

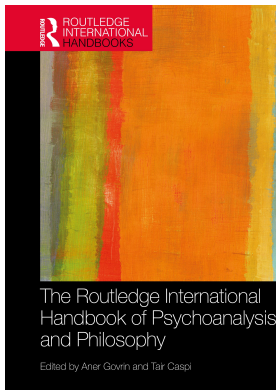
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HEGEL'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PSYCHOANALYSIS

Theory of Mind, Dialectics, and Projective Identification

Jon Mills

The psychic process known as “projective identification” has become a familiar tenet of psychoanalytic doctrine. The term was coined by Melanie Klein in 1946¹ where it was conceived as an aggressive discharge of certain portions of the ego *into* an external object, the aim of which is to dominate or consume certain aspects of the object's contents in order to make it part of the ego's own internal constitution. Not only has the introduction of this concept revolutionized Kleinian theory, further developments have paved the way toward its progressive application in understanding a number of mental processes, pathologies, and clinical encounters. To be sure, projective identification may be viewed in multiple fashions: (1) as a general process of mental activity, from unconscious structure to conscious thought, (2) as a defensive maneuver motivated by intrapsychic conflict, and (3) as an intersubjective dynamic affecting object relations, especially the process of therapy. But with a few noteworthy exceptions (see Bion, 1959), projective identification has been largely overlooked as a basic element of psychic organization.

Although largely unknown to psychoanalytic discourse, Hegel was the first philosopher to articulate the process of projective identification. In fact, Hegel anticipated many key psychoanalytic insights that Freud was to make more intelligible nearly one hundred years later (Mills, 1996, 2002). It is my intention throughout this chapter to highlight the normative functions of projective identification and show how it is an indispensable ontological feature underlying all mental activity. Through a proper appreciation of Hegel's logic of the dialectic, projective identification may be seen as the most elementary process that governs both unconscious and conscious life, a dynamic that brings Hegel into dialogue with Klein, Bion, and contemporary psychoanalytic thought.

Hegel's Logic of the Dialectic

Hegel's philosophy of mind or spirit (*Geist*) rests on a proper understanding of the ontology of the dialectic. Hegel refers to the unrest of *Aufhebung* – customarily translated as “sublation,” a dialectical process continuously annulled, preserved, and transmuted. Hegel's use of *Aufhebung*, a term he borrowed from Schiller but also an ordinary German word, is to be distinguished from its purely negative function whereby there is a complete canceling or drowning of the

lower relation in the higher, to also encompass a preservative aspect. Unlike Fichte's meaning of the verb *aufheben*, defined as: to eliminate, annihilate, abolish, or destroy, Hegel's designation signifies a threefold activity by which mental operations at once cancel or annul opposition, preserve or retain it, and surpass or elevate its previous shape to a higher structure. This process of the dialectic underlies all operations of mind and is seen as the thrust behind world history and culture. It may be said that the dialectic is the *essence* of psychic life, for if it were to be removed, consciousness and unconscious structure would evaporate.

When psychoanalysis refers to dialectics, it often uses Fichte's threefold movement of thought in the form of thetic, analytic or antithetic, and synthetic judgments giving rise to the popularized (if not bastardized) phrase: thesis-antithesis-synthesis² – a process normally and inaccurately attributed to Hegel;³ or it describes unresolvable contradictions or mutual oppositions that are analogous to Kant's antinomies or paralogisms of the self.⁴ It is important to note that Hegel's dialectic is not the same as Kant's, who takes contradiction and conflict as signs of the breakdown of reason, nor is it Fichte's, who does not explicate the preservative function of the lower relation remaining embedded in the higher. Furthermore, when psychoanalysts and social scientists apply something like the Fichtean dialectic to their respective disciplines, the details of this process are omitted. The presumptive conclusion is that a synthesis cancels the previous moments and initiates a new moment that is once again opposed and reorganized. But the synthesis does not mean that all previous elements are preserved, or that psychic structure is elevated. In fact, this form of dialectic may lead to an infinite repetition of contradictions and conflict that meets with no resolve.

Hegel's dialectic essentially describes the process by which a mediated dynamic forms a new immediate. This process not only informs the basic structure of his *Logic* which may further be attributed to the general principle of *Aufhebung*, but this process also provides the logical basis to account for the role of negativity within a progressive unitary drive. The process by which mediation collapses into a new immediate provides us with the logical model for understanding the dynamics of projective identification. An architectonic process, spirit invigorates itself and breathes its own life as a self-determining generative activity that builds upon its successive phases and layers which form its appearances. Spirit educates itself as it passes through its various dialectical configurations ascending toward higher shapes of self-conscious awareness. What spirit takes to be truth in its earlier moment is realized to be merely one appearance among many appearances. It is not until the stage of Absolute Knowing as conceiving or conceptual understanding that spirit finally integrates its previous movements into a synthetic unity as a dynamic self-articulated complex whole.

Hegel's use of mediation within the movements of thought is properly advanced in the *Science of Logic* (1812) as well as the *Encyclopaedia Logic* (1817) which prefaces Hegel's anthropological and psychological treatment of spirit in the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817/1830). In the *Logic*,⁵ thought initially encounters Being which moves into Nothing and then develops into Becoming, first as the "passing over" into nothing, second as the "vanishing" into being, and third as the "ceasing-to-be" or passing away of being and nothing into the "coming-to-be" of becoming. Becoming constitutes the mediated unity of "the unseparatedness of being and nothing" (*SL*, p. 105). Hegel shows how each mediation leads to a series of new immediates which pass over and cease to be as that which has passed over in its coming to be until these mediations collapse into the determinate being of *Dasein* – its new immediate. Being is a simple concept while Becoming is a highly dynamic and complex process. Similarly, *Dasein* or determinate being is a simple immediacy to begin with which gets increasingly more complicated as it transitions into Essence and Conceptual Understanding. It is in this early shift from becoming

to determinate being that you have a genuine sublation, albeit as a new immediate, spirit has a new beginning.

In Hegel's treatment of consciousness as pure thought represented by the *Logic* (1812), as well as his treatment of history in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) and anthropology and psychology in the *Encyclopaedia* (1817/1830), spirit – whether it be the mind of each individual or the collective psyche of the human race – continues on this circular albeit progressive path conquering each opposition it encounters, elevating itself in the process. Each mediation leads to a new beginning, and spirit constantly finds itself confronting opposition and overcoming conflict as it is perennially engaged in the process of its own becoming. In the *Logic*, the whole process is what is important as reason is eventually able to understand its operations as pure self-consciousness; however, in its moments, each mediation begets a new starting point that continually re-institutes new obstacles and dialectical problems that need to be mediated, hence eliminated. But thought always devolves or collapses back into the immediate.

This dynamic is a fundamental structural constituent that offers systematic coherency to Hegel's overall philosophy of spirit which is furthermore germane to the specific issue at hand. The individual psyche – as well as culture itself – mediates opposition and conflict it generates from within its own evolutionary process and attempts to resolve earlier problems unto which new immediacy emerges. Mediation is therefore an activity performed from within the mind and between interpersonal forces that in turn make new experience possible. As we will see, projective identification becomes the basic structural process of dialectical progression that is responsible for the epigenesis of unconscious organization, consciousness, the ontology of the self, and civilization at large – a dynamic responsible for both maturation and psychic decay.

The Structure of Mind

Hegel's theory of mind is comprehensively outlined in the *Philosophy of Spirit* (*Philosophie des Geistes*) which is the third part of the *Encyclopaedia*.⁶ Unbeknownst to psychoanalysis, Hegel provides one of the first theories of the unconscious. He gives most of his attention to the unconscious within the stage of presentation (*Vorstellung*) in the context of his psychology, thus belonging to the development of theoretical spirit. Here Hegel refers to a “nocturnal abyss within which a world of infinitely numerous images and presentations is preserved without being in consciousness” (*EG* § 453). Hegel explains that the nightlike abyss is a necessary presupposition for imagination and for higher forms of intelligence.⁷ While these more complex forms of the psychological would not be possible without the preservation of images within the unconscious mind, the unconscious is given developmental priority in his anthropological treatment of the soul (*Seele*).

For Hegel, the unconscious soul is the birth of spirit which developmentally proceeds from its archaic structure to the higher order activities of consciousness and self-conscious rational life. Like Freud (1926a) who shows that the ego is a differentiated portion of the id,⁸ the conscious ego is the modification and expression of unconscious activity. For Hegel, the soul is not an immaterial entity (*EG* § 389), but rather the embodiment of its original corporeality, the locus of natural desire (*Begierde*) or drive (*Trieb*).⁹ As the general object of anthropology, Hegel traces the dialectical emergence of the feeling soul from the abyss of its indeterminations; at first unseparated from its immediate universal simplicity, it then divides and rouses itself from its mere inward implicitness to explicit determinate being-for-self. Through a series of internal divisions, external projections, and re-internalizations, the soul gradually emerges from its immediate physical sentience (*EG* § 391) to the life of feeling (*EG* § 403) to the actual ego of consciousness (*EG* § 411), which further becomes more refined and sophisticated through

perceptual understanding, ethical self-consciousness, and rational judgment, the proper subject matter of the *Phenomenology*.

For Hegel, spirit begins, like ego development for Freud,¹⁰ as an original undifferentiated unity that emerges from its immediate self-enclosed universality to its mediated determinate singularity. This is initiated through a dialectical process of internal division, self-externalization, and introjection as the reincorporation of its projected qualities back into its interior. Here lies the basic process of projective identification: unconscious spirit splits off certain aspects of its interior, externalizes its Self, and then reconstitutes itself by identifying with its own negated qualities which it re-gathers and assimilates back into its unconscious framework. Through the complexities of mediation and sublation, spirit achieves higher levels of unification until it arrives at a full integration of itself as a complex whole, uniting earlier finite shapes within its mature universality.

Negativity, aggressivity, and conflict are essential forces to the thrust of the dialectic, a process Klein emphasizes in her characterization of ego development. The sleep of spirit is an undifferentiated void with the inner ambience of violence. It experiences the primeval chaos of an intense longing to fill its empty simplicity, desire being its form and content, the desire to fill the *lack*. Through the drive toward self-differentiation, unconscious spirit defines itself as a determinate being for itself and thus effects the passage from the universal to the particular, from a unity which lacks difference to differentiated plurality and singularity. There is an antediluvian cycle of negativity that we may say belongs to the prehistory of conscious spirit, a circular motion of the drives that constitute the dialectic of desire. Awakening as sensation from its nocturnal slumber, the feeling soul remains the birthplace of what is the substance of the “heart,” for the abyss is the midwife of mind.

The Dialectical Structure of the Unconscious

As we have seen, the dialectic informs both the inner organization and the content of the unconscious. It is the dialectic that provides the Self with intrapsychic structures and functional operations that can never be reduced or localized, only conceptualized as pure activity. This pure activity of the dialectic as Self is constantly evolving and redefining itself through such movement. The unconscious forms of spirit (initially as feeling soul and then as ego) are thereby necessarily organized around the dialectical activity of the abyss. These structural operations, however, are not mechanistic, reductionistic, or physical as in the natural science framework often attributed to traditional psychoanalysis.¹¹ They are mental, telic, and transcendental, always reshaping spirit's inner contours and the internalized representational world within the night of the mind. Therefore, as a general structure, the unconscious is *aufgehoben*.

For Hegel, the unconscious is pure *process*, a changing, flexible, and purposeful activity of becoming. As the very foundation, structure, and organizing principles of the unconscious are informed by the movement of the dialectic, the architecture of the abyss is continually being reshaped and exalted as each dialectical conflict is sublated by passing into a new form, that in turn restructures, reorganizes, and refurbishes the interior contours of the core self. Therefore, the structural foundations of the self are never static or inert, but always in dialectical movement – having its origin and source in the unconscious, revamping the texture in which spirit emanates. This self-generating dialectical movement of the unconscious is the evoking, responding, sustaining, and transcending matrix that is itself the very internal system of subjective spirit.

The concept of the self as subject in Hegel is of particular importance in understanding the unconscious nature of mind. Essentially, the stage-by-stage (phase) progression of the dialectic is expressed as an epigenetic theory of self-development. Through sublation, Hegel's notion of

the self encompasses a movement in which the subject is opposed to an object and comes to find itself in the object. This is exemplified by Hegel's treatment of the master-slave dialectic outlined in the *Phenomenology*. During the dialectical movement of spirit, the subject recognizes or discovers itself in the object. This entails the mediation of its becoming other to itself, with the reflection into otherness returning back to itself. The process of the development of the self is, like the soul, a process of differentiation and integration. As seen in the *Logic*, Being is characterized by an undifferentiated matrix which undergoes differentiation in the dialectical process of Becoming that in turn integrates into its being that which it differentiated through its projection, reclaiming it and making it part of its internal structure.¹² This is the very fabric of projective identification. The outcome of the integration is once again differentiated then reintegrated; unification is always reunification. Therefore, spirit comes to be what it already is, the process of its own becoming.¹³

Interfaces With Klein

Klein's theory of splitting has revolutionized the way we understand ego development. For Klein, the ego exists at birth plagued by anxieties characteristic of psychosis which it attempts to fend off and control through the primary defense mechanisms of splitting, projection, and introjection giving rise to the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions that mold object relations. While Klein refers to these defensive maneuvers as "mechanisms," they are not mechanistic. Ego activity is never fixed or static operations taking the forms of predetermined tropisms, rather psychic organization is the continuity of subjective temporal processes. It is more accurate to conceptualize these early mechanisms as defensive *process systems* comprised by the ego's intrapsychic relation to itself and its object environment, initially the maternal object. This makes ego development and object relations an intersubjective enterprise.

In her seminal essay, "Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms," Klein (1946) proclaims splitting as the original primordial defense, a process she started analyzing as early as 1929. Beset by the death drive (*Tödestrieb*), the immature ego deflects the destructive impulse by turning it against the object accompanied by oral-sadistic attacks on the mother's body thus giving rise to persecutory anxiety. Splitting is the very first in a series of defenses that are never completely separate from one another, hence forming the dialectical cycle we have come to label as projective identification. While Klein cogently articulates the gradual evolution and strengthening of the ego, she concedes that "so far, we know nothing about the structure of the early ego" (p. 4). Here Hegel is instructive for contributing to psychoanalytic theory.

As previously outlined, Hegel traces the dialectic course of the soul as a sentient feeling entity – at first a prenatal agent – only to gradually acquire more personal unity and organization as ego. It is important to note that both Klein and Hegel use the same word *Ich* to designate the personal agency of the ego – at first an unconscious constellation that later makes consciousness possible. Klein says very little about the prehistory of the ego prior to birth, yet she is suggestive.

The question arises whether some active splitting processes within the ego may not occur even at a very early age. As we assume, the early ego splits the object and the relation to it in an active way, and this may imply some active splitting of the ego itself.
(1946, p. 5)

Klein is correct in showing that splitting is the ego's original defensive activity despite the fact that she omits explaining how the ego is formed in the first place. This is presumably due to her scientific attitude guided by empirical considerations, but by way of Hegel's speculative

metaphysics, the logical progression of the dialectic clarifies this process. Through Hegel's logic, we can reasonably conclude that the ego exists prior to birth and is prepared by the unconscious activity of the soul lending increasing order to intrapsychic structure. Because the ego cannot simply materialize *ex nihilo*, it must emanate from a prior unconscious ground or abyss (*Ungrund*). The ego has a prenatal life which is developmentally prepared prior to conscious perception: unconscious experience precedes consciousness.

Not only does Hegel situate splitting at the inception of the soul's development, he demonstrates that splitting is the earliest activity of mind. Splitting becomes the prototype of mental process and remains a fundamental operation in the normative as well as the pathological functions of the psyche. The unconscious soul first undergoes an internal division or separation of its interior which it projects as an external object *within its own internality*, only to re-gather and again make it part of its inner constitution. This primary splitting activity is architectonic, thus forming the foundation for psychic growth. Since splitting is identified as the initial movement of the dialectic thus effecting its transition into mediatory relations, it becomes easy to see how splitting becomes the archetype of later ego activity which Klein emphasizes in her developmental framework. But unlike Klein (1946, 1955) who repeatedly tells us that the ego's first object is the mother's breast, it would follow that the ego's first object is itself – its own internality. Hegel does not contradict Klein's main theses, he only substantiates her theoretical innovations. The ego must first posit and set itself over its initial immediacy which it does through splitting.

In "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence," a posthumously published unfinished paper, Freud (1940 [1938]) addresses the notion of disavowal and the "alteration of the ego" that goes beyond his earlier treatment of splitting in cases of psychoses (1924, *SE*, 19, pp. 152–153) and fetishism (1927, *SE*, 21, pp. 155–156) which is now included within his general theory of neurosis. Freud, as does Klein, generally sees the conceptualization of splitting as a defensive process that is usually confined to the domains of conflict, while Hegel's emphasis on the internal divisibility of the soul makes splitting a generic process that may be applied to any mediatory aspect of division and negation within the mind. But in *New Introductory Lectures*, Freud (1933) is clear that splitting is a general ego operation: "the ego can be split; it splits itself during a number of its functions – temporarily at least. Its parts can come together again afterwards" (*SE*, 22, p. 58). Freud also alludes to an innate and normative function of splitting as it is applied to the synthetic processes of the ego. He states: "The synthetic function of the ego, though it is of such extraordinary importance, is subject to particular conditions and is liable to a whole number of disturbances" (1940, *SE*, 23, p. 276). While Freud emphasized the synthetic functions of ego unification in several places before (see *SE*, 1926a, 20, pp. 97–100, 1926b, 20, p. 196, 1933, 22, p. 76), which had always been an implicit part of his theory, Hegel shows that splitting is a basic psychic operation that may take on more pathological configurations throughout development, such as in the cases of psychotic and schizoid disorders articulated by Klein and her followers, or in pathological narcissism and borderline personality, a topic that occupies much of the literature today (see Kernberg, 1975; Masterson, 1981).

For Hegel, the ego is unconsciously implicit within the sentient feeling soul and is already a prenatal form of self-awareness. Both a sensuous and cognizing agent, unconscious spirit intuits itself as an "intro-reflected" or pre-reflective, non-propositional self-conscious being – intro-reflection being the process of unconscious spirit's immediate self-awareness and self-identification. In Hegel's discussion of the ego's actual emergence from its natural embodiment as soul, the ego has to confront its corporeal confinement and inwardness. He states: "It is through this *intro-reflection* (*Reflexion-in-sich*) that spirit completes its liberation from the form of *being*, gives itself that of *essence*, and becomes *ego*" (*EG* § 412, *Zusatz*). In its alteration from mere immediacy to determinate mediate being, the soul *senses* its Self as an impression, already containing the

rudiments of ego-awareness in its self-intuiting. In its ego explicitness, before the soul makes its final trajectory to consciousness, unconscious spirit has already undergone a splitting of its interior in manifold accounts by its own hands. In each incremental process of splitting that accompanies sublation there is an internal division, projection, and (re)introjection of its particularization back into its internality. Each introjective maneuver is a re-incorporation of its projected interior that takes place through an identification with its alienated shape(s) it takes to be an exterior object however possessing its internal qualities. Such projective identification may be said to be the truncated recognition the soul has with itself through the process of intro-reflection – itself a preliminary form of unconscious self-consciousness – only that the ego has undergone a splitting as an element of defense against its unconsciously perceived conflict which subsists due to the negative tension of the dialectic.

As noted, this continual process of internal separation, projection, and introjection as re-incorporation is the general structural operation of projective identification. The ego projects its internality as alienation, comes to recognize and identify with its alienated qualities, then takes hold of and repossesses its earlier disavowed shapes. It is through this continual elevating process that both the content and the developmental hierarchy of the mind becomes more complex and sophisticated. Unconscious spirit comes to take itself as its own object through intro-reflection once it projects its interior as its exterior then “reflects upon it, takes back into its internality the externality of nature, idealizes [or cognizes] nature” (EG § 384, *Zusatz*), and thus effects a transition back into reunification. Spirit is continually engaged in this dialectical process in all its shapes, however at this level in the soul’s development, unconscious spirit displays an early form of self-recognition through its projective identification as mediated intro-reflection.

This model of unconscious self-consciousness as self-recognition becomes the logical template for Hegel’s theory of self-consciousness outlined in the dialectic of desire and recognition advanced in the *Phenomenology* (§§ 166–230). Although Hegel discusses desire and recognition in his phenomenological treatment of self-consciousness, it is already prepared in the anthropology as an ontological feature of unconscious spirit. The soul is desirous – the abyss is unconsciously self-aware, with drive (*Trieb*) and intro-reflection providing the logical prototype for desire and self-consciousness to emerge in conscious life. While both Freud and Klein see the ego as a more modified portion of the id, Hegel more clearly shows that consciousness is the manifestation of unconscious structure.

But why would the unconscious ego *need* to split itself in the first place? Here Klein and Hegel are on the same page. The ego’s original activity is one of negation: it defines itself in opposition to what it is not. Following Freud (1920), Klein speculates that splitting mechanisms arise in an effort to subvert the death drive which threatens the ego with internal destruction. Splitting is a defense against felt or perceived annihilation. As too for Hegel, unconscious spirit first encounters an inner negativity, aggressivity, or conflict that becomes the impetus for dialectical intervention. In fact, splitting itself is a violent cleaving operation that divides subject from object. For Klein, splitting disperses the destructive impulse, while for Hegel splitting is destructive – it destroys as it negates. But the destruction incurred by the canceling function of the dialectic is also preserved in the same moment as the ego sublates itself to a higher state. Splitting and projection highlight the negative side of the dialectic while introjection serves a synthetic function. The repetitive process of projective identification may be applied toward the general ascending thrust of sublation or succumb to contentious dichotomies that are mired in chaos. While the relationship between the death impulse and negation still remains equivocal, destruction is nevertheless a key element in the progressive unification of the ego.

In several works, Klein (1946, 1952) underscores the point that the ego has an orienting principle toward higher degrees of unification. Elsewhere she states: “Together with the urge

to split there is from the beginning of life a drive towards integration" (1963, p. 300). This is the affirmative and ongoing drive of the ego that forms the edifice of the Hegelian dialectic, a proclivity that inevitably strives for wholeness to which Klein herself endorses. Hegel's emphasis on holism anticipates Klein's (1960) advocacy for a well-integrated personality, the goal of which is to master early developmental frictions that arise from persecutory anxiety and its vicissitudes.

But for Hegel and Klein, there is a dual tendency for both progression and regression, elevation and withdrawal back to previous points of fixation. As Klein (1946) puts it, "the early ego largely lacks cohesion, and a tendency towards integration alternates with a tendency towards disintegration, a falling into bits" (p. 4). Hegel refers to this disintegration as a fixation and/or regression to the form of feeling – the original self-enclosed simple unity of the feeling soul, a dynamic responsible for "madness" (see *EG* §§ 403–408).¹⁴ Like Klein who stresses the primacy of developmentally working through the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, Hegel sees mental health as the ability to achieve holism through sublation: while feeling is never abandoned as such, it devolves into the higher instantiations of self-conscious rational thought. Even Klein (1963) herself says that "the urge towards integration, as well as the pain experienced in the process of integration, spring from internal sources which remain powerful throughout life" (p. 313). For Hegel, this would be tantamount to the labor of spirit, an arduous poignant crusade. If the subjective mind is not able to developmentally progress toward synthetic rational integration, then earlier primitive defensive constellations will persist unabated.

Bion on Thinking, Linking, and Phantasy

While Klein (1946) first defined projective identification as a defensive process expressed through splitting and schizoid mechanisms, she later (1957) suggested that envy was intimately imbedded in projective identification, a process by which the ego forces itself into the psychic reality of the other in order to destroy its coveted attributes. Shortly after this theoretical modification, Bion (1959) distinguished normal from pathological forms of projective identification which has further led revisionist Kleinians to articulate many distinct yet related modes of projective-identificatory processes (Hinshelwood, 1991).

Bion, himself analyzed by Klein, was the first psychoanalyst to recognize normative functions of projective identification imbedded in normal thought processes. Bion (1959, 1962a, 1962b) distinguished between two alternative aims of projective identification marked by difference in the degree of violence attached to the mechanism. The first, *evacuation*, is characterized by its forceful entry into an object, in phantasy, as a means of controlling painful mental states directed toward relief and often aimed toward intimidating or manipulating the object. This is a pathological manifestation of projective identification. The second, *communication*, is a more benign attempt to communicate a certain mental content by introducing into the object a specific state of mind, a function often seen in the process of *containing* – a process in which one person contains some part of another. This is a normative function. It may be argued that evacuation is itself a form of communication, thereby the distinction becomes blurred; but for our purposes, evacuation highlights the thrust, intensity, and urgency of the need to expel psychic content. In all likelihood, evacuation and communication operate in confluence separated only by their motives and force of violence enacted through projection.

In his influential essay, "Attacks on Linking," Bion (1959) presents his mature view of projective identification as a form of communication taking on both normal and abnormal valences. Drawing on Klein, pathological forms fall within a range of *excess*, such as the degree of aggressivity of splitting, hatred, intrusion, omnipotent control and fusion with the object, the amount of loss or defusion of the ego, and the specific awareness of destructive intent. Normal

projective-identificatory processes, however, play an adaptive role in social reality and are ordinary operations of communication and empathy which furthermore transpire within the process of thinking itself.

Bion's (1957) model of thinking, linking, and phantasy is preliminarily addressed in his effort to differentiate psychotic from non-psychotic personalities with special emphasis on the awareness of psychic reality. For Bion (1954), drawing on Klein's (1930) and later Hanna Segal's (1957) work on symbol formation in the development of the early ego, the awareness of psychic reality is contingent upon the capacity for verbal thought derived from the depressive position; yet this process goes back even further. Linking – the capacity to form relations between objects or mental contents – serves a functional purpose, a process derived from the paranoid-schizoid position. Bion (1957, 1959) envisions psychotic organization to be largely plagued by violent attacks on the ego – particularly on the links between certain mental contents – and the awareness of inner reality itself. As a result, the schizophrenic lives in a fractured world of terror where mental links are “severed” or “never forged.” Phantasy formation is fragmented, persecutory, and horrific. Attempts at linking conjunctions or making connections between objects are all but destroyed, and when minute links exist, they are impregnated with perversion and cruelty.

What is of importance in understanding the normative functions of projective identification is how Bion conceives of the phenomenology and evolution of thinking, a process that brings him in dialogue with Hegel. Bion (1957) informs us that “some kind of thought, related to what we should call ideographs and sight rather than to words and hearing exists at the outset,” a capacity derived within the non-psychotic part of the embryonic psyche (p. 66). He continues to tell us that this crude level of thinking “depends on the capacity for balanced introjection and projection of objects and, *a fortiori*, on awareness of them” (p. 66). Ultimately for Bion, both pre-verbal and verbal thought necessarily requires an awareness of psychic reality.

Throughout the course of his theoretical contributions, Bion explicates three phases in the process of thinking. The first relies on the presumption of *a priori* knowledge whereby an innate *preconception* meets a *realization* in experience which results in a *conception*, the product of thought (Bion, 1959, 1962a). Bion's notion of preconceptions is similar to Segal's (1964) notion of unconscious phantasy used as a means of generating hypotheses for testing reality. A preconception may be understood as a predisposed intuition of and expectancy for an object, such as a breast, which “mates” with the realization of the actual object in experience, thus forming a conception.

The second phase depends on the infant's capacity to tolerate frustration. A positive conception is generated when a preconception meets with a satisfying realization. When a preconception encounters a negative realization – absence, frustration ensues. Klein shows that when the immature ego encounters absence, it experiences the presence of a bad object, or perhaps more appropriately, a bad self-object experience. Bion, however, extends this idea further and posits that the experience of absence is transformed into a thought. The notion of absence, lack, or nothingness is conceptually retained. Yet this process is contingent on the infant's ability to modulate frustration. If frustration tolerance is high, the generation of absence into a thought serves the dialectical function that presence is possible, viz. the absent object may appear or re-present itself at some later time in the future, such as the breast or bottle. For Hegel, affirmation and negation are dialectically conjoined, separated only by their moments. With application to Bion, nothing stands in opposition to being which, once realized, is expected to return. If the capacity to manage frustration is low, the experience of nothingness does not advance to the thought of an absent good object, but rather remains at the immediate level of the concrete bad object experienced in the moment which must be expelled through omnipotent evacuation.

Bion (1962a) believes that if this process becomes arrested, advances in symbol formation and thinking are deleteriously obstructed.

The third phase of thinking involves more advanced levels of projective identification which Bion (1962b) describes as the container-contained relationship. Here the infant has a sensory experience, feeling, or need which is perceived as bad which the infant wishes to banish. This type of projective identification evokes within the mother the same type of internal sensations experienced by the infant. If the mother is adequately well-balanced and capable of optimal responsiveness, what Bion calls *reverie*, she will be able to contain such feelings and transform them into acceptable forms which the infant can re-introject. Bion labels this process of transformation the *alpha-function*. In normal development, the container-contained relationship allows the infant to re-introject the transformed object into something tolerable which eventually results in internalizing the function itself. If successful, this process aids in the increased capacity to modulate frustration and developmentally strengthens the infant's cognitive capabilities to conceptualize and generate symbolic functions, which generally leads to the fortification of the ego. Not only does Bion breach the sharp schism between feeling and thought that has dogged philosophical rationalism, he shows how emotions are made meaningful within the broader conceptual processes of thinking (Spillius, 1988).

Hegel's Philosophical Psychology

Bion's theory of thinking is prefaced by Hegel's detailed analysis of the ontological processes of thought and the phenomenology of consciousness. In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel is concerned with articulating the ground, scope, and functional operations of thinking, reason, and the coming into being of pure self-consciousness, while the *Phenomenology of Spirit* comprehensively outlines the various appearances or shapes of individual and collective consciousness. Hegel's philosophical psychology is presented in his philosophy of subjective spirit outlined in the third division of his *Encyclopaedia*. Recall that Hegel discusses the role and function of the unconscious soul in the Anthropology which precludes the activities of conscious awareness. In the Psychology, he shows how the normative operations of thought, perception, attention, imagination, phantasy, memory, and concept formation are intimately associated with unconscious processes that are prepared by the soul or unconscious ego.

Subjective spirit expresses itself as cognition actively concerned with finding reason within itself (*EG* § 445). As the forms of theoretical spirit or intelligence unfold, the unconscious abyss is the primary domain of this activity. Hegel points out that intelligence follows a formal course of development to cognition beginning with (a) intuition or sensation of an immediate object (*EG* § 446), to (b) presentation (*EG* § 451) as a withdrawal into the unconscious from the relationship to the singularity of a presented object in consciousness and thus relating such object to a universal, leading to (c) thought (*EG* § 465) in which intelligence grasps the concrete universals of thinking and being as objectivity. In the stage of intuition as immediate cognizing, intelligence begins with the sensation of the immediate object, then alters itself by fixing attention on the object while differentiating itself from it, and then posits the material as external to itself which becomes intuition proper. The second main stage of intelligence as presentation is concerned with recollection, imagination, and memory, while the final stage in the unfolding of intelligence is thought which has its content in understanding, judgement, and reason.

By Hegelian standards, Bion's model of thinking appears rather simplistic; but in his defense, Bion (1962a) himself admits his theoretical system "differs from philosophical theory in that it is intended, like all psychoanalytical theories, for use . . . composed in terms of empirically verifiable data" (p. 306). However, Hegel is very clear that his speculative outlook is not at odds with

empiricism, instead “experience” becomes the standpoint of “*speculative thinking*.”¹⁵ In the *Philosophy of Nature* he also states: “Not only must philosophy be in agreement with our empirical knowledge of Nature, but the *origin and formation* of the Philosophy of Nature presupposes and is conditioned by empirical . . . science.”¹⁶ Like Bion, Hegel is concerned with articulating the inner meaning and ontology of thinking that applies to both normal development and disease.

Bion’s scheme is remarkably compatible with Hegel’s on many levels emphasizing: (1) the awareness of inner reality, (2) the nature of pre-conceptual mental activity, and (3) the process of realization as conceptual thought. In our discussion of Hegel’s theory of the soul, the unconscious ego attains for itself via *intro-reflection* a preliminary level of non-propositional, pre-reflective self-consciousness; that is, the nascent ego does not yet posit itself as a subject reflecting upon itself as an object, but rather is intuitively aware of its internal divisions and shapes that it sets over itself through its splitting activity. Such unconscious self-consciousness is the prototype for the process of consciousness. In fact, consciousness itself is a split off and projected instantiation of unconscious structure.

Unconscious intro-reflection corresponds to Bion’s notion of innate *a priori* knowledge in the form of preconceptions, yet for Bion this gets explained through encounters with realized or non-realized objects resulting in positive (satisfying) or negative (frustrating, non-gratifying) conceptions. Hegel’s epistemology derives from the logic of the dialectic, while Bion’s is merely presupposed yet verified through the subjective encounter. In order for conceptualization to occur, certain mental pre-conditions or configurations must be thought to exist prior to experience which are mobilized from the beginning. Through the principle of sufficient reason, there must be a ground to psychic life that precedes conscious experience, and this assumption remains a cardinal pillar of psychoanalytic doctrine.

For Hegel, the process of conceiving or conceptual thought is a complex achievement, an activity attained very early from Bion’s account. Bion’s notion of preconceptions would be explained by Hegel as the implicit realization of ideas or the Concept (*Begriff*) within the deep internal abyss of spirit – a process fully actualized in Absolute Knowing. Put in more accessible language, the unconscious ego generates pre-conceptual, pre-linguistic ideas belonging to its innate natural constitution, what Klein and Bion would contend are drive derivatives. But Hegel also locates pre-conceptual mentation within the realm of unconscious feeling, a position closely allied with Bion’s. Furthermore, both Hegel and Bion place primacy on the awareness of psychic reality – for Hegel, in the feeling soul, and for Bion, as a pre-condition for the process of thought and symbol formation to transpire. For both Hegel and Bion, awareness of inner reality is a necessary and universal condition for symbolization, phantasy, and language acquisition to occur.

Unconscious Intelligence

Hegel is very specific in tracing the intellectual development of the subjective mind, a process that has further implications for Bion and Klein. For Hegel, intelligence moves from sensation of its immediate material to attention, whereby it fixes the object as well as separates it from itself, to intuition as positing the object externally. At this point, the presentation of a certain object thrusts intelligence into its second main movement which has three corresponding sub-stages: (a) recollection, (b) imagination, and (c) memory. Presentation (*Vorstellung*) is implicit within intuition because attention is paid to two moments, namely feeling and the attending act, whereby an object is isolated and related to externally. Attention now becomes introspective and must *re-collect* the content intuited within itself, “within its *own space* and its *own time*” (EG § 452). This content initially appears as an image (*Bild*) which is taken up by the ego and disassociated from its external context in which intuition had occurred. Abstracted from the concrete

immediacy of intuition, the image becomes contingent or arbitrary and is but a fleeting moment since attention may focus on only one thing at a time.

Essentially, the ego internalizes its presented content by gathering up and separating the external image or impression and then making it part of its internal structure, but being only a transient impression it vanishes quickly from consciousness. "Intelligence is not, however, only the consciousness and the determinate being . . . ; recollected within it, the image is no longer existent, but is preserved unconsciously" (EG § 453). Here Hegel points to the underworld of spirit; intelligence is *not only* consciousness but is a "nocturnal abyss (*nachtlichen Schacht*) within which a world of infinitely numerous images and presentations is preserved without being in consciousness." Hegel specifically equates "intelligence as this unconscious abyss," thus forming the domains of two fundamental realities, the world of the deep and the world of consciousness.

This is the first textual mention of the unconscious within the Psychology, § 453, thus pointing to its relationship with consciousness. Hegel explains how unconscious presentations are preserved within certain "fibers" and "localities" of the abyss, recalcitrant, as they were, to the tangibility of conscious processes, subsisting as intrinsically concrete yet simple universals. Intelligence has "imperfect control of the images slumbering within the abyss" that cannot be recalled at will (EG § 453, *Zusatz*). Hegel himself even concedes that we have no means of knowing the full extent of all that which lies within the unconscious, suggesting that there are certain elements to psychic life that may resist incorporation into the dialectic. "No one knows what an infinite host of images of the past slumbers within him. Although they certainly awaken by chance on various occasions, one cannot, – as it is said, – call them to mind" (EG § 453, *Zusatz*). This concession on Hegel's part points to the inner autonomy of unconscious processes and organizations, presumably belonging to the soul – the unconscious ego, and how, from the standpoint of consciousness, they share a divided existence within spirit. This suggests that there is always an element of "chance," as Hegel says, and contingency that spirit can never completely overcome.

Imagination

What is of particular interest here is Bion's theory of ideographs in relation to Hegel's theory of imagination and phantasy. Bion (1957) postulates that something analogous to ideographs and sight are formed in the pre-verbal ego, presumably as early as the paranoid-schizoid position if not from birth onward. This would collaborate Hegel's theory of imagination and particularly his notion of symbolization. As noted before, unconscious images are preserved within the abyss of the mind, and due to the negative character of the dialectic as well as early developmental contingencies that mold ego development and object relations, they can take on many persecutory qualities and valences that are in need of evacuation. To recall an image is to repeat or re-present an intuition, and this is why it is free of immediate intuition because it is "preserved unconsciously." We recognize in immediate perception images we have experienced before. While consciousness isolates a specific feature, it relates it to the universality of unconscious recollection. Representation is therefore the synthesized product of relating an immediate intuition to an unconscious universal which becomes an object for consciousness. It is in imagination, however, where the process of relating one representation to others is intellectually carried out.

For Hegel, imagination mediates between intuition and thought. In imagination, representations are related to one another in the flow of consciousness which becomes linked with other images, affects, and thoughts as they are generated and manipulated by the ego's activity. Retrieved from the abyss, they are now technically under the ego's control, but with qualifications. Imagination also assumes three forms or sub-stages, namely: (a) reproductive imagination,

(b) associative imagination, and (c) phantasy. First, representations are reproduced from the abyss but fall under the direction of the ego as “the issuing *forth* of images from the ego’s own inwardness” which it now governs (EG § 455). The line of demarcation that divides the unconscious ego from the conscious ego is now breached: the ego vacillates between its unconscious and conscious counterparts.

Images are not only retrieved but issued forth from the ego itself, assuming that unconscious material is externalized into conscious apprehension, or as Hegel puts it, “excogitated . . . from the generality of the abyss.” This process immediately initiates an association of variegated images and features that are related to further presentations which may be either abstract or concrete and varying in content and form, thereby the range of intellectual connections expands. However, if links are attacked, as Bion informs us, such connections would be attenuated. But normatively within this multiplicity of associations, the synthetic functions of intelligence are already operative as thought implicit within intelligence. Imagination in general determines images. As a formal activity, the reproduction of images occurs “*voluntarily*” (EG § 455, *Zusatz*); it does not require the aid of an immediate intuition to effect this process as in the case of recollection which is dependent upon the presence of an intuition. Distinguished from recollection, intelligence is now “self-activating.”

Phantasy

Phantasy is the third movement of imagination where the ego fully manipulates its representations and images, drawing lines of interconnection where particulars are subsumed under universals and given the richer elaboration of symbols and signs which effect the ego’s transition to memory, the third stage of presentation. Phantasy is a subjective bond the ego has with its contents, and with the introduction of symbolization, allegory, and sign, imagination gains increased synthetic mastery over its presentations that are imbued with “reason.” Here the inwardness of intelligence “is *internally determined concrete subjectivity, with a capacity of its own deriving*” (EG § 456). Within fantasy, there is an imagined existence as hidden unconscious processes infiltrate the creative centers of subjectivity. This can be both monstrous and sublime.

While fantasy attains its most elaborate articulation in language and speech, it does not strictly require words in order to show itself. This may be achieved by the mind’s manipulation of its own operations with respect to both content and cognitive functions, such as the confluence of certain feeling states attached to interrelated images. In fact, fantasy is the *a priori* condition for language, it is a pre-linguistic organization that precedes organized conceptual thought.¹⁷ Here Hegel’s position is Kleinian: phantasy precedes concept formation. While Klein, Bion, Segal, and others focus upon the content, motives, and qualitative attributes underlying the phenomenology of phantasy, Hegel clarifies the ontological processes that make phantasy possible.

Phantasy both symbolizes and engenders signs. Initially it subsumes singulars under a universal through symbolization, but because the immediate content is both a particularization and a universal, interpretation remains ambiguous. Phantasy becomes a central operation in unconscious production, a spewing forth of impulses and desires from the wishing well of the abyss. It may be suspended in space and time, conform to the abyss’s will through regression or withdrawal irrespective of the ego’s counter-intentions, and warp objective reality to the tone of the ego’s own subjective caprice. This is why images may be either disturbing or pleasing. The “*symbolizing, allegorizing or poetical power of the imagination*” (EG § 456) is not confined to the mere subjective however, it may take an external objective referent as the embodiment of its creativity. This move constitutes “the phantasy of sign making” (EG § 457).

Through signification, intelligence is concerned with unifying the relations between determinate content and what it signifies universally. The synthesis of fantasy is the unity of the sign with the universal and its self-relation. Hegel states, “in phantasy intelligence has being, for the first time, not as an indeterminate abyss and universal, but as a singularity, i.e. as concrete subjectivity, in which the self-relation is determined in respect of being as well as universality” (EG § 457). This statement suggests that universality itself is a sort of abyss, in that all particularity is lost in it, whether this be the soul's initial immersion with and undifferentiation from nature or its subsumption in universal spirit. Such unification of the sign with universality is seen by spirit as its own activity that is internal and proper to it. Here intelligence gives itself being which is now within its own capacity to do. Not to be underestimated in its importance, the sign “adds proper intuitability” to images as an objective existent (EG § 457). While the symbol refers to the intuition of the content and its relation to its essence and Concept, the sign *designates* meaning in which the content of intuition becomes dissociated to what it signifies (EG § 458). In symbolic phantasy, intelligence pays attention to the given content of images, but in sign phantasy it replaces imagined universality with objective affirmation – the presented universal is liberated from the content of images. Hegel tells us:

The *sign* is a certain immediate intuition, presenting a content which is wholly distinct from that which it has for itself; it is the *pyramid* in which the alien soul is ensconced and preserved.

(EG § 458).

Hence intelligence proceeds from the pit to the pyramid, the soul sublated as intelligence gains more mastery over its self-designating operations. The content of intuition becomes “irrelevant” to what it signifies. Spirit may now focus on the signified universal rather than on the particular features of its intuited content. But before its final transition to memory, imagination must cancel its subjectivity, its internality, and give itself objective being. In this way it unifies “the universal and being, one's own and what is appropriated, inner and outer being, are given the completeness of a unit” (EG § 457). These operations belong to the mature liberated ego, a developmental progression from the primitive functions of unconscious phantasy guided by archaic forces.

Intelligence goes beyond the sign to understanding its meaning. With each new immediate intuition, intelligence moves from unconscious determinateness which transforms intuitions into images, images into representations, representations into associations, and is thus raised to the level of objective existence and self-determining being as sublatedness – a normative process conforming to the dialectic of projective identification. Intelligence is now presented (as presenting itself) with a “*tone*” from the unconscious soul “which intelligence furnishes from the anthropological resources of its own naturalness, the fulfillment of the expressiveness by which inwardness makes itself known” (EG § 459). Sound instantiates itself further in speech, and as the interrelations of words, in a system of language which endows the sensations, intuitions, and representations with a “second determinate being” that sublates the immediacy of the first. Spirit no longer needs the constant presence of external signs; when they vanish as ephemeral phenomena, intelligence draws upon its inner meaning and “inner symbolism” as it generates and relates to its own processes. Intelligence remains active, it confers meaning through sounds and words and as such becomes a sublated intuition for itself. Networks of meaningful relations are externalized as signs, and when they disappear the mind must reconstitute their significance through its own self-relating activity. Imagination first makes visible unconscious processes in the form of images, then manipulates their relations through phantasy, conferring symbolization

and assigning meaning – the name, a word. When the name vanishes, imagination either must create a new name for its set of relations, or it must recollect a previous name and its meaning and attach it to new associations. This requires memory.

Intelligence has moved from its initial task of internalizing intuitions, to its externalization of the abyss through imagination, to which it takes its next shape as memory, the task of which is to integrate its previous two movements. While intelligence gains greater dynamic unity in verbal, reproductive, and mechanical memory, Hegel sees theoretical spirit through to its end, viz. to thought as understanding, judgement, and formal reason. Thought knows itself, it *re-cognizes* itself which achieves its fullest logical elaboration as pure thinking: thought thinking about itself and its operations. While these are the greater faculties of spirit, they need not concern us here. Bion's model of ideographs is given richer articulation by Hegel's analysis of imagination which has further implications for understanding unconscious phantasy.

We may say that the types of thoughts and conceptions Bion speaks of during the ego's early development of thinking, linking, and phantasy is not the type of conceptualizing belonging to formal intelligence or reason, but is instead associated to the *functions* objects serve. I believe the pre-verbal ego constructs meaning not through concepts or words, but through images, impressions, and/or sensory-tactile sensations that are internally processed in relation to a felt referent and related to objects encountered in phantasy, either real or imagined. Thought is originally the succession of sensory impressions imbued with emotional mediacy linked to functional meaning associated with objects of experience. What becomes encoded or imprinted on the psyche is the functional qualities, properties, attributes, and consequences of the presence and experience of objects. Under the influence of internal drives and their derivatives – such as wishes and their vicissitudes – the nascent ego constructs meaningful relations to objects through the functional attributions of phantasy which are subject to the anxieties and/or pleasure associated with its own internal impulses and subjectively perceived object attachments. Images and sensory experience related to objects are imbued with functional meaning, linked to associative affect or corresponding feeling states, recorded, and laid down as memory traces in the deep abyss of the unconscious which are called up when phantasy is mobilized.

We are justified, I believe, in further saying that the nascent ego performs such mediatory operations by attaching functional meaning to objects in the form of qualities and their related expectations which take on the signification of the affects evoked corresponding to gratifying or anxiety ridden associations. In effect, the ego assigns an object and the experience of such a task or job which is related to the quality and expectation it evokes, the represented meaning of which stands for the function the object serves. Thus, sensory impressions become the original contents for the earliest modes of thought, first having their origins in the prenatal activity of the unconscious mind where the embryonic ego senses its own internality along with the predisposed preconceptions belonging to its various constitutional pressures. In the beginning moments of conscious life, the ego forms meaningful associations to objects based on the functional qualities and evoked affective states mediated through phantasy, a process that becomes more robust during language acquisition and formal concept formation. What Hegel refers to as the function of symbols and signs, or what Bion calls ideographs, we may speculate occurs at the crudest level of conscious life if not before. While the incipient ego does not think in concepts or words, the experience of objects are dialectically mediated through projective identification in phantasy which signify various functional meanings. It is only when language is introduced that such mediatory relations acquire conceptual signification in the form of names and words.

We have seen the overwhelming presence and indispensable function of the nocturnal abyss throughout the stage of presentation, the necessary precondition for higher activities of mind

to become manifest. Presentations are fleeting and much of memory fades, but it becomes imprinted within the soul and wells up from imagination. Hegel explains:

The power of memory is replaced by an unchanging tableau of a series of images fixed in the imagination . . . Not only is spirit put to the torment of being pestered with a deranged subject matter, but whatever is learnt by rote in this manner is as a matter of course soon forgotten again. . . . What is mnemonically imprinted is as it were read off from the tableau of the imagination . . . and so really brought forth from within, rehearsed from the deep abyss of the ego.

(EG § 462)

As Hegel reminds us once again, intelligence is unconsciously constituted as ego. There can be no doubt about the importance of imagination and its relation to the abyss; spirit is as much dependent on imagination – especially phantasy – as it is on reason. In fact, their relationship is so intimate that it leads Hegel to say, even with stipulations, that “phantasy is reason” (EG § 457). Imagination therefore becomes the locus of the powers of the mind.

Conclusion: Toward Process Psychology

Hegel's anticipation of Klein's and Bion's theories of projective identification as the process of the self returning to itself due to its own self-estrangement adds to our understanding of both the normative and pathological processes of mind. In health and illness the ego projects certain aspects of the self onto the object world, which it then identifies with and finally re-introjects back into the subject. In effect, the self rediscovers itself in the product of its own projection and then reintegrates itself within itself as reunification. This is the generic structural movement of the Hegelian dialectic, whereby internal division, external projection, and re-incorporation function as a mediating and sublimating dynamic.

With the introduction of the Hegelian dialectic, psychoanalysis may enjoy new vistas and advances in theory, application, and technique (Mills, 2010). There is a preponderance of evidence in traditional and contemporary psychoanalytic theory to conclude that the mind in general and the unconscious in particular is dialectical both in its structural organization and its internal content.¹⁸ In general, psychoanalysis would contend that the dialectical modes of *Geist* are themselves differentiated and modified forms of the mind maintained through ego mechanisms of intentionality and defense.¹⁹ Klein herself, as well as all post-Kleinians, constantly refer to the dialectical forces of splitting accompanied by projection and introjection that are responsible for both good and bad self-object representations as well as the general division between the ego and the object and the internal polarities that maintain rigid antitheses struggling for reconciliation. Hegel's emphasis on psychic holism mirrors the general consensus among Kleinians that the ego strives for wholeness guided by an orienting principle aimed toward increased synthetic integration – the primary motive of sublimation. This is simply the dialectic of desire, the internal thrust of spirit that yearns for self-completion.

While Klein discovered projective identification, which further led Bion to advance the distinction between its normal and pathological variants, Hegel was the first to articulate the formal structural processes of projective identification having its source and origins within the unconscious mind. Since Bion, a less pejorative attitude toward patients' use of projective identification has been adopted among clinicians, which has further initiated attempts to define different aspects and subtypes of this phenomena differentiated by form and motive – such as the degree of control over the object, the attributes acquired, the need to protect certain positive qualities or

to avoid separation, their relation to splitting, the force of evacuation, communication, etc. – all subsumed under a general rubric (Spillius, 1988).

As we have seen, Hegel's philosophical depiction of projective identification has implications for understanding psychic structure, psychosis and schizoid mechanisms, linking, thinking, symbol formation, phantasy, and containers and change. More recently this concept has been given special attention in its relation to countertransference and empathy (see Ogden, 1982; Tansey & Burke, 1989). Generally we may say that within the context of therapy, the patient projects onto the therapist certain disavowed and repudiated internal contents which the therapist unconsciously identifies with, such as the behavioral fantasies, attributions, or personal qualities that are the objects of splitting, which the therapist then introjects as a function of his or her own ego, thus leading to conflicted inner states that the therapist must manage. If the therapist's countertransference reactions are too strong and/or remain unrecognized as the internalized projected attributions of the patient, s/he may potentially act out such negative states within the therapeutic encounter, thus potentially leading to further internal disruptions in both parties negatively affecting the intersubjective field. Seeing how such a process is dialectically informed may augur well for further advancements in theory and intervention.

Hegel's philosophy may be especially significant for the future of psychoanalysis. His logic of the dialectic adds systematic coherency and philosophical rigor to the theoretical speculations and empirical verity governing psychoanalytic investigation. For Hegel, psychic life is a burgeoning process of becoming: the reality of the inner world as well as that of nature and culture is a dialectical enterprise. If we are to espouse Hegel's great insight that reality – including every intellectual discipline – is about *process*, evolution, and change, then his implications for psychoanalysis may bring about a new relation between wisdom and science. Dialectical psychoanalysis becomes an auspicious sign for realizing the value of process psychology.

Notes

- 1 When Klein republished her 1946 paper, "Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms," in *Developments in Psycho-Analysis*, (London: Hogarth Press, 1952) she added the term 'projective identification' as a way of explaining the process of splitting in connection with projection and introjection (p. 300).
- 2 In his *Wissenschaftslehre* (§§ 1–3), Fichte discerns these three fundamental "principles" (*Grundsatz*) or transcendental acts of the mind. Cf. Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1794).
- 3 For example, see Donald Carveth's (1994) inaccurate assessment of Hegel's logic, p. 151.
- 4 Cf. Immanuel Kant (1781/1787), *Critique of Pure Reason*, Second Division: Transcendental Dialectic, Book II, Chapters I–II.
- 5 *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1812/1969). All references to Hegel's *Science of Logic* will refer to *SL* followed by the page number.
- 6 From the *Encyclopaedia*, M.J. Petry (Ed.), outlines Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit in *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit, Vol. 1: Introductions; Vol. 2: Anthropology; and Vol. 3: Phenomenology and Psychology*, (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978). Petry's edition provides a photographic reproduction of Hegel's original text published in 1830 along with the *Zusätze* added by Boumann when the material was republished in 1845. Petry's edition also indicates variations between the 1927 and 1830 editions of the *Encyclopaedia*. His edition has several decisive advantages over A.V. Miller's edition of the *Philosophie des Geistes* translated as the *Philosophy of Mind*. In addition to having the original German text and his notations of the variations between the 1827 and 1830 editions, Petry also provides notes from the Griesheim and Kehler manuscripts. He further provides an accurate translation of the word "unconscious" (*bewußtlos*) whereas Miller refers to the "subconscious." For these reasons Petry's edition is a superior text to the Miller translation. For comparison, I have also examined Hegel's 1827–28 lectures on the *Philosophy of Spirit: Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1994). I have mainly relied on Petry's translation but provide my own in places that warrant changes. Hereafter, references to the *Philosophy of Spirit* (*Die Philosophie des Geistes*), which is the third part of

Hegel's *Enzyklopädie*, will refer to EG followed by the section number. References to the *Zusätze* are identified as such.

- 7 Cf. Petry, *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, Notes to Vol.3, p. 405.
- 8 Cf. *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety, Standard Edition*, Vol. 20, p. 97. Hereafter all references to the *Standard Edition* will refer to *SE* followed by the volume and page number.
- 9 Compare to Freud, "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego." *The Ego and the Id, SE*, 19, p. 26.
- 10 For both Hegel and Freud, the inchoate ego is originally encased in a unity and is therefore modally undifferentiated from external forces – the inner and outer are fused in a symbiotic organization. Freud informs us "originally the ego includes everything, later it separates off an external world from itself. Our present ego-feeling is, therefore, only a shrunken residue of a much more inclusive – indeed, an all embracing – feeling which corresponded to a more intimate bond between the ego and the world about it" (*Civilization and its Discontents*, 1930, *SE*, 21, p. 68). For Hegel, the natural soul moves from an undifferentiated unity to a differentiated determinate being; so too for Freud, ego boundaries gradually becomes more contrasted, constructed, and consolidated throughout its burgeoning activity. Freud notes that originally an infant is unable to distinguish between its own ego and the external world as the source of stimulation and sensation. But eventually the infant comes to discern its own internal sources of excitation, such as its bodily organs or somatic processes, from external sources of sensation, (e.g., mother's touch, breast, etc.), that become set apart and reintegrated within ego organization. It is not until this stage in ego formation that an object is set over against the ego as an existent entity that is outside of itself. Once the ego moves from primary to secondary narcissism, attachment to external cathected (love) objects form the initial dynamics of object relations and character development.
- 11 Freud is often misunderstood to be a reductive materialist, relying on his unofficial and immature views espoused in the *Project for a Scientific Psychology (SE, Vol. 1, 1895, p. 295)*. Freud realized that he could never offer an adequate theory of mind solely from a neurophysiological account and by 1900 had officially abandoned his earlier materialistic visions for a psychological corpus (Cf. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Vols. 4–5, 1900, p. 536).
- 12 This point has also been discussed by Jerome Levin (1992, p. 51).
- 13 In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel tells us: "As Subject . . . the True . . . is the process of its own becoming, the circle that presupposes its end as its goal, having its end also as its beginning; and only by being worked out to its end, is it actual" (*PS* § 18). Later he says, "The realized purpose, or the existent actuality, is movement and unfolded becoming . . .; the self is like that immediacy and simplicity of the beginning because it is the result, that which has returned into itself" (*PS* § 22). In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel further extends the development of the Self to that of the Concept: "The Concept, when it has developed into a *concrete existence* that is itself free, is none other than the *I* or pure self-consciousness" (*SL*, p. 583). For Hegel, the Self and the Concept are pure becoming: "The Idea is essentially *process*" (*Encyclopaedia Logic*, § 215).
- 14 Hegel offers a cursory description of thought disorder and insanity, however, a critical discussion of his contributions is beyond the scope of this immediate project. For a more detailed analysis of Hegel's theory of abnormal psychology, see Berthold-Bond (1995) and Mills (1996) for a review.
- 15 *Encyclopaedia Logic*, §§ 7–9.
- 16 *Philosophy of Nature*, § 246.
- 17 For Hegel, phantasy developmentally and temporally precedes language or linguistic acquisition. In his discussion in the *Encyclopaedia*, §§ 456–457, phantasy occurs before symbolization and signification and "derives from what is furnished by intuition." It is not until § 458 that he introduces language proper.
- 18 Freud's conceptualization of the unconscious is organized by the dialectical exchange of psychic forces that seek to maintain a homeostasis. Within all psychoanalytic disciplines since Freud, there appears to be a universal dialectical interplay between the subject and the object. Historically, the post-classical movement in psychoanalysis emphasized the role of the ego as agent of unconscious activity and focused on the ego's motives toward mastery and adaptation of inner forces via defensive construction and transcendence over instinctual demands. While the classical position emphasized the pleasure seeking aims of drives, object relations theories have emphasized the primacy of object relatedness as the central motive of unconscious activity oriented toward interpersonal involvement and relational attachment. Self psychology introduced the centrality of the self as agent motivated toward fulfilling "selfobject" needs of empathic attunement and validation from others, mirroring of self-worth, and the pursuit of idealized relationships all in the narcissistic service of the self. While the field of psychoanalysis has radically departed from Freud's metapsychology and presently focuses on relational theories, intersubjectivity, and contemporary selfobject theory, Freud's psychoanalytic theory remains subsumed as the

theoretical foundation of contemporary thought. However, whether unconscious motivation emanates from the influence of drives, the ego, object relations, or the self, all disciplines within the historical development of psychoanalysis observe the phenomenology of the dialectic. For a review see, Bacal and Newman (1990), Kohut (1984), and Mitchell (1988).

19 See Freud's discussion, *SE*, 19, p. 24; 20, p. 97; 22, pp. 75–76.

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