowed metaphysical stance. Not surprising, analytical training is structured in such a way as to imbue to analysts-in-training an experience of initiation to the reality of the objective psyche and its natural capacity to produce symbols that meaningfully underwrite the inner tensions between the conscious and the unconscious mind of the analysand. It is Tsempeleis's assertion that analytical psychology is predicated on such an experience, initiation, which is replicated along the lines of Jung's own dissent to the unconscious following his creative illness signified with the break with Freud and the subsequent work on the *Red Book*, a personal journal documenting Jung's confrontation with the world of his inner fantasy.

In the same vein, Tsempeleis argues that analytical psychology posited as a self-referential science, without an Archimedean point outside, cannot stand as an *a priori* critical science that can provide the foundation for other sciences. Such an audacious dream of science is not tenable for analytical psychology, not merely because it is predicated on an implicit faith, which cannot be taken for granted, but also because its *a priori* Kantianism leads to an infinite regress associated with a view of psyche which ultimately cannot provide a stable border between the phenomenological archetypal image, manifested in dream and fantasy, and the noumenal archetype thing-in-itself, which is posited in a transcendental realm resting in a beyond. If the image is a mere representation of the real archetype, then what about the image of the image and so *ad infinitum*?

Jungian hermeneutics seem to operate precisely on that elusive border between the phenomenal and the noumenal. In *Answer to Job*, Jung can be seen masterfully exercising his hermeneutic method. Starting from the premise that no claim will be laid as to God himself, Jung advances his interpretation of the Book of Job by a psychological lens provided by a confrontation with the God-image (Divine Darkness) as provoked by a contemporary (his own) reading of the Old Testament, which Jung then takes to provide a larger insight into the experience of God in his time and age. Indeed, a close reading of Jung's text unveils his readiness to leave the phenomenological bracketing and make claims about the divine archetypal drama transpiring across the aeons in the noumenal realm. Tsempeleis takes this to indicate how deeply embedded within a metaphysical outlook analytical psychology actually is and, conversely, as an insight into how psychological speculation, at Jung's scope and depth, cannot be taken to be merely "empirical." A close reading of Jung's works, combined with a parallel contradistinction with Hegel, unveils how the former's hermeneutic involves a dialectic tension between immanence and transcendence, a tension between science and metaphysics

upon which analytical psychology seems to rest as a whole despite its founder's declarations to have bracketed metaphysics out.

Metaphysics, Tsempeles posits, is first devowed by means of making formal declarations with regard to abstaining from ontological claims about God or the noumenal realm, but in fact then re-inscribed in psychological language by means of introducing psychological functions (transcendent symbol making function, religious function), archetypes (Self, animus, anima, etc.) and psychic realms (Objective Psyche, Unconscious), which are indeed imbued with ontological status. The empirical hypostasis of the latter, all the while, remains beyond objective reach. As such, Tsempeles claims analytical psychology is operating on an implicit psychological positivity (*psychological differentiation*), which forgetful of its historical ground acts today as an interpellation for further thought. Tsempeles take this implicit positivity to be manifested in Jung's attempts to work with the trinitarian god-image and to posit a fourth, by means of an integration of evil, as a necessary means of moving psychologically into a more wholesomely integrated God(Self) image. Jung's notion of wholeness along the lines of his notion of individuation seems to presuppose a structure of subjectivity, which in its logic, is quintessentially trinitarian to the extent that it is predicated on an individualized notion of interiority and on a dialectical tension between immanence and transcendence whereby the individual incarnates the universal (archetypes). Whilst Jung calls for an incorporation of the fourth in the trinitarian God-image, his approach invites a critique of the nature of his understanding of evil as negative.

A survey of the negative conception of evil in a long tradition, ranging from St. Augustine all the way to the 19th century German idealism, reveals how the metaphysical argument, holding that evil has a negative ontological status, is not tantamount to a repression of the actual reality of evil thus necessitating a correction in terms of an incorporation of a fourth in the form of an addition. Invoking the work of Arthur Lovejoy, Tsempeles makes reference to the principle of plenitude, which informs a long lineage of Western theology and philosophy with regard to the status of evil. In its neoplatonic origins, such a principle rests on an emanationist premise according to which eternal essences (Platonic ideas/archetypes) have temporal counterparts. Along this line of thought, the widest conceivable diversity of living things is postulated in a perfectly created world, from the abundance of a supreme being all the way to the exhaustive end of a "being" bordering the empty darkness of non-being (evil). Within this context, absolute non-being (οὐκ οὐ), ought to be distinguished from non-being in the relative sense of a yet un-actualized potentiality of a specific thing (μὴ οὐ), which informs the

notion that evil has a privative nature in Western theological and philosophical tradition with which Jung boldly takes issue.

Provided that indeed a Neoplatonic view of creation is markedly different from a Christian one, in which the world is created *ex nihilo* by a personal god without any ensuing degrees of creaturely participation in divine reality along a chain of degrading equivalences between degrees of goodness and degrees of being, a conflation of goodness – conceived as omniscient and self-sufficient self-presence- with being is indeed problematic. Theologian John Hick is invoked in order to point to an internal inconsistency in Western theological tradition, which Jung's argument may be seen to be ultimately addressing, attempting to correct.

Indeed, to the extent that analytical psychology may be seen as a space where the personal religious experience can be rehabilitated and Jung posited as a man who boldly defended the personal dimension of numinous experience from the oppressive forces of doctrinarian conformism, his view on evil may be also seen as a rehabilitation of a Christian tradition, which had veered into the sub-personal by means of adopting Neoplatonic emanationist categories to address the reality of evil. An emanationist logic of being, and its corollary, an aesthetic view of evil based on a principle of plenitude, arguably contains a sub-personal character against which one would rightfully protest. Jung's cry, even if problematic in terms of its argumentation, and to the extent that he seems to have misconstrued the idea of negativity (of evil), represents, indeed, a highlight in the history of asserting the importance of the personal dimension with the ethical and religious spheres of life.

Building on these insights, Tsempeles argues for the importance today of carrying forward with that ethos, which underpins the entire Jungian opus despite its scientific pretenses and methodological mishaps. Taking stock from Kearney's notion of *anatheism*, Tsempeles refers to the analytical practice as a space where the sacred can be thought and entered into an interpersonal experience within a secular setting. In this vein, the fourth is not posited in the direction of achieving completion as wholeness or plenitude; not as a step toward more theoretical consistency, or a more robust and complete God image, but rather as one in the direction of a weakening of theory; of a loosening of the logic of representationism, set on the acquisition of gnosis; and, ultimately, as one enabling an intimate, non-sovereign relationship with the sacred to emerge in an intersubjective relationship.

That space corresponds not only to the de-throning of the god of theodicy, but to a radical questioning of any science that seeks its foundation on the notion of self-reference thus standing in a heritage that equates omnipotence, with self-sufficiency and presence. Heidegger referred to onto-theology to describe the concept of a god representing the highest and most

general Being abstracted from the lived world. This is the god that the thinkers, who Ricoeur ascribed to the hermeneutics of suspicion in modernity, contested. Arguably this is the god (image) that Jung took on in his bold *Ausseinandersetzung* at his Answer to Job. Atheism revealed that this omnipotent god towering over the world cannot stand. His theodicy, where good and evil cohere in a plenum that *sub specie aeternitatis* is deemed the best possible world is surely worth protesting against. But his demise is also the corollary of the collapse of metahistorical narratives, which attempt to account of being in terms of eternal archetypal structures too. Ontotheology dies together with objectivist metaphysics, which holds that the real has a certain structure and a determinate foundation. As a new paradigm for truth based on plurality, contingency, interpretation and historicity emerges, the dream of scientism also passes away. Analytical Psychology cannot be the science of sciences that provides a foundation in its a priori knowledge nor can it rest self-assured in a self-referential circularity posited as the interiority of a hermetically shut container.

Analytical psychology, once such an inheritance is worked through - held, divested, but not forgotten- emerges as a practice with a deeply existential orientation. An affinity between Jung's individuation and Heidegger's notion of authenticity emerges through a radical destitution that renders psychology as practice at the border of life and death. The healing effect that is made possible within the confines of the analytical room, in a face-to-face encounter without active prescriptions or presuppositions, where life and experience are shared in their overwhelming bearing on individual fragile lives, lies in the domain of educators, not doctors at the age of medicalized psychotherapy.

In his reflections about psychoanalysis in his *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Gadamer poignantly insists on the importance of hermeneutical reflection in the context of psychotherapy. The point that Gadamer makes is that psychotherapy "could be described as the work of completing an interrupted process of education into a full history (a story that can be articulated in language)," Indeed, analysis takes place within an inter-subjective field of resonances where two actors with discreet roles, the analyst and the analysand, engage in a practice oriented toward self-understanding. Such self-understanding and its emancipatory potential take place within a context of language in an engagement of dialogue. The exploration of the notion of evil in the Christian tradition and its place within Jungian psychology has served as a means to reveal that despite a seeming disjunction as to the status of evil and a conflict between theological and philosophical tradition on the one hand – exemplified by the centrality of the doctrine of *privatio boni* – and psychology as a modern science, on the other, there is a deeper continuity between analytical psychology and the tradition from which it emanates. A

monotheistic tradition that transmits the message of a personal God who is good finds its corollary in a modern analytical practice operating with an implicit notion of “goodness” expressed in the privileging of psychic healing over suffering, of truth over falseness, of authenticity over contrivance.

Jung captures the essence of his notion of individuation in terms of a person’s ability to assent to the power of her personal voice. In this vein, the analyst is not someone who imbues the analysand with a certain knowledge, nor is he a scientist who performs a therapy in the positivistic terms that modern medicine prescribes its remedies. As someone standing vis a vis, the analyst engages in a conversation - governed by specific conventions comprising the rules of the game - aimed at providing testimony to the unconscious “truth” that a symptom of suffering is manifesting for the totality of the person. The analyst, as a trained professional is certainly inducted to a set of practices that may comprise a method. Yet, when confronted with another person in the consulting room, if any truth worthwhile is to ever emerge, the analyst must engage in a radical relinquishing that is the condition for the possibility for something unanticipated to emerge in the form of an event. The healing effect of analysis is directly proportional to the ability of the dyadic therapeutic relationship to contain such events of truth as resonance; the experience of being confronted by such events can be coined as “religious” to the extent that they do carry a sense of awe capable of shattering one’s existence as one knew it hitherto. Conversely, the analyst to affect her analysand must be prepared to be impacted by him. Gadamer speaks of the experience of feeling at home as essential to any kind of education or cultivation. Indeed, the therapeutic process in the analytical setting can be well described as one of home-coming from the self-estrangement of the objective psychic suffering to an experience of returning to a secure base of belonging: to one’s own larger truth, to one’s own meaning and voice.

This home-coming takes place as objectified suffering accedes into language, becomes symbolized and transformed relationally. Analyst and analysand form an alliance in pursuit of a set of interpretations that provide transformative narratives that are capable to unleash new potential in the life of an individual and to advance an “interrupted education.” Indeed, every form of psychotherapy comes with a set of theoretical presuppositions that provide the underpinning for any particular method of interpretation be it Jungian, Freudian or Lacanian. A keen awareness of how the analyst is affected by her own set of experiences, trainings and complexes (biases) is critical in terms of her ability to offer conditions conducive to authentic resonances with her analysand. Indeed, as Gadamer has pointed out such limitations are not to be seen as biases that ought to be superseded in order to arrive to some higher objectivity.

Rather, such limitations – to the extent that one becomes progressively aware of them- provide the access points for the beginning of a meaningful conversation, which always assumes some aspect of otherness for a thinking consciousness.

Conversely, a strictly Jungian/Freudian/Lacanian interpretation, whereby one remains forgetful of her historically effective consciousness thus remaining fixed on the level of method or transfixed to theory as truth, is bound to fail to elicit the eventful character of a dialog that as meaningful is also impact-fully able to elicit an other's deeper truth. Indeed, the measure of a correct interpretation is its ability to produce resonance and to mobilize a vivifying experience of truth. In a similar vein, the measure of a successful interpretation lies in its ability to produce a mutuality of understanding in the application of a set of theoretical insights/presuppositions. As such, the analyst, steeped in an ongoing conversation with peers and supervisors comprising a community of practitioners, is constantly engaged in a reinterpretation of the theory of her practice by engaging in new applications, which in turn provide a continuity in the evolution of both her individual practice and the set of theoretical and practical tools that comprise a given field.

Ultimately, it is the commitment to a truth - that is finite and situational and constantly susceptible to reinterpretation – which allows us to thematize the relevance of analysis for education and vice versa. Both analysis and paideia are not geared toward the accumulation of knowledge, but to the transformation of the human person. In the old platonic sense, illuminated by the story of the cave dwellers, and by Heidegger's thought we are reminded of how intricately related the notion of education (paideia) is to the notion of truth.

Indeed, accompanying the individual person in the treacherous path leading from the realm of the shadowy existence that plagues the heart, in a state of unfulfilled being, into another realm where the individual, with a more integrated heart and mind can engage in the struggle of acceding to a meaningful existence commensurate to her own finite and contingent truth appears to me as a supremely educational task. Its healing effect brings, in a tortuous continuity throughout a long tradition, the analyst in late modernity in an active rapport and communion with her predecessors in the far depths of the obscurity of bygone aeons.

5. Conclusion

In view of the aim of a review in the registration and conferment procedure for a doctoral degree, I can state with conviction that the PhD dissertation by Magister Evangelos Tsempelis is an example of a dissertation of interdisciplinary character, which not only undertakes

important, new and relevant pedagogical issues, but which is also written in a critical and competent way. The dissertation is appropriately justified in terms of theory and methodologically correct in accordance with the assumptions of hermeneutic work. Undoubtedly, it does stand out as being critical and reveals PhD student's wide reading and eloquence. Moreover, there is no doubt that the dissertation under review constitutes an original solution to the scientific problem and shows Author's profound theoretical knowledge within the scope of humanities, successfully applied to the research problems as required in the field of social sciences in the discipline: pedagogy. Therefore, the dissertation confirms Author's ability to conduct independent interdisciplinary research within the scope of humanities and social sciences, at the same time opening a new interpretive and research perspective for the discipline: pedagogy, thereby it fully satisfies the requirements of the Article 13 of the Act of 14th March 2003 on the academic degrees and academic title.

Taking into consideration the statements above, I believe that the dissertation by Magister Evangelos Tsempelis meets the requirements of the Act on the Academic Degrees and Title and I put forward the motion for admitting it to further stages of the registration and conferment procedure for a doctoral degree.



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