English Summaries

Phantom and Crypt – The Psychoanalysis of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok

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ESSAYS

Carlo Bonomi, Nicholas Rand: Psychoanalysis, Language and Deconstruction in the Work of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok

Though psychoanalysis has tended to disappear from departments of psychiatry in the USA, it has gained increasing prominence in literature departments in the academy. Bonomi and Rand discuss this shift as they review the work of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, recently defined by Elisabeth Roudinesco as an alternative French trend to Jacques Lacan. The discussion then turns to the work's phenomenological basis, its continuity with Sandor Ferenczi's thought, its difference from the project of Lacan himself, and its disparity from both the psychoanalytic mainstream of the 1970s and the deconstructive philosophy of Jacques Derrida. Particular light is shed on Abraham's theory of disasters or symbolic operations that occur as attempts to overcome threats of disintegration. This new conception unites diverse symbolic products such as neurotic symptoms, literary and artistic works. Interpreting symbols psychoanalytically amounts to looking for the underlying 'original' obstacle whose readable marks are yet contained within the livable solution, the symbol.

Keywords: *psychoanalysis, deconstruction, Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, Nicolas Abraham, Maria Torok, phenomenology, death instinct, introjection, the third, symbol, trauma, family secret*

Nicolas Abraham: Time, Rhythm, and the Unconscious – The Delineation of a Psychoanalytic Aesthetics

The author the essay aims to outline a psychoanalytic aesthetics. He raises the question whether psychoanalysis "can help us understand the mysterious fabric

of art" and "suggests aesthetic criteria that would permit us to distinguish between true inspiration and clever contrivances". Abraham, translator as well as a professor of aesthetics and philosophy searches for answers by analyzing a special field of art, the phenomenon of rhythm. Abraham's approach links Husserlian phenomenology and the psychoanalytic theory of the genesis of temporality. Temporality plays a fundamental role in the constitution of the experience of rhythm itself. As an illustration of his thoughts, Abraham provides the psychoanalysis of a "simple rhythm" in *Goethe's* poem *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*.

Keywords: *affection, affect, genetic criticism, The Sorcerer's Apprentice by Goethe, prosody, phenomenology, psychoanalytic aesthetic rhythm, temporality, translation, unconscious, work of art*

Barbara Miklós, Mónika Takács: Verbarium: an analytic-poetic dictionary (The interpretation of "The Wolf Man" by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok)

Sergei Constantinovitch Pankeiev, the so-called "Wolf Man" underwent various forms of psychoanalysis during most of his adult life. He was Freud's most famous patient, a test case in the foundation of psychoanalysis (*The History of an Infantile Neurosis*). He was also analysed by Freud's disciple Ruth Mack Brunswick and supported by Muriel Gardiner as well as other analysts.

Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok spent five years "in the company" of the Wolf Man through an immutable collection of documents: the case studies and texts written by his analysts. In our paper we aim to present and contextualize Abraham and Torok's technique of re-reading the Wolf Man's "life-long poem", that is "unreadable" material due to the process of cryptonymy. Cryptonymy is a verbal procedure leading to the creation of a special text. The sole purpose of this text is to hide words that were meant to remain beyond comprehension. Words are manipulated like dried flowers in a *herbarium*. Verbarium (from the French word) *verbe* (word or verb) and *herbier* (herbarium) is a collection of the Wolf Man's words (cryptonyms), linking fantasy to trauma, fiction to reality – in several languages. The authors construct a dialogue in poetic terms- not an event – dream by dream and symptom by symptom at the base of the Wolf Man's "nightmare of the wolves".

Keywords: *archeonym, castration, cryptonymy, cryptonym, demetaphoresation, homophony, incorporation, neurosis, seduction, signifying chain, The Wolf Man*

Zoltán Dragon: Derrida's Specter – Abraham's Phantom, or Psychoanalysis as The Uncanny Kernel of Deconstruction

The aim of this paper is to trace the haunting effect of two texts by Jacques Derrida and disclose the cause of that effect. First I discuss J. Hillis Miller's bafflement and subsequent misreading of Derrida's rather enigmatic text, "Fors," and then read it in tandem with a similarly haunting-haunted text, *Specters of Marx*. This forms the basis of my endeavor to disclose the silenced traces that lead to the work of Nicolas Abraham, an old friend of Derrida's, whose name is simply foreclosed from the French philosopher's oeuvre even though he wrote two prefaces to Abraham's works (one of them being "Fors" – which curiously turns into an enigma for Miller). My aim, in other words, is to let the foreclosed trace speak and to see what it does to Derrida's deconstructionist project culminating in his later project of "hauntology".

Keywords: *hauntology, deconstruction, cryptonymy, crypt, uncanny, Wolf Man, J. Hillis Miller, Jacques Derrida, Nicolas Abraham*

Esther Rashkin: Unmourned dead, filtered history, and the screening of anti-Semitism in Kieślowski's *A Short Film About Killing*

A searing indictment of the death penalty, Krzysztof Kieślowski's *A Short Film About Killing* derives its power in large part from its stark juxtaposition of Jacek Lazar's brutal murder of a taxi driver with the Polish State's execution of Jacek for his crime – an act critics have consistently described as unmotivated and inexplicable. This essay explores how the film invites us to view it psychoanalytically, cinematographically, and historically as a multilayered narrative about personal and collective traumas that can be neither buried nor mourned. It begins by showing that Jacek's murderous act is motivated by an unutterable personal secret and an intrapsychic structure that prevents his grieving a lost love. The essay then reveals how the film embeds within this private tale the national trauma of Poland's oppression by the Nazis and Soviets during and after the Second World War. It concludes by elaborating the subtle ways in which the film reflects on Poland's still unsettled history of anti-Semitism. Opposition to capital punishment thus emerges as a screen for personal and public sagas involving pathological mourning and the murderous power of political and religious ideology.

Keywords: *Kieślowski, film, capital punishment, personal trauma, collective trauma, incorporation, crypt, intrapsychic structure, political repression, anti-Semitism, Lanzmann's Shoah*

WORKSHOP

Ferenc Erős: Tempting emotions: the phantoms of history

The article discusses the feeling of "uncanny" as we experience when we encounter with the phantoms of history in films and literary works. In the paper Abraham's and Maria Torok's theory of unmourned death and transgenerational phantoms is illuminated through films like Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985), Krzysztof Kieślowski's *A short film about killing* (1987) László Jeles Nemes's *With a little patience* (2006), Ferenc Török's 1945 (2017), and through the memoirs of the Hungarian writer Péter Nádas *Illuminating details* (2017).

Keywords: *uncanny, anxiety, Maria Torok, Nicolas Abraham, transgenerational phantom*

Barbara Miklós, Mónika Takács: "Listening to *The Book of Jonah*" – Translation and interpretation of Mihály Babits' poem *The Book of Jonah* by Nicolas Abraham

Nicolas Abraham emigrated from Hungary to France in 1938 at the age of 19. *The Book of Jonah* – both as a biblical story and a piece of art by the outstanding Hungarian poet Mihály Babits – played an essential role in his ouvre. Abraham translated the poem into French and created a psychoanalytic interpretation of the text, entitled *The case of Jonah*. Our paper aims to present and illustrate Abraham's original method of "laying down the poem on the couch" utilizing his own theory of "Psychoanalytic Aesthetic" as a tool of interpretation. Abraham found a substantive similarity between the translation, the interpretation and the analyst's act of listening to the associations his patients perform on the couch. In The case of Jonah, the poem is treated as a patient, listened to its unconscious messages and the story of the main character is interpreted as a development process of a child up to puberty. The maturation process of the analyst is presented as well.

Keywords: *development, introjection, instinct, psychoanalytic aesthetics, The book of Jonah, translation*

Antal Bókay: Phantom, Crypt, Apparition – Abraham's Self-concept Based on Hamlet

Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok sometime in the 1960s, early 70s developed a radically new psychoanalytic understanding of the self. Their central new idea was

that the personal unconscious is not the final base of our personal life. In addition to the unconscious level of the psyche, the human individual unavoidably carries within itself the traces of repressed memories of events of parents or other important figures often happening before birth of the child. Shakespeare's Hamlet is a direct example, a kind of model of this process. After Freud's Oedipal interpretation, Lacan's mother-centred understanding Abraham suggested that the real central force in Hamlet's indecision was the transference of an unspeakable secret of the murdered king. This transferred secret, the repressed memory of someone else's acts which were unconsciously integrated, transferred into the individual as hidden inner objects, in a kind of crypt housing phantoms, words, cryptonyms. Abraham brought into analysis the whole play together with us, the audience. Besides his analysis he added an extra scene attached to the end of the original play where the ghost of Hamlet and the ghost of Hamlet's father return and the phantomic repression finally solved. The concept of his Hamlet interpretation were connected to and allowed to develop, redefine other important psychoanalytic ideas like the function of dual-union, the concept of introjection and incorporation and also a new approach the melancholy.

Keywords: *Hamlet, ghost, secret, introjection, incorporation, crypt, phantom, melancholy*

ARCHIVES

Kata Lévy: Freud's last summer "before the upcoming end of the world"
(Foreword by **Anna Borgos**)
Kata Lévy's recollection of Freud's visit to Budapest in the summer of 1918.

Additions to Sándor Ferenczi's biography (Foreword by **Ferenc Erős** and **Judit Szekacs-Weisz**)
Zsófia Ferenczi's recollections of his brother, Sándor Ferenczi.
A letter from Ladislaus Vajda (Sándor Ferenczi's nephew) to Michael Bálint.

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