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PSYCHE, SELF AND SOUL: RETHINKING PSYCHOANALYSIS, THE SELF AND SPIRITUALITY. By Gerald J. Gargiulo. London: Whurr/Wiley & Sons. Publishers, 2004, 168 pp., \$45.00.

I recommend that readers of this unusual collection of psychoanalytic papers start with chapter 12, where the unifying theme of the book appears in its clearest statement: "In my focus on the need to be comfortable with mystery, with poetry, with unknowing, I have attempted to highlight the different dimensions that psychoanalysis must bring to clinical work, if they are going to know who and where they are. Throughout the text I have alluded to the works of Meister Eckhart to suggest a broader reading of what it means to be human. None of this stands in opposition to analysts understanding the genetic determinants of a person's present situation, nor does it exclude a sensible analysis of defenses or transference manifestations" (p. 125).

This declaration may serve as a guide to Gerald Gargiulo's thought. Once an observant Roman Catholic who taught religious studies, including Carmelite spirituality, but who now apparently stands aside from formal religious commitment, he has been for many years a practicing psychoanalyst and a member of Division 39 of the American Psychological Association and other psychoanalytic groups. He brings with him a deep acquaintance with and sympathy for the writings of the mystics, Eastern as well as Christian. Perhaps the most original aspect of the book lies in his appropriation of their experiences, and making close comparisons of them with his reading of writers more familiar to most analysts, especially Winnicott, Lacan, Klein, Fairbairn, Balint, and Grotstein, as well as Heidegger, Whitehead, and Ricoeur among philosophers.

The book begins by situating the "spirituality" and "transcendence" of Gargiulo's references to this world and not the heavens—"this world" notably including the unconscious. Recognition of the unconscious exposes the infinite possibilities of human experience, and there psychoanalysis inevitably touches on the spiritual life. Winnicott and Eckhart meet in opening our thought to selfhood beyond the personal, Winnicott in his seemingly paradoxical questioning of the reality of the self, Eckhart in the *via negativa* of meditation, by which sense experi-

ence is transcended. Once we see that the language of psychoanalysis is metaphorical, we free it from the restraints of concrete thinking. Transference, for example is a metaphoric re-creation of earlier states. The varieties of psychoanalytic theory are alternative ways, inevitably culture-bound, of approaching the content of human discourse. Theoretical certainty is illusory.

Gargiulo pursues these themes in many directions, always provocatively, though perhaps unavoidably with repetition, this being, after all, a collection of articles. In writing of "essential aloneness" as the ground of both psychoanalysis and spirituality, he invokes the unconscious in its limitlessness as corresponding with "void," "the nothingness" of the mystics. Far from abandoning meaning thereby, he points to analysis of the unconscious on the way to exploring the unlimited possibilities of meaning and undermining rigid definitions of selfhood. We discover that all truths are partial and contextual, and come to "a profound sense of mystery," without which no analysis can be adequate.

It will be evident already that Gargiulo's argument is at least as philosophical as it is psychological—which is not a negative appraisal when we reflect how traditional psychoanalysis has been steeped in a positivist, empirical philosophy of mind rarely examined as such. That transference and other interpretations of unconscious content are analytic constructions arising from the relationship in which they take place, although hardly a new proposal, is a refreshing antidote to the dogmatism to which psychoanalysis is recurrently subject. Perhaps it is Gargiulo's earlier commitment to the more obfuscating aspects of dogma in religion that makes him sensitive to them when they crop up in our psychoanalytic understanding.

Constructionist thought about the analytic relation governs here. In passages strongly influenced by Lacan, as well as Winnicott, Erikson, and Balint (and possibly by Loewald, although his name is strangely absent), Gargiulo locates the origin of the transference relation in the transitional object that gives the world meaning. Since that appears in the infant's experience with the parents, the world of meaning is inherently found in subjection to parental authority, the Other who is supposed to know and who fulfills or frustrates desires. The self is constructed too, as the precipitate of parental recognition. A task of analysis is to expose the desire to have the other as authority. All this stands in contrast to

dogmatic religion, which, as Gargiulo sees (and no doubt experienced) it, opposes critical inquiry and maintains the state of submission to parental authority through ecclesiastical or other surrogates.

The human issues that psychoanalysis addresses dovetail with many spiritual traditions, without underwriting any one of them. The fluidity of selfhood, personal existence as part of a totality (linguistic and cultural, as well as interpersonal), empathic insight with compassion as its basic emotion—these expectable experiences of successful analysis are also offered in the mystical tradition, notably in the writings of Eckhart, but equally in the non-Christian literature. It is worth remarking parenthetically that Gargiulo follows a modern trend in abstracting, or maybe safeguarding, Meister Eckhart from Catholic Christianity. True, he came under suspicion of heresy, but as a Dominican priest, vicar-general of Thuringen, prior of Erfurt, and lecturer at the University of Paris, he was not out of line with ancient religious tradition when he preached on the need for interior revelation.

Gargiulo provides a case history, of a schizoid patient, that is of particular interest because of its unlikely start. In a prolonged treatment with varying degrees of psychoanalytic intensity, this man slowly awakened to dimensions of feeling and caring hitherto unavailable to him. As analyst, Gargiulo engaged in an active interpretation of transference, with close attention to his own subjectivity. Frequent reference here as elsewhere to the writings of Winnicott show plainly his special influence on the author's theoretical and therapeutic positions.

Gargiulo's gratefully acknowledged appropriation of the insights of earlier analysts, with demonstrated evidence of their usefulness, is balanced by his presentation of himself as an independent thinker, a sympathetic yet skeptical listener and participant in the analytic dialogue. His engaging style and impressive knowledge of both modern psychoanalysis and mystical writings encourage the reader to look beyond the scientific claims of our discipline to its possible contributions to the world of thought nowadays called "spirituality." I am all the same reminded of a remark of Freud's in a letter to his Swiss follower Ludwig Binswanger, who had called on Freud to give recognition to the spiritual side, so neglected in psychoanalytic theory. Freud wrote in reply, as I quote from memory, that he was far too concerned with the lower floors of the mental structure to have time to study the upper

ones. While the irony is apparent, and perhaps unfair, the warning is worth attention for two reasons. The first is that the analysis of transference and defense, no matter the analyst's theoretical preference or technical approach, remains the unique offering of psychoanalysis among the psychotherapies. It directs the attention of the analyst at all points of the treatment. Second, and consequent to the first, whatever spiritual, aesthetic, or scientific side may exist in our patients' personalities, to be authentic it can emerge only as resistances against it fall. The analyst only needs to avoid supporting the resistance through his or her prejudices or ignorance—often no small order, as when we see instances in supervision in which the religious life of the patient, past or present, is interpreted by the analyst only in its defensive uses, if at all. Gargiulo may be urging goals of spiritual resolution beyond, or outside, the hopes of most analysts. While he does not try to impose his own essentially religious character as a general model for his patients or for other analysts, he nevertheless seems to owe a lot to his early mentors, here extended to uses probably not anticipated by them. All the same, many analysts, of whatever "spiritual" disposition, will find their horizons broadened by his message.

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