Daseinsanalyse and psychoanalysis:
The issue of the unconscious
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(English text based on recorded interpretation)

So today I'd like to address the issue of the unconscious and the relationships between Daseinsanalyse and Psychoanalysis. I think that is a question that must be raised because you know that two main figures of Daseinsanalyse have had very close relationships with Freud.

Ludwig Binswanger who was the first one to try to find reasons for criticising psychologism in the narrow naturalism of Freud, before discovering in the reading of "Time and Being" that he made in 1927 that the terms life and conscience only characterise in an imperfect way the nature of man. Nevertheless, Binswanger was very close to Freud: they exchanged many letters between 1908 and 1938 and these letters were published several years ago\(^1\). Binswanger met Freud for the first time when he was very young, he was 26 years old. He kept having with him an impossible dialogue. He saw in him the experimentator of a new concept of nature that includes the psyche and the inventor of a scientific mythology that objectivizes the phenomena. The dialogue had started at the time when Binswanger was writing his PhD thesis under direction of Jung and was intensively studying Freud's work. This dialogue remained rather unreciprocated. Binswanger, 25 years younger, he was always full of admiration for someone he considered to be his master. Let me quote him after a visit to Freud in 1927 "you don't feel as small in front of anybody else". That admiration was not reciprocal I believe. Freud remains completely closed to the philosophical dimension of Binswanger research.

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And he's being a bit patronising with him. In a letter to Ferenczi, he describes Binswanger in 1912 as somebody extremely correct, serious and honest but not very gifted, and knowing that, and as a result "very modest"². It's not a very flattering judgement. Till Binswanger writes to him

After a visit he made to him on the occasion of the colloquium for the 80th birthday of Freud, during which he pronounced a very flattering speech, he writes "I am very happy and delighted to see you again and to find that we are still close to one another"³. Freud answers complimenting him for his diction, his culture and his tact in contradiction. He said "Naturally, I don't believe you. It may be that we speak without understanding each other and we'll need centuries to settle out our disagreements"⁴.

Let's move on to Médard Boss who started his didactical analysis with Freud in 1925 and worked for many years (10 years) with Jung before meeting Heidegger in 1947. His attempts at constituting a preventive therapy and medicine in accordance with the Dasein (daseinsgemäße) produced his Grundriß der Medizin published in 1971. We can say that this project is radically opposed to theory that Freud developed of the psychological device even though he recognized the extreme wealth of this therapeutic method⁵. Médard Boss is very ambiguous about Freud. He criticizes the theoreticians but he praises the therapisit. In Zollikon seminar, we see all that separates the Heideggerian analysis of Dasein from Freudian analysis of the psyche : on the one hand you have the concerns, the existential, the self, on the other hand, the pulse, the instances of the psyche, the self. Also, the pillars of the Freudian causalistc theoretical device, in that it is opposed to the phenomenological understanding, are what Heidegger calls "the fatal difference" (der fatale Unterschied) of the unconscious and the conscious⁶.

So, Médard Boss says the hypothesis of the unconscious is artificial, superfluous and detrimental⁷ from the phenomenological and daseinsanalytical point of vue. And I would like to focus on this reject using

² Freud-Binswanger, Briefwechsel 1908-1938, op. cit.
³ Briefwechsel, op. cit., (letter of 1 October 1936).
⁴ Ibid., (letter of 8 October 1936)
⁷ M. Boss, Grundriß der Medizin und der Psychologie, Huber, Bern, 1975, p. 351 (referenced as GM).
as reference only the text of Médard Boss because he attacks openly the idea of the unconscious contrary to Binswanger who still sees in the emerging of that notion the faithfulness to experience and not a simple use of scientific speculation. In a late text with a significant title "my path towards Freud", he says and he explains that "the doctrine of the unconscious is not only based on scientific speculation but first of all on experience". And it is the reason why he recognizes in 1956 (ten years before his death) that there is something completely new in psychoanalysis as empirical science"\(^8\). And that text of 1957 wound up with the assertion to which neither Heidegger nor Boss could have subscribed: "by his doctrine of the unconscious intentionality, Freud has made man closer to the world and the world closer to man"\(^9\).

I shall now speak about the Zollikon seminars. In the Zollikon seminars we can see clearly that phenomenological matters are completely opposed to the nature sciences matters that reduce these phenomena to calculable data. There is what Heidegger calls existential analysis and what Freud called Analysis because for Freud that word means, in conformity with the spirit of the modern science since Descartes, an interpretation of symptoms according to their origin by analogy with the chemical analysis that looks at the different elements or compounds. Heidegger gives another meaning to analysis and he explains that it is not a breaking down into elements, it is the reconstitution of what is unity of a structured whole\(^10\). The point is not to reconstitute the ontic process of a causal series of events but the point is to see the ontological unit of an articulated multiplicity. The point is not to apply existential analysis to psychiatry\(^11\), the point is as Heidegger explains to look at the ontic in the light of the ontological.

That explains that Heidegger tells Boss in 1968 that "the research matter that is specific to the Dasein is not phenomenological but it is in the dependence and under the leadership of phenomenology understood as the Dasein hermeneutics"\(^12\). What Heidegger proposes is not to look into Sein und Zeit the theoretical foundation of a new anthropology but to discover there the practical motivation for a converted perspective. No theoretical "mediation" is possible between the ontological and the ontic for the simple reason that the ontological is not or another order, higher or opposed to the ontic, but it is on the contrary its very "content"\(^13\). Science, for example

\(^8\) “Mon chemin vers Freud” (1957) in Analyse existentielle, psychiatrie clinique et psychanalyse. Discours, parcours et Freud, op. cit., p. 246.
\(^9\) Ibid., p. 261.
\(^10\) ZS p. 150.
\(^11\) Ibid., p. 286
\(^12\) Ibid., p. 281.
\(^13\) Ibid., p. 255.
psychiatric science, always talks about this without being able to capture it in itself and to thematise it. The ontological is not separated from the ontic, it is not another order, it is what determines the ontic and allows seeing the ontic as it is. The access to the ontic is mediated by the ontological or made known by the ontological but only insofar as it is effectively and practically accomplished by those who try to understand the ontic phenomena that they are faced with. What Heidegger means by phenomenology is not the mere description of ontic phenomena but "hermeneutics of facticity", the name he gave it in one of his first classes in 1923, which consist in an understanding of the existence that remains inherent of the accomplishment of the latter without having to raise above it to produce its reflexive objectivation. So it has only the meaning of an explicitation and not of a theoretical explanation of the existence.

The Zollikon seminars bring about essential specifications. The learning of such a method is not meant to turn the physicians into philosophers or into theoreticians. The point is to make them more attentive to what they already are as human beings, to what concerns them in an unavoidable way as thinking beings. What such a learning process requires from the participants is not the merely intellectual understanding of what the human existence is "in general", we can speak about it until tomorrow, the important point is to be "committed" to the way of being which is already ours and the point now is to accomplish it. It implies that the inadequate representations that one has of man from the point of view of human sciences should be set aside. The methodology is still radically dominated by the mathematical method of nature sciences. It is the reason why the teaching of Heidegger at Zollikon is closer, as Médard Boss underlines, to group therapy or to some sort of Heideggerian cure quite similar to the Freudian cure. To go just like the Freudian approach, it brings to the light the resistances in the participants but is even more similar to Socrates' "releasing" practice called Socratic maïeutics and Heidegger claims he belongs to that school. Because the physician or the analyst like Socrates is the reason and not the cause of the healing of the patient, which implies that the therapeutic relationship is a human situation characterised by the being together, and cannot be reduced to an objective process similar to what the natural processes are for nature sciences. The point is to see in the therapeutic relationship the fact of being one with another which is not biological or sensitive, since as

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14 Subtitle of training session summer 1923, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität), Heideggers Gesamtausgabe Band 63, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1988.
15 Ibid., p.174.
17 ZS, p. 151.
Heidegger underlines in Taormina interview, "there is no sense or organ for what we call the other one"\textsuperscript{18}

The relationship between the therapist and the patient is not explained by scientific arguments. Freud understands the psyche on the basis of biological nature of human beings as in the Daseinsanalytical perspective the point is to understand the human body from the existence and it is the latter that is the starting point of all the determinations of the existence\textsuperscript{19} of the human body and not the other way around which means, as Heidegger says, that "the flesh (das Leibliche) is the most difficult problem"\textsuperscript{20} because it can only be reduced in an abstract way to biological nature and to causal substracts. And far from ignoring the phenomenon of the body, an accusation that is very often made against the Heidegger's existential analysis\textsuperscript{21}, on the contrary, its presupposes the existence of the body everywhere but it does not provide a separate description that would reduce it as an objective phenomenon it appears and is only met from the community situation of the being with others. It is the case of all the flesh phenomena (Leibphänomene) which cannot at all be reduced to objective phenomena as the example of the tears or going red clearly show because these presuppose relationship with other people, with our peers\textsuperscript{22}. Indeed as Heidegger underlines with force, we must be aware of the fact that the man, Mensch-sein, is always presupposed in the capture of any ontic phenomenon and it is the true a priori just like the Miteinandersein, the being with one another that does not stem from the effective meeting of somebody else but is on the contrary what presupposes any power doing meeting\textsuperscript{23}.

Freud has not ignored that being with one another of the patient and the physician since he put it at the very centre of his therapeutic approach and he made of it the very foundation of his theory of transfer. But instead of staying inside the therapeutic relationship itself and instead of understanding analysis on that basis, Freud felt the need to give a scientific

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p. 199.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 293.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 292.
\textsuperscript{21} It's the case not only with Sartre, to whom Heidegger replies (ZS, p. 292), but of his most dedicated interpreters as well. See for example A. de Waelhens, dans “Une philosophie de l’ambiguïté”, foreword to La structure du comportement de Merleau-Ponty (P.U.F., 1960, p. V), asserting Heidegger "always uses the complexity level which imagines the problem as solved", that is the level of description of "paradoxical structure of a conscious existence, of an existence that turns into an object in overhanging the object", which explains why there is merely 10 lines in Sein und Zeit on the issue of the body.
\textsuperscript{22} ZS, p. 106 et p.144.
\textsuperscript{23} ZS, p. 224, p. 227 et p. 270.
foundation to his practice and to build the psychodynamics which model is the mechanics of nature sciences. And that is the reproach that Heidegger voices about Freud in the Zollikon seminar. He was brought to place in the category of perceived phenomena a set of forces judged more real than the phenomena themselves because they are measurable and usable. And it is that secondary superstructure that he calls metapsychology, a word that appears in 1915 at the time when Freud indicates that he has had the intention to publish two essays about dreams and mourning under the title of "preparation to metapsychology" which obliges to clarify and analyse more in depth the theoretical hypothesis on the basis of which psychoanalytic system could be founded. Metapsychology is dealing, as Freud underlines, with the hereafter of the conscious. That hereafter of the conscious includes all the forces that mythology just like metaphysics see as independent of man and which are nevertheless according to Freud only psychology projected to the external world, which implies that the "translation" of metaphysics in metapsychology which he assignes himself as a task consists in pure and simple anthropologisation of the "unconscious".

Because it is that "psychoanalytical system" that requires the concept of unconscious. As Heidegger explains in the Zollikon seminar, "Freud's metapsychology is the transposition of neo-Kantian philosophy to man. On the one hand there are the nature sciences and on the other the Kantian theory of objectivity". It is the neo-Kantian of the school of Marburg as well as the one of the school of Bade to which the Heidegger's interpretation of Kant is opposed to, because it emphasized the role played by Kant in the foundation of the sciences of nature. For Heidegger, Freud's metapsychology, elaborated in the frame of that philosophy which was then dominant philosophy and that was neo-Kantism, is an attempt to build anthropology on the basis of an entirely relative epistemological model. And he says that it is the way which Freud says that "for human conscious phenomena there are no gaps in the explanation, that is the continuity of causal connections. And as such continuity does not exist in the conscience, he must invent the unconscious where the absence of gaps in the causal connections must be found. The postulate is the ability to explain the psyche in which we can explain, understand and identify. This postulate

26 See on this issue, Psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne, Payot, 1979, p. 276 sq.
27 ZS, p. 260.
does not come from the psyche itself but it is the postulate of modern
science of nature." (… 29 … 30)

It is the topical point of view that allows defining psychoanalysis as
psychology of the depth as Freud says, because there is another place which
is where everything is sketched 31. And I think we have here a beautiful
example of what we could call, and its an expression used by Wittgenstein,
the "myth of interiority" as if there was a double psyche32.

In his Grundriß der Medizin, Médard Boss sets himself against the
dynamic use of the unconscious, that is the use of it made by Freud, while
maintaining a descriptive33 use of it. Such an opposition can be found in
Freud himself34 who distinguishes the preconscious from the unconscious.
The unconscious "does not only designates the latent thoughts but it
designates the dynamic thoughts to a certain extent, that is the thoughts that
are maintained separate from the conscience despite their intensity and their
efficiency"35. Because for Freud "the repressed thoughts are the prototype of
the unconscious"36 and it becomes clear at the level of the second topic that
he distinguishes the three bodies of the id, the ego and the super ego,
because the role of repression or suppression is to reject outside of the
conscience and to keep away from it everything that must be repressed or
suppressed 37. For Boss, Freud does discover a very important phenomenon
for human existence but he has not succeeded in providing an existential
interpretation 38. Freud sees in suppression or repression the rejection of an
unpleasant internal material of the psyche from one internal space to
another39. It consists according to him in banning a certain content of the
conscience precisely because that content cannot be reconciled with social
prohibitions and commands. They were interiorised by the individual in the
form of the superego. The unconscious can be more precisely defined as

28 Ibid.
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31 M, p. 78-79.
32 Reference to the paper of J. Bouveresse on Wittgenstein : Le Mythe de l’intériorité.
Expérience, signification et langage privé chez Wittgenstein, Paris, Ed. de Minuit,
1976.
34 M, p. 176-177.
35 M, p. 179.
37 M, p. 47.
38 GM, p. 518.
39 Ibid.
something hidden by the person herself for herself which implies that it is a self-deluding operation.

Boss takes inspiration from Sartre\textsuperscript{40}, who in \textit{L’Être et le Néant} criticizes the very idea of self delusion and see in it something preposterous because it means that "I must know as a deceiver the truth that is hidden as deceived person"\textsuperscript{41}, reminding that Freud himself has seen that unconscious knowledge is an \textit{in adjecto}\textsuperscript{42} contradiction: you cannot not know and not know at the same time. In the case of the dream for instance the obvious content is considered by Freud to be the work of the self-delusion where the unconscious of the dreamer deceives him by distorting the latent content of the dream. So that's aporia knowledge that must hide itself and Freud, in order to get out of that dead end, has had to strive to understand the relationship with oneself, which is at stake here, by using an analogy with the behaviour that consist in deceiving somebody else. To create duality necessary to the self-delusion of the dreamer, Freud divides the egoïty in two personifications: the conscious and the unconscious that can thus establish between them the same relationships as the one that links the psyche of a man to that of another one as he recognizes himself. "We call unconscious the psychological process of which we must suppose the existence because, for example, we deduce it, we infer it from its effects but we don't know anything about it. We have the same relationship with it than with a psychological process in another individual, except that it is one of ourselves"\textsuperscript{43}. So we are inhabited by somebody else that is not ourselves. So Freud must suppose a division and an original alienation of the psyche.

Sartre had seen that when he says in "The being and nothingness": "psychoanalysis substitutes to the notion of bad faith the idea of a lie without liar, it enables to understand how I can not lie to myself but be lied to, in the situation of somebody else in relationship with me. It replaces the duality of the deceiver and the deceived, an essential condition of the lie, by that of the id and the ego. It introduces in my deepest subjectivity the intersubjective structure of the \textit{midsein}"\textsuperscript{44}. The problem is that such a duality theory, which we know ever since the Plato's Parmenide and the so-called argument of the third man, presupposes necessarily the existence of a third instance that decides of the sharing: it is the censor of the dream that Freud mentions. Of course we need someone responsible for censorship who says "this is a lie, this is not a lie, this can have access to the conscience and this

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 519.
\textsuperscript{41} J.-P. Sartre, \textit{L’être et le néant}, Paris, Gallimard, 1943, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{42} Freud, \textit{Introduction à la psychanalyse}, Payot, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{44} Sartre, \textit{L’être et le néant, op. cit.}, p. 90.
cannot”. If we wonder what is the status, conscious or unconscious, of the censor, we can only answer that it is constituted like an unconscious conscience unless we suppose it is itself divided by another censoring body, a censor of the censor and so on until the infinite. The argument of the third man is that when you have two men, there is a third one. So the aporia that Freud wants to solve with the first topic appears again in the person of the. "Indeed it's if we push away the language of psychoanalysis, we realise that censorship in order to do it with understanding must know what it represses. We must admit that censorship must choose and it must be knowledgeable in order to be able to choose (…) Psychoanalysis in order to eliminate bad faith has created between the conscious and the unconscious an autonomous conscience which is bad faith. His effort to establish a true duality -and even a trinity (Es, Ich, Überich expressed by censorship)- only has led to a verbal terminology”

In the same way, Boss concludes that Freud was forced to develop the hypothesis of the unconscious to satisfy to the methodological requirements of the sciences of nature and he asserts that psychological unconscious is something that has been invented to satisfy theoretical needs it is an artificial construction to which the modern subjectivism resorts to, to try and explain the being of man. In reality, it is the Freud topic which is rejected here (the first one just like the second one, despite the more dynamic character) and not the descriptive unconscious.

Boss is thus brought to recognizing a certain fertility of the idea of unconscious, provided it is not referred to the Cartesian philosophy of the soul and substance, cartesian philosophy upon which Freud (who did not like them : he said philosophers are makers of conceptions of the world) is completely dependent.

It must be said that Freud was tempted by the study of philosophy and even thought about a philosophical thesis but he was driven away from it by Brentano himself who recommended that, instead of studying philosophy, he should read the English emprirists and Auguste Comte. This

46 GM, p. 193.
47 Ibid., p. 354.
48 “I thought it was interesting to take note of Freud's low metaphysics standards whereas he has a poor reputation for speculating”, writes Binswanger in 1910 (Freud-Binswanger, Correspondance, op. cit., p. 87). Instead of calling it a paradox, we might wonder if such low metaphysics standards (which Husserl was naming "blindness for thoughts") could be a foundation for most abstract "constructions" in particular about psychology (see on this issue, Husserl, Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie, Gallimard, 1950, § 22).
is why Freud just like Auguste Comte completely despises metaphysics. Freud says in a letter to Werner Achelis: "the other gaps or lacks in my nature have mortified me and made me modest, but concerning metaphysics it's not the same; I have no organ for it, no power, no faculty and in addition, I have no respect for it. In secret, these things cannot be said out loud, I think metaphysics will be sentenced as a nuisance as a abuse of thinking, a vestige of the period of religious conception of the universe. I know exactly how that mentality drives me away from the cultivated German circles". What Freud criticizes of philosophy is the tendency to unification, the seduction of unity and monism to the detriment of what seems essential to him, that is a gradual development of science. He writes to Lou Salomé in 1915: "I feel so little the need for synthesis. (...) What I am interested in is the separation, the division into elements that without it would be melting together in a primary magma". And the same model comes out that of chemical analysis Freud wanted to be the chemist of the psyche

So we should come back to the idea of a certain fertility of the unconscious, not understood as a topic, an unconscious that would be an unconscious from a completely descriptive point of view, phenomenological unconscious, not a mental psychological unconscious that is an intra-psychological instance that would be the depth of the psyche itself seen as a container, but a place of concealment, pre-psychological place of concealment which is pre-personal as well, a concealment that remains inaccessible and from which everything emerges. In relation with such a cosmic unconscious and even such a pre-cosmic unconscious because it precedes that event of the world which is the existence for each and every one. In that sense we could speak of the unconscious but not in the sense of an intra-psychological unconscious which is the Freudian unconscious which appears as an abstraction in relation with that psychological unconscious, in relation with what remains obscure, opaque and precedes the advent of the existence. "In that psychological unconscious we only feel a very abstract, very distant and anthropomorphised "pre-human concealment and in general as preceding the being" against which the human existence must conquer a domain of opening to the clarified world." 49

For Boss, the human existence cannot be understood as that of encapsulated subject isolated and locked up upon themselves but as the opening of a free space, of a clearing constantly conquered on a deep

49 M. Boss, "Il m'est venu en rêve...", Essais théoriques et pratiques sur l’activité onirique, P.U.F., 1989, p. 221.
obscurity from which any phenomenology and any phenomenon must be thought. It is necessary for phenomenology to be aware of the depth of the invisible and the unconscious. We can regret, and it would be my criticism about him, that Boss sometimes stays at the level of an excessively flat phenomenology, not very open to the unreal, the fantasy and into their specific ways of being. Maybe at that level we should consider the interesting aspect of the Freudian hypothesis of psychological unconscious, the hypothetical character of it was always strongly underlined by Freud himself. At his second visit to Vienna in 1910, Binswanger said that "Freud was saying that we do as if the unconscious were a reality like the conscious, but as a true scientific researcher, it does not say anything about the nature of the unconscious because we don't know for sure. He asserts that in the same way as Kant had the postulate of the thing in itself behind the phenomenon, he postulates behind the conscious accessible to our experience the unconscious that would never be a direct object of experience. Freud is and remains the conscientious scientific researcher who asserts nothing else than what experience shows him. Freud himself has remained in the "as if". The idea of the unconscious, which he defined as an intra-psychological unconscious and to which he assigned a place, nevertheless remains a hypothesis. And in that sense the idea of the Freudian unconscious is a fertile idea.

I would like to conclude saying that if metapsychology and the implied topics appear as theoretical constructions that can only be radically criticized from the phenomenological point of view, it is possible to discover in freudianism a "phenomenological core" and we know that certain phenomenologists saw a true hermeneutics in Freud. I am thinking of the hermeneutic reading of Freud by Paul Ricoeur more than 30 years ago. And certain indications of Merleau-Ponty had already announced before being able to give to his dialogue with Freud a finished shape. So from that reading phenomenological and hermeneutic reading of Freud that something else different from an impossible dialogue could be started

50 Freud-Binswanger, Correspondance, op. cit., p. 87.
52 Cf. Merleau-Ponty, Phénoménologie de la perception, Gallimard, 1945, p. 184 : “Even with Freud, it would be wrong to say that psychoanalysis excludes description of psychological motives and confronts with the phenomenology method : on the contrary it has contributed to development of phenomenology in asserting, as Freud said, that each human act "has a meaning" and in always trying to understand the event rather than connecting it with mechanical contingencies."
between Freud and the phenomenologists. In that sense, if you read Médard Boss well and if you read the essay that he published in 1957 which title was "Psychoanalysis and analysis of the Dasein", that generous reading from Freud was not so far away from the reading by Boss.

I would like as a conclusion to read the conclusion of his book where he attacks Freudian psychoanalysis but as a theory, not as a practice. These are the last lines of the book of Médard Boss : "the reflection of the Daseinsanalysis on the psychoanalytic practice enables the latter to become fully aware of its own and authentic essence and to become in all clarity transparent to itself. It is in the light of the Daseinsanalysis that Freudian practice becomes what it is truly". And the last sentence : "the views of the Daseinsanalysis about the fundamental constitution of the human being make us know exactly the extent to which the speculative superstructures of psychoanalytical theory are inadequate. In Freud's own opinion, they are to be thrown away and they can be sacrificed without regret."

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