

Transformations of the storied unconscious

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EARLY VERSIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

The discovery and elucidation of the unconscious is an ambivalent tale of different ways of storying the unknown, the invisible, the chaotic, the hidden (irrational/rational) order, of interpolating the “psychic Real.” (On the histories of the unconscious, see Whyte, 1960; Ellenberger, 1970; Tallis, 2002; Claxton, 2005.) You can make this journey through different paths or storylines. I have chosen here one path, stopping at certain junctures, where the emblematic conceptualizations and conceptions of the unconscious can be discerned. Somebody else would make this journey by following other paths. The process of fictionalizing and narrativizing the unconscious (that nobody has directly seen) is here related to some parallel changes in the rhetoric and orientations of the scientific (psychological) endeavor.

The history of pre-autonomous (and pre-experimental academic) psychology is mostly a history of the development of psychology in the domains of philosophy and literature (Bell, 2005, p. 225). Later on, the modern literary unconscious from Dostoevsky to O’Neill did not adopt the scientific mappings as such, but is highly idiosyncratic and would deserve its own case stories (see a suggestion of that in de Grazia, 1984, pp. 205-211: for example, how Kafka reified the unconscious, how Joyce in his *Ulysses* “caught in its bright net the live tangle of subconscious life,” and in his *Finnegan’s Wake* mined “the bastion of sleep” [Steiner, 1967, p. 31], how O’Neill explored in his dramas the deranged Oedipal unconscious, etc.).

The first story of the unconscious saw it embedded in nature. It can be called the *animistic unconscious*, populated and sustained by folkloric imagination. Something from outside (a spirit, a god, a force, a fairy or a pixy) was influencing and intruding into “me.” Prior to the 18th century, researchers of the nervous system clung to the Animal Spirits hypothesis. In its classical form, inherited from Galen, the hypothesis stated that first the Natural Spirit is created in the liver, then converted to the Vital Spirit through the heart, and finally to the Animal Spirits within the brain, through the action of the proposed structure called the rete mirabile, or “wonderful net.” The Animal Spirits transported in the hollow nerves of the body were supposed to produce sensation and movement (Clower, 1998). So, there they already had the marvelous Net! Moreover, as the basis for the control of physiological functions the Animal Spirits paradigm held its place until the latter half of the 18th century.

Researchers abandoned this paradigm by the end of the 18th century in favor of the Animal Electricity

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Hypothesis. By the adjective “animal” some researchers referred to animals, some to “anima”/“animus” (life force/soul, spirit). Electricity became the miraculous phenomenon that was used also for therapeutic purposes. Various kinds of electric treatment were applied. For example, even Freud used electric stimulations in his therapies before inventing the method of free associations.

There had been exceptions before and during the Age of Enlightenment, such as Pardies, Leibniz and Lichtenberg who doubted reason and rational mastery and suggested that unconscious processes might be working and affecting our thinking. On the basis of Pardies’s suggestions, Leibniz forwarded ideas of unconscious perception, of a continuum of consciousness, and of a threshold between conscious and unconscious (see Claxton, 2005, pp. 200-205). “It thinks,” (“*es denkt*”) was the expression Lichtenberg (1778; quoted by Whyte, 1960, p. 114) used, meaning that thinking was not the operation of the I, but of something unknown (“*es*” was also used by Moritz, then by Nietzsche; “*das Es*” was later used by von Hartmann, Groddeck and Freud).

Nineteenth-century *Naturphilosophie* (Schelling et al.) as well as Romantic literature and criticism (both the Romanticism of Novalis and the Schlegels and the second wave Romanticism of Schelling) stressed the unity of man and nature and had already stronger intimations of the unconscious, and of the interplay between the personal and the collective, in dealing with fantasies, wishes and dreams. (The unconscious of natural philosophy is compiled in von Hartmann, 1869; see also Bell, 2005.)

Schelling viewed nature as the unconscious absolute. The first explicit theorist of the *Naturphilosophie unconscious* was, however, Carl Gustav Carus, who was active in the arts and sciences. In his major work *Psyche*, concerning the developmental history of the soul, Carus (1846, p. 1) proclaimed: “The key to the understanding of the conscious life of the soul lies in the realm of the unconscious.” Carus’s unconscious is nature, the “not yet conscious I” (Felber & Bach, 1990, p. 120; cf. Bell, 2005, p. 213), but it has three different levels, from the “absolute” level (god-like) to the “general” and “partial” levels. Carus mentioned also the “relative unconscious” that contained materials already earlier present in consciousness. He listed the defining features of the unconscious: it is flowing, indefatigable, having its own governing laws different from those of consciousness, and being a repository of ancient human wisdom (Tallis, 2002, p. 14).

It was the task of individual writers, such as Goethe and Schiller (whom Freud could cite for hours by heart), Coleridge and De Quincey, von Kleist and E. T. A. Hoffmann, Turgenev and Dickens, Thackeray and Flaubert to stage, organize and embellish the hidden desires and fantasies into fictions (both poetry and prose), long before Freud brought forth his “discovery.” For example, Goethe said that he had written *The sorrows of the young Werther* (1774) while “practically unconscious,” and Schiller saw his poetry originating from the unconscious (see Tallis, 2002, p. 5). Coleridge wrote of “the twilight realms of consciousness,” and even mentioned “exact psycho-analytical understanding” (15 September, 1805; Coleridge, 1961, §2670) and “psychological meticulousness of the inner Soul-Biography” (8 September, 1805; Coleridge, 1961, §2667) in his notebook (see also Eng, 1984).

Thus, some writers practiced at least implicit psychological theorizing. On the other hand, the scientific Freud had suppressed ambitions as a creative writer, although bits of such ambitions were reflected in his case histories. He did not, however, venture very far into analyzing literature. In no case can Freud be justifiably labelled as a novel writer in the disguise of a physician (see Cohn, 1999). His interest was in the direction of the fantasy reality, the “psychic reality,” co-constructed in the analytic setting by the analysand and the analyst.

TOWARD MORE “EXACT” STORIES OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

Freud gained a lot from German physiology, especially from his teacher Ernst Brücke who maintained that all natural phenomena are movement phenomena. Freud was also well aware of the writings of Du Bois-Reymond, Helmholtz and Virchow. Between 1820 and 1850, a physiological psychology of the unconscious became prominent. Its model of the unconscious is a continuation of the tradition that has been traced by Bell (2005, p. 208) as follows: “the theory of dark [Platonic and Neoplatonic] ideas

[including Plato's theory of the soul's *anamnesis*, recollection or reminiscence], the plastic imagination [of Romanticism], the vitalistic physiology of Herder and Goethe, the Idealist and Romantic distinction between conscious and unconscious realms, the physiology of the *Naturphilosophen*."

The discovery of the unconscious is, as Whyte (1960, p. 71) proposed, "the recognition of a Goethean order, as much as of a Freudian disorder, in the depths of the mind." The depth model of the unconscious is a rational construction, focused on rationality's enemy. The postulated unknown preserves the wholeness of the known felt to be threatened, from Leibniz via Kant to Schopenhauer (Bell, 2005, p. 225).

The "exact" and "logical" story of the unconscious began to have new supporters among natural scientists, experimental psychologists and even traditional associationists. Such an eminent figure as J. S. Mill was in favor of the *logical unconscious*. Paradoxically, introspectionist associationism helped develop the concept of the unconscious mind, while founding on both "unconscious impressions" and "muscle sensing." (See Reed, 1997, pp. 71-77.) Helmholtz's doctrine of "unconscious inference" can be seen as a symptom of the shift from the science of the soul to the science of the mind built up by new psychologists who wanted to study the conscious mind, the unconscious mind and, also, bodily processes (cf. Finger & Wade, 2002; Reed, 1997, p. 118).

Purging metaphysical concepts, panteism, nature mysticism and vitalism, positivist natural scientists opposed German *Naturphilosophie* or "Romantic science" that still cherished hopes of a science of the soul. As Ellenberger has stated, "After 1850, the philosophy of nature and Romanticism seemed to have completely disappeared. It was the period of positivism and the triumph of the mechanistic *Weltanschauung*" (Ellenberger, 1970, p. 241). The term *Weltanschauung* (world view), by the way, was coined by Wilhelm von Humboldt who "claimed that the science of a certain period was always unconsciously determined by its *Weltanschauung*" (ibid., p. 201). In psychiatry of that time, Wilhelm Griesinger, a synthesizer of brain anatomopathology and psychiatry, taught physicians to speak neural-ese, but he also proclaimed to the brain scientists and psychiatrists that "the greatest and most important part of the psychic processes were unconscious" (ibid., p. 241).

The new physiology was to be based on the sciences of physics and chemistry. Supernatural explanations for forces and mechanics were to be replaced by natural scientific ones, stating that only physical and chemical forces are active within the organism. There was no need to believe in mystical vital and creative forces. The concept of energy (changing its state, but its quantity remaining the same) took their place (Finger & Wade, 2002.)

The *physiological unconscious* was soon set into the evolutionist and organic paradigm and became part of the rhetoric of exact science. Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection was linked to the workings of the mind and its functions. The brain was conceived as an adaptive organ that had developed from animal ancestry, and the "moiety of conscious and unconscious functions" was an "optimal solution to the problem of survival." Theory of evolution gave explanations to the mystery of consciousness and its capacities as well as to the unconscious foundations of human mental life (Tallis, 1992, pp. 134-135).

Although 19th century physiologists had different ways of approaching the processes below the threshold of consciousness, of the "subconscious," or the "subliminal" (not always named as such), unconscious acts were mostly seen as purely organic, as "unconscious cerebration." This was the term used by the physiologist and naturalist William Carpenter in his *Principles of mental physiology* (1874). He gave examples of unconscious cerebration from writers' (Charlotte Brontë) and composers' (Mozart) experiences of spontaneous revelations of stories or compositions outside of the conscious and intentional efforts. Modern ideas of the *adaptive unconscious* were based on the observations made by Helmholtz, Carpenter, Hamilton and others indicating that the human perceptual system operated almost totally, and the mechanisms of thought and emotion to a large extent, outside of consciousness. However, the talk about the unconscious acts of the spirit or even the "I" made no sense (Despine, 1880) to many physiologists. On the other hand, explaining such complex creative products as the stories of Charlotte Brontë or the symphonies of Mozart as the results of mere cerebral reflex actions (a kind of pre-behaviorist "unconscious" chain of reflexes) posed great problems (Crabtree, 2003, pp. 53-59). Thus, the physiological (or organic) paradigm had to be supplemented by the psychological one.

Before Freud, in the 1880s Frederic Myers and Pierre Janet tried to formulate more psychological frameworks for human automatism, defining it as “psychological automatism,” thus combining automatism and consciousness. In introducing the psychological paradigm, Myers and Janet insisted that there are multiple centers of consciousness, or a number of consciousnesses (for example, the ordinary and the hypnotic or the somnambulistic consciousness) in one individual. The physiological “correlates” of these consciousnesses had to be taken into account, and psychological explanations should not contradict the findings of physiology, but physiology could no more solely provide the proper method of consciousness research.

Myers (1888) referred to the “Subliminal Self” as the locus of growth-oriented mental activity occurring below the threshold of ordinary consciousness, and Janet (1889) saw dissociations of consciousness, resulting in several subconscious personalities (below normal consciousness) in one individual. Myers held psychological automatisms as part of ordinary life, while Janet categorized them as manifestations of pathology. (See Crabtree, 2003.) William James sympathized with Meyer’s conception of the growth-oriented subconscious and esteemed it as a great contribution to new 20th century psychology (see Taylor, 1983, p. 43). Freud, by the way, had lifelong hostility toward Janet’s version of the subconscious (Freud insisted on “*unbewusst*,” not on “*unterbewusst*” nor “*nebenbewusst*”) and of his “psychological analysis.” The illusion or pretension of priority weighed heavily on Freud.

FREUDIAN STORIES OF THE UNCONSCIOUS...

The *Freudian concept of the unconscious* (the *dynamic unconscious*) has both romantic and rationalistic aspects. It is defined quite rationalistically (according to the tradition of the natural sciences), but the phenomena attached to it contain irrational, awe-inspiring, nightly and ghostly aspects that need to be scientifically tamed by the principle of psychic determinism and metapsychological points of view, and to be guided by evenly floating attention on the part of the analyst. The psychic or the mental was not to be equated with consciousness. The invisibility of the unconscious is particularly exemplified by the drives (Darwin psychologized) and libido, i.e., sexual drive energy (Brücke et al. psychologized), both having an organic, biological foundation. They cannot be grasped straight, but are only interpolated indirectly, through their proposed derivatives (symptoms, dreams, the psychopathology of everyday life), from cathecting and decathecting of objects in the amoeba-like drive-energy economy. Sexuality was first located in certain erotogenic zones, but later on Freud became more doubtful about them and situated sexuality in the entire surface of the skin, in every sense organ and in every internal organ, also including the brain and its “verve” for knowledge. Sexuality became rhythmical moving across the zones and parts of the subject’s body.

The “contents” of the unconscious (and the conscious too) have been “narrated” by populating it with drives (impulses and sexual drive energy), phantasies, images, emotions, memories and different kinds of thing-(re)presentations derived from infantile sources. Freud was hesitant about unconscious emotions. The totality of the repressed (as the foundation of the dynamics of the mind) belongs to the unconscious, although not the totality of the unconscious belongs to the repressed. In Freud’s topological version of the unconscious, the Ucs. was one of the three *systems* of the psychic apparatus (the two other being the Cs. and the Pcs.). Freud gave the Ucs. specific characterizations: primary process (thinking) following the pleasure principle, unbound drive energy, absence of negation, of opposites, of doubts, of conflicts, of time, of mortality, the monopoly of thing-(re)presentations, not of word-(re)presentations. Firm boundaries are said to “melt in a free chaotic mingling of forms” (Ehrenzweig, 1967, p. 3). This “cauldron” of the unconscious has given opportunities for different fictionalizations and depictions. Freud’s conceptions also include cognitive hints at thinking and paleologic. (On Freud and cognitive science, see Bucci, 1997.)

In Freud’s second topography, the structural model, the distinction between the unconscious, the preconscious and the conscious became intrasystemic, no more intersystemic. For Freud, nothing was below, or above in the psyche. The unconscious, in the structural model, was not solely in the id (that

is totally unconscious), but also located in the ego and in the superego (that are partly conscious and preconscious). Freud called (1933) his model of the psyche, or mapping the mind as “tentative.” To orient ourselves we must mix separate color fields (as in modern art), and perhaps even disciplines, in order to reach new relational knowledge of the psyche. Neither space nor fictional universe has a structure that would have exactly that structure our imaginary or image schemata produce (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, pp. 508-509).

The positing of the Freudian unconscious requires presupposing that real thoughts (not experienced by the subject) preexist the analysis and that resistance to these thoughts is a constant general life force. The first presupposition concerns the “*realistic exigence* that transforms the facts into proof of the unconscious,” and the second presupposition concerns “*functional formalism*” that discards the first-person drama and leads to a drama in the third person with its elements, psychic entities, instances and processes. (Politzer 1928/1994, pp. 108-109.) From Politzer’s (ibid., 119-120) point of view, the analysis transposes the being in the first person to the level of the story, and thus, for example, the latent content of a dream or of a symptom is no more than a description, a narrative, a “conventional story” that has a “lived attitude” as its theme. When a lived attitude or a behavior is more than the accompanying story, there is a lack or a gap that has to be filled by structuring the unconscious complement (actually relative to consciousness), by projecting into the unconscious what is lacking in the story in order to make it adequate. The function of the unconscious is to complete the analytical story, and this can be done by postulating in theory that “we cannot live more than we think” and that the being in the first person always needs an adequate knowledgeable story (ibid., 120). The reversal of priorities would impose an impossible task on psychoanalysis: It would mean admitting that being can exceed knowledge, that a human being is not omniscient, and that not everything unknown to the subject would be reached by the analyst, and, finally, that there is no reclusion in the unconscious for the “lacking description.”

... AND BEYOND

Several psychoanalytic versions of the unconscious have been presented after Freud. To put it shortly here, they have moved via Jung and his *collective unconscious* to more constructive and creative ones (Ehrenzweig, 1967) and via Lacan to the *linguistically structured unconscious*. Jung had influences from romantic notions of the universal unconscious, and he inhabited the collective unconscious by archetypes, by humanity’s archaic encounters with basic situations and emotional upsets, kind of “potentials” or “deposits” ready to burst out, to be enlivened, not as such, but through myths, fairy tales, symbols and personifications (f. ex., animus, anima, Philemon, Wotan). In Jung’s vision, archetypes are neither historically nor culturally determined, but they determine historical and cultural phenomena, induce numinous experiences, and may, after inner struggles, lead to integrative mystic mandala wholeness and holy unifications of opposites. Jung’s psychospiritual quest reached such esoteric fields as astrology, alchemy and the UFOs.

As to the *linguistic unconscious*, the concept was around in linguistics as early as the 1880s, long before Lacan (see Thass-Thienemann, 1967, 1968). For example, Heymann Steinthal and Hermann Paul acknowledged all manifestations of speech growing out of the unconscious mind (see Paul, 1880/1888, p. 23). It was Lacan, however, who got inspired by Roman Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss and asserted that “madness is lived *entirely* in the register of meaning” (Marini, 1992, p. 113), that “the unconscious of the subject is the [transindividual] discourse of the other” (others in the self), that “the unconscious [and the symptom] is structured *like* [not the same as] a language” and that man is a subject, a *parlêtre*, founded and alienated by language and full of censored chapters (see, f. ex., Lacan 1953/1977, pp. 50, 55, 59). Contradictory in many instances, Lacan (ibid., pp. 40-47) saw in the psychoanalytic process the patient moving from the “empty speech” [of stereotypes and the language barrier] to “full speech,” leading to “the birth of truth in speech,” albeit an ambiguous truth of “what is neither true nor false” [outside of dual-value binary logic]. Thus, pages of forgotten shame and pages of compelling glory are revealed.

Influenced by the modern “thinking machine,” game theory and cybernetics, Lacan later relativized the “chain of signifiers,” the “body of words” as being beyond any linguistic definition, relating the symbolic to the body. For Lacan (1970a), language was the “condition of the unconscious,” but the unconscious became also the “condition of linguistics” (Lacan, 1970b). As a mark of distinction, Lacan called his own perspective “linguistry” (*linguisterie*) (see Marini, 1992, pp. 47-53). Through the Lacanian pun, literature, as the bastion of symbols, was renamed “litureterre,” the playground of words against Law (Lacan, 1971).

After the Second World War, ego psychology and existential philosophy revised psychoanalytic presuppositions and leaned toward the conscious workings of the ego, in cultural and social contexts, giving the ego its own “conflict-free” energy and autonomy in comparison with the id. Reality control, the adaptive (both autoplasmic and alloplasmic), integrative and rational functions of the ego and “preconscious automatism” were fashionable themes in ego psychology (cf., f. ex., Hartmann, 1939/1958). The unconscious fell out of the trend in the 1950s, but revisions of the unconscious were soon to follow.

Developing psychoanalytic aesthetics and art theory on the basis of ego psychology and object relations theory, Anton Ehrenzweig (1967, pp. 261-262) reminded that actually “id and ego once evolved together from a common undifferentiated matrix,” and he even presupposed the *computational and matrixial unconscious*, the undifferentiated structure fit for scanning, “utterly mobile and ready to absorb new serial structures in its wide amoeba-like embrace.” He (ibid., pp. 260-263) also claimed that

“[...] the concept of the primary process as the archaic, wholly irrational function of the deep unconscious, is now undergoing a drastic revision. This revision, in Marion Milner’s words, is due partly to the need for accommodating the facts of art. These facts suggest forcibly that the undifferentiated matrix is technically far superior to the narrowly focused conscious processes. [...] This constructive role of the unconscious is difficult to accept. [...] The conscious and unconscious matrices are not merely linked. Surface thought is wholly immersed in the matrix of the primary process. [...] In a single indivisible process creativity links inside and outside. [...] The neglect of the undifferentiated structure of primary process phantasy has been responsible for the deadlock which has held up the progress of psycho-analytic aesthetics for over half a century.”

Later, Ignacio Matte-Blanco (1975) has gone further and introduced a more *systemic* psychoanalytic view of the unconscious as “infinite sets.” For him, the chaos of the unconscious was deceptive. Using mathematical logic, Matte-Blanco suggested that symmetrical logic is at the base of primary process and all affectivity containing experiences of infinity (f. ex. in omnipotence, idealization, love, dread and grief). Asymmetrical logic is at the background of secondary process, but both forms of logic also intermingle in thought processes (ibid.; see also Rayner, 1981).

THE “COOL” COGNITIVE UNCONSCIOUS

Along with the shift from logocentrism to cognitocentrism (and the stories of information processing and knowledge building), there have been shifts from the fabrications of the dynamic, “hot” and “seething” unconscious to “cooler,” computational and cognitive constructions of the unconscious. John Kihlstrom (1987) talked about subliminal priming, the activation of automatic programmes in the *cognitive unconscious*. The comparison between the Freudian and the cognitive unconscious is set into metaphorical language: “Their [the psychoanalysts’] unconscious was hot and wet; it seethed with lust and anger; it was hallucinatory, primitive, and irrational. The unconscious of contemporary psychology is kinder and gentler than that and more reality bound and rational, even if not entirely cold and dry” (Kihlstrom, Barnhardt & Tatar, 1992, p. 789; see also Pervin, 2003, pp. 242-253).

The revival of interest in the unconscious was accelerating by the late 1980s. The information-processing view studied automatic, unintentional and uncontrollable but efficient processing occurring outside of consciousness. Information processing, knowledge strategies and self-regulation styles have

been studied in interaction with memory processes, emotions, (e)motives, planning, goals of action, values and beliefs, schemata and interpretive frames, partly built on implicit knowledge and nonconscious image/memory bases.

The cognitive unconscious (a kind of *incognito*) was seen to contain primarily thoughts and ideas, not motivations (except perhaps nowadays “emotives”), while the contents of the dynamic unconscious are sexual and aggressive drive impulses, fantasies, desires, motives, memories and thoughts. The cognitive unconscious does not have defensive functions (cognitions either have never reached consciousness or have become automatic or routinized), while the dynamic unconscious has several defenses on developmentally different levels. From the cognitive point of view, unconscious processes are, qualitatively, logical and rational, not highly different from cognitive processes, while the Freudian conception of the unconscious processes pinpoints illogical (paleological) and irrational qualia.

The contents of the dynamic unconscious (that “other scene” repressed by the “bar”) are not easily accessible to consciousness but demand special procedures of free association and the interpretation of dreams, slips of the tongue and symptoms. Freud, however, did not later naively believe that we could recall the past as such. He clearly held, somewhat in the vein of hermeneutics, that the unconscious cannot be “cognized” as such. It has to be transformed or translated into the contents of consciousness (see Freud, 1915, p. 166). Such a process is seen hermeneutically as “recursive and dialogical, opening up a ‘liminal space’ (Iser, 2000, pp. 5-12) between the text and the register the interpreter brings to bear on the text” (Veivo & Knuutila, 2005, p. 297). “[...] the end product of interpretation is always a translation: a reformulation of the text in the interpreter’s idiom” (ibid.).

Cognitive literary studies, however, consider meaning as a mental phenomenon and meaning making as a mental process, decontextualizing the text, the register (the mental operations) leaving hardly space and place for explicating the literariness (the internal texture) of a literary text, indistinguishable from other cultural texts. When the text or language does not any more figure as a plausible autonomous agency (contrary to what structuralists and post-structuralists claimed), the cognitive mind has become the actor, literature and its literariness disappearing into the mind, as reflections of the cognitive processes.

Texts of (and stories about) the unconscious are mental-textual, set in theoretical frameworks that postulate the narrative (articulate) thought where something is lacking from experience. The literary texts are situated in the circular field where mind affects brain affects mind, and where mind/brain affects environment affects mind/brain. Still very few literary studies make use of brain research (the story and image of the brain) and especially developmental cognitive neuroscience (Norman Holland’s approaches being the heralds in this regard).

One of the latest additions to the stories of the unconscious, with growing neurocentrism, is the *cognitive-neural* “exact” hard data-driven *unconscious* (studied, f. ex., in subliminal perception, preconscious processing, split-brain research, blindsight, implicit memory/learning/knowledge; see O’Brien & Jureidini, 2002). Experimental techniques, brain imaging and scanning, cognitive neuroscience, artificial intelligence/life research, (neuro)computer science, dynamic non-linear complex systems theory, chaos theory, evolutionary psychology – all contribute to studying unconscious or nonconscious processes. Brain science of the 1960s and 1970s eschewed concepts that referred to the unconscious, while nowadays they occur routinely in consciousness and brain research and in the philosophy and psychology of mind/brain (cf. Tallis, 2002, pp. 176-177).

Neuro-evolutionary and evolutionary-psychological conceptualizations have proposed, for example, the existence of three “human” brains: a reptilian (pre-emotional) brain, a mammalian or crocodile (emotional) brain and an actual human brain with the more recent cortical circuits (MacLean, 1975; see also Le Doux, 1996; Tallis, 1992, pp. 134-135). “Blind,’ unconscious, automatic processes” (Dawkins, 1988) are said to be active in the brain, so that we can speak of the *neuro-evolutionary unconscious* of the species. According to Gerald Edelman’s (1987) neural Darwinism, each moment of consciousness means an adaptation to environment (as has been the case in the scope of millennia), networks of cells competing with each other in the scope of milliseconds to gain a temporary emergence in consciousness.

The whole evolution and the on-going activity of the brain and the marvel of consciousness is backgrounded by unconscious spaces that in some species date back to hundreds of millions of years.

The new cognitive (re)evolution has also brought forth the discursive mind with its socio-cultural cognitions, social affective-cognitive interactions and regulations as well as the *affective-cognitive-narrative* view of the *unconscious*. It has not been possible to find modules and “programs” in the brain that would “trigger” or “attract” specific storylines and narrative structures. Behind storylines (narrative constructions) there are most probably several interacting brain structures and processes. Beginning from infantile attractors (childhood feelings and memories, object representations, associations and fantasies), our brains have developed at ever higher levels of organisation and differentiation, interacting and changing with experience-based storylines. Storylines infiltrate concepts, making the concepts fluctuate, and storylines change in perpetual metamorphoses.

NEW MIXTURES AND APPARITIONS

It is through (literary, analytical, historical, developmental) interpretations, or “perturbations,” that the attractors are loosened from their infantile anchorage, while the acceptance of complexity, responsibility and nuanced differentiation is fostered. Thus the bandwidth of the mind and the “grammars,” or the rule sets of the attractors are more flexibly extended (cf. Palombo, 1999). Representations, associations, memories and fantasies become less stale and less rigidly determined. This applies also to the theoretical and methodological patterns of research.

Literary research does not have to stubbornly stick to a single definitive theory and to exclaim, “Show me your ‘facts’ and ‘theory,’ and I will show you my better facts and more extensive (more penetrating-into-truth, more legitimate) theory.” By reaching out for reciprocal and fertile cross-disciplinary relations, literary researchers and historians can make trans-theoretical and trans-methodological advances, not as purveyors of the truth, but as promoters of knowledge and understanding in action, caught in the act of forming and transforming, semantically, somatically, intellectually and emotionally (cf. Ihanus, 2005a, p. 251).

As long as the reverberations of the past in present relations and future perspectives remain unacknowledged, transferences and countertransferences are fixed in endless and compulsive reiteration of the past. On the other hand, reappraisals and workings-through are accompanied by transformative transferences and countertransferences that break the “should” of the past in favor of the affirmation of change. The “ecstasy” (“Ek-stase” by Heidegger, meaning out of stasis) of disciplinary change and invention is related to the rediscovery of a futurity that is intrinsic to human passions.

The present tense of “theory” is always its terminal state out of which one has to steer toward anticipation that makes existence “authentically futural.” The “futural,” the source of restorying the unconscious, in literary theory and research also has to do with the latest advances in the interdisciplinary fields of evolutionary and cultural studies, of complex and epigenetic dynamic systems perspectives, of neuroscientific and various kinds of psychological research focusing on developmental life-cycle processes, attachment, coping, and co-adaptive strategies in relation to physical, psychical and socio-cultural environments (cf. Ihanus, 2005a, p. 251). Again, we have to add the (*socio*-)cultural *unconscious* in order to refer to the out-of-awareness cultural processes that are automatically enacted especially through nonverbal modes of expression and taken for granted by members of a culture, as if they were innate (cf. Hall, 1981).

Different stories of the unconscious, whether they be Freudian, Jungian, Lacanian, behaviorist (the sum total of automatic and conditioned reflexes), evolutionary, cognitive or neuroscientific, have potential for the interactions, for mutually restorying the *dialogic* (Billig, 1997, 1998) or the *polylogic unconscious*. Language and rhetoric (of truth) can be both expressive and repressive, the repressive aspects of language being immersed in dialogues. On the other hand, repression itself (and repressive acts of language and theorizing) can be examined as a dialogic process (ibid.)

Intertextual and intersubjective narratives are circulatory (itinerary) systems, distributing and

disturbing cognitions, connecting networks, linkages and fluctuations. Their metaphors are priming memory (cf. Levin, 1991, 2003), and serving as bridges, carrying over transferences to readers-writers involving and revolving their text-processing and meaning-making mind/brain. New inter- and crossdisciplinary apparitions (such as cognitive and affective neuroscience, neural Darwinism, evolutionary psychology, cognitive-analytic approaches and neuropsychanalysis) shun fixed positions and rigid divides.

CONSTRUCTIONS AND CO-CONSTRUCTIONS

“Chronically accessible constructs” (Bargh, 1989; see also Pervin, 2003, pp. 248-249) are automatic ways of viewing the self, the others, and the world, but also of reifying, stabilizing and freezing metaphors about the unconscious into outworn (*Abnutzung* à la Nietzsche) concepts that are fixed to a permanent meaning formation (a disciplinary monolith or a block). Such constructs lend themselves too easily, are mechanically activated with little relevant information. Maybe also the neatly packed and categorized sets of the unconscious are examples of such constructs? They can bias our perception, sensitivity, memory and expectations and channel our anticipations of futures to come (*à venir* à la Derrida) to the firm conclusion of the future already arrived (*déjà arrivé*).

We can direct ourselves to confirm these constructs rather than to perceive and remember events that would disconfirm and change them. “You have discovered these traits together ten times, but have you also counted the times you have not found them together,” asked Lichtenberg (1990, p. 100) once in his notebook. What can be, what should not be, is already primed or predisposed by our too readily accessible and available constructs, and ensuing binding theoretical positions (bastions that have lost their currents). Maybe we should count much more than three levels of consciousness (or versions of the unconscious). Even ten is not enough, since different “worlds” and multiple levels of consciousness can simultaneously relate to each other.

In naturalizing and narrating the unconscious we may come to the frontier or divide where the supposed organization, order, structure or system of the unconscious turns out to be fictional, the whole of the unconscious being fabricated and storied by human (posthuman) consciousness trapped in matrices, the tripartite division of the psyche, for example, signifying nothing. There are innumerable co-existing universes. The journey through the process of narrativization of the unconscious is not science fiction, but it may concern fictions of science and scientific fictions of the intrapsychic world.

The “becoming conscious of” something that has been unconscious is also a “just so story,” as is the “original” unconscious (phantasy), or the “primal horde and parricide,” or the Oedipus myth, or information and cognition, or the phenomenological self and authentic life (to mention just few key concepts) amid the competing discourses of the behavioral and social sciences and therapeutics. If “something,” a fictional construct with official denotations and idiosyncratic connotations (animal spirits, forces, drives, archetypes, atoms, dark matter, schemata, scripts, even the whole of cognition, neural networks, computer programs, brain processes, matrices) is hidden “out there,” or “there under,” we cannot become conscious of it as such, only through transformations and translations into more or less explicit and conscious representations (cf. Talvitie & Ihanus, 2002).

Journeying through the field of more personal and expressive self-related narration we can transform implicit (or implied) knowledge into explicit “knowing and feeling characters” that are capable of both metacognition and “meta-emotion.” For example, while we are reading/writing literary texts, our meta-emotional self-regulative and self-reflective processing combined with reading/writing transferences and metacognition help us assess what, how, when, where and why we feel in the text, in the matrix of the affective-cognitive mind/brain (including reading/writing pleasures and frustrations, feelings attached to an author/authorship, narrative figures, narration, style and aesthetics) (cf. Ihanus, 2005b, pp. 71-73).

The construction and co-construction of complex narration entails playful meaning negotiations, interpretive moves and strategies that make use of stratified attractors of meaning spanned through

different life histories, contexts and fictional worlds. The psychic real always has to be approximated and interpolated. Its projections on the (inter)faces of the outer world (others' faces) pose more questions to be processed than we can dream of having time to answer. Will the unconscious transform itself to the *simulated, virtual and matrixial unconscious*? Will there be any interunconscious net communication? In the relational field of network avatars, in the Sim Universe or cyberspace of multiple distributed and disseminated worlds, do "we humans" still recognize "our humanness"? Are we aware of our fragmented and core identities? Can we at all be conscious of being in the matrix, programmed throughout, and self-regulated by processed processing? Or have we with the dynamic unconscious already irreversibly regressed in the service of the other? In one of his sonnets R. D. Laing approached the forced situation of the mind/brain: "[...] But here I'm in a jam. / I'm motionlessly fleeing from my mind. // I'm devastated by a dreary war / That may be only manure from my brain. / But it goes on. I can't remember what it's for. / There's none to whom I dare complain. [...]" (Laing, 1979, p. 36.)

THE BRIDGING TASK OF LITERATURE

Have you been able to follow me through different versions of the unconscious? Did we actually count more than ten? At least this list is not exhaustive: animistic, nature philosophical, physiological, Freudian (dynamic), Jungian (collective), Lacanian (linguistic), more constructive psychodynamic, behaviorist, cognitive, neuro-evolutionary, matrixial, dialogic/polylogic, and additional inter- and crossdisciplinary ones. Hesitating at the end: if this what I say and count is true, it is one more (once upon a time) story of truth, changing between the discourses of the participants and between the texts of the reciprocal worlds. The truth, as an incorporated and inscribed self-deception, must be switched – or possibly, in order to make the possible possible, it should (or could it, perhaps it might) disappear for good.

The text of the other does not answer interactively. In this age of net fiction, interactive writing and blogging, there is no interaction between the text and the reader (the "interactional fallacy"; see Pettersson, 2005, p. 68), but there are inter-reader agreements or disagreements on the interpretations of the textual facts. The texture of the unconscious is a tissue that is fabricated by literary and non-literary stories of how things happen and are ordered (to make sense to us), and these stories have their own constructions of "literariness" and "facticity" of science. The regulation of boundaries proceeds through master stories and storied mastery.

Writers undoubtedly and intuitively have realized the import of the unconscious and of restorying the unconscious. This is their contribution to science, although there are many "eccentric" formulations of the unconscious in literature (see, f. ex., Lawrence, 1921, 1922). So what? And what next? A new version, "a new soaring impalpable imperishable being" (Joyce, 1916/1956, p. 169)? The literary-scientific enterprise will perhaps loosen strict identities and disciplinary identifications, and go on asking questions, such as what literary experimental journeys can contribute to scientific explorations. There is no one and only model of the unconscious (like that of the "hidden deep structure and meaning"), but various potentials to be imaginatively entered, enjoyed and shared as present (*in praesentia*) presents in interimaginary conversations, not treated absent-mindedly as abstract (*in absentia*) atomistic entities or essences.

The narrative point of view does not mean reducing the human mind to a "story machine" with its particular logic and cognitive processing, but allows the emergence of non-conceptualised experiential aspects (changing feelings, phantasies and images), and the sharing and discussing times and places, perspectives and engagements. As Vygotsky (1971; see László, 2002, p. 11) put it, literature is a "social technique for emotions," while it articulates unspecific and nonconscious feelings in social relations. Literature provides "scaffolding."

The experiences of separateness and togetherness belong to sociodramatic plays, and playfulness in literature means mindfulness of textual and intertextual networks with their linkages and connections. Through literary mindscapes, we can pave the way for studying transformative transferences, the priming

of memory, similarity judgment and all kinds of comparisons in text processing and meaning making. Thus, the carrying over of the fluctuations of the unconscious into both intersubjective and personal literary space is potentiated. The non-fixed nature of the unconscious is a permanently intriguing challenge to the bridging task of literature.

The future of the unconscious is to be discussed and negotiated. Here is not the place of a sermon or of a prediction. By the way, prediction used to be only one of the rhetorical forms of the Hebrew prophets (*nabi*). Their task, as prolocutors, was not only to foretell future events, but even first and foremost to speak, as His mouth (cf. Arlow, 1951, pp. 375-376), “in front of” an audience in the present, outlining, introducing the subject of the future (here and now: of the unconscious) to discussion. What kinds of futures (or unconsciousnesses) those present want? How will they work through and toward futures of unconsciousnesses, co-constructing and retelling them in the unfolding narratives, in the name of – ?

Finally, in storying the mindscape, and in connecting the void, the source of images and words, I evoke and imagine some alchemical environments, the laboratories where experimental transformations and invisible sublimations of the unknown substances were supposed to take place, in the silence of the past (“And silence is another metaphor?”; Laing, 1979, p. 33). No image, however, will represent the unconscious. For example, Freud saw nothing of the unconscious in Salvador Dalí’s surrealist works, only deliberate machinations. Neither did Lacan see “the slightest trace of a thought in the brain” electroencephalograms (quoted by Roudinesco, 1997, pp. 378-379) Still, like alchemists we can work in the laboratory or simulacrum of our mind toward permutations and transformations, missing something in the waiting room, waiting for something to appear as an apparition of the invisible: “Was it a quaint device opening a page of some medieval book of prophecies and symbols, a hawklike man flying sunward above the sea [...]?” (Joyce, 1916/1956, p. 169).

In writing and through writing, by discussing in the workshop, we combine sensations, perceptions, memories, emotions and thoughts, melting and fusing “substances,” refusing to get stuck to known substances but heading waywardly toward the unknown, to be storied further by malleable metaphors. There are surplus-values and surplus-enjoyment beyond the pleasure principle in minding literature or signifying “litraterre.”

Sartre (1952/1963, p. 584) in his study on Jean Genet formulated that “we are what we make of what they made of us.” While writing (or painting) we create our parents (and ancestors), and recreate and re-enact subjectively experienced modes of parenting (cf. Dervin, 1996, p. 189). We smiths, hitting the fleeting associations and experiences on the anvil of our mind, experimenting with our wishful realities, “forging anew” “in the smithy of my soul,” and in our workshop “out of the sluggish matter of the earth” “the uncreated conscience [and the unconscious] of my race” (Joyce 1916/1956, pp. 169, 253), while our brains are neurally and in many social-affective-cognitive ways developing along our multiple storylines. Are we more advanced than the alchemists?

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