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PSYCHE, SELF AND SOUL

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Traditionally, psychoanalysts have sought to explore the dark side of the soul, the varieties of psychopathological experiences, ossified as taxonomies of disease, reminiscent of the 1486 Witches 'Hammer, to be exorcised with the help of various dynamic formulas. Few among the tribe have attempted to address the normal side of the spectrum and fewer yet have seen fit to delve into the spiritual side of the psyche. But that has been reversed lately, with analysts drawn more and more to the realm of spirituality. Foremost among the seekers of the soul is analyst and humanist Gerald J. Gargiulo, steeped in the thought of leading Western philosopher and spiritual sages such as Meister Eckhart, as well as the echoes of this tradition in the works of analysts such as Winnicott, Grotstein, Green and Roustang. His represents an appreciation of the total human person, a spirit, a mind, and a body, and informs an approach that seeks a meaningful and-personal connection to the sufferer who seeks therapy.

This enlightened approach is beautifully illustrated in a case history in chapter eight, "Reflections, Musings, and Interventions: A Personal Communication on Psychoanalytic Work." The author is honest both with his analysand and with himself, willing to search his soul for wrong moves but able to stay the course and in the end guide the person to a resolution of his conflicts and a happier life. The guiding principle of Gargiulo's psychoanalytic method is given full expression in the preceding chapters, of which the titles alone speak volumes: "Language, Love, and Healing," and "Empathy and Reverie: The Various Ways of 'Knowing the Other.'" In fact, while the book is a compilation of various essays and addresses, what emerges is a unifying vision of a genuine therapist true to his calling: to labor for understanding of his patients and their welfare.

Moreover, Gargiulo builds an important bridge to the poets. It will be remembered that in his foundational work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud proudly traced his legacy, the discovery of the unconscious and the

psychoanalytic method, to the poets like Friedrich Schiller and the romantic writer Ludwig Borne. The dream, with its affinity to poetic tropes, such as metaphor and synecdoche, its ability to dramatize emotions by means of visual imagery and linguistic homophony, is not just the dreamer's poetic rendering of his current traumatic events and past childhood experiences. It is also the model of the so-called symptom (Lothane, 1983) and the manifestation of what Gargiulo calls "the playful intelligence," a clear allusion to Winnicott. Winnicott's idea of the psychoanalytic playground, or transitional space, reflects the approach that the analytic process is a continual interaction between two minds working in unison, the analyst's and the analysand's, thus creating a bridge between methodological concepts developed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Reik's listening with the third ear and Isakower's analyzing instrument (Lothane, 1981).

Perhaps the most intriguing and challenging essay is "Authority, the Self, and the Psychoanalytic Experience." I shall proceed with a two-pronged discussion here: 1) issues of terminology which are a critique of the field rather than Gargiulo; and 2) his ideas about authority in therapy. The word "self," which also appears in the title, has become a term of obfuscation among analysts. If it means anything, then, on Gargiulo's own showing in this essay, it is but a synonym of the word person, as in the expression self and other, or me and you, or, as in Buber, the primary combination words I-Thou. The word "self" in the title of the book, appearing in the company of psyche and soul, suggests something else that eludes me. One who reined and mystified the word self is none other than Kohut, who does not cloud Gargiulo's skies, even as he makes a reverent bow in the direction of the other great obfuscator, Lacan. The self and the other in the analytic encounter, the analysand and the analyst, the sufferer and the healer, are not two selves but two persons engaged in an interpersonal situation. And here I must extol the virtues of the nearly forgotten American psychiatrist. Harry Stack Sullivan, who put the word interpersonal on the map. Why then speak, as Gargiulo does in chapter nine, of "Anna O: An English Objects Relation Approach"? Why not an American interpersonal approach, when what we want to talk about is relations between people? Whose English is it anyway? I do not know how this objectionable object-speak ever began, but it is a gratuitous misnomer, because: firstly, a person is not an object; secondly, objects, for example, the book and the

desk it is lying on, do not have any relations with each other except the static fact that the book is on the desk; thirdly, at least when Freud used the term in his 1905 "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" he wrote: Liebesobjekt, or love-object, the cognate of instinctual drives. Those drives are not disembodied wishes floating in some ether but are forever devoutly aimed by the person who "has" them at another person with whom to consummate them. For Freud, like M. Jourdain in Moliere's comedy who did not know he spoke prose, was, mirabile dictu, a closet Sullivanian: he practiced interpersonal psychoanalysis and didn't even know it, because he never heard the word interpersonal spoken into his ears (Lothane, 1997). I think it was Fairbairn who first created the straw man of desires, that is, those accursed drives, without a desirer. But it was Greenberg and Mitchell; who reaped all the benefits of this polemic. The latter still seems to be haunting Gargiulo; but he is merely paying for the sins of the fathers.

The real thing is what he says about who retains the interpretive authority in the analytic situation, the analysand or the analyst, and here he gives free rein to his existential impulse. He inveighs against the rigid conception that the analyst is the privileged knower while the analysand is seemingly doomed blindly to repeat his dependent infantile transference onto the supposedly all-knowing analyst. Clearly, that won't do for Gargiulo, and rightly so. In his existential quest, Gargiulo traces the essential give and take in the analytic situation to the fact that the analysis triply invested: he is a real person, a transference person, and a new person for the analysand. The analysand may desire the analyst in an infantile way, but as a real person, he is not father substitute or mother substitute of any other substitute. But he is also new: the analysand has just not met anybody like that ever before in his life: that's how new the analyst is. The rest is their conversation, on many levels- the conscious, the unconscious; the concrete, the metaphorical; the mendacious and the truthful. Without invoking ethics, Gargiulo comes very close to defining the analyst as an ethical authority, not an interpretive authority, because the patient can say, with Correggio upon seeing Leonardo's work: anch 'io sono pittore, I can interpret, too, you know. As far as I am concerned: every intervention is an intrusion and every interpretation is a delusion. The true sense of a symptom, as I claim, is interpersonal: it is in the interaction between the two interlocutors (Lothane, 199/).

A seasoned clinician and a wise man, Gargiulo makes you listen to an important message about life, love, and therapy. I highly recommend this book to psychoanalysts, professionals in neighboring disciplines, and anyone with an interest in psychoanalysis. It will stir your heart and inspire you to rethink some of the recurrent facets of mind that have been with us since the birth of philosophy a few thousand years ago.

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