Contributions to Hermeneutics 3

Vinicio Busacchi

Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics

From Psychoanalysis to a Critical Human Science

Springer

Contributions to Hermeneutics

Volume 3

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Deuten! Das ist ein garstiges Wort!

S. Freud

Preface

This research – which re-actualises my previous research on Jürgen Habermas (Busacchi 2009)[1] and Paul Ricoeur (Busacchi 2010)[2] – is aimed at contributing to the study of the possibilities of interpreting psychoanalysis in a hermeneutical key. I write "possibilities" in the plural to indicate the double meaning inherent in this concept: the feasibility, sustainability and eligibility of a theory or hypothesis on the one hand, and the potential and applicability of it on the other. If the first meaning refers to an epistemological analysis (theory of science), the second denotes the wider sphere of the *speculative* (philosophically interesting, in the case of psychoanalysis, under different thematic/disciplinary levels) and indicates, above all, the sphere of *speculation* that affects therapeutic work (not strictly psychoanalytical). The latter is certainly the most relevant in the current debate on psychoanalysis and hermeneutics. Indeed, it goes on to produce scientific material around the problem of the epistemological status of psychoanalysis, and the preferred approach continues to be the model developed by Sigmund Freud. Freud's attempt to place psychoanalysis among the sciences, suggesting that it should be accorded equal dignity with the *exact sciences,* has been and still *is* a real challenge for theorists and epistemologists, and a formidable terrain of analysis, reflection and theorisation. In this sense, the most famous example is no doubt that of Karl Popper, and the tradition that is to a greater or lesser extent connected to him. As is known, his criticism of the inductive method – his epistemological *falsificationist* model – comes from a critical comparison between the scientific parameters offered by the relativistic physics of Einstein on the one hand, and the claim of scientific doctrines such as Marxism and, indeed, psychoanalysis, on the other (Parrini 2002, 147 ff). As various experts have explained, this case can be inserted into a branch of the philosophy of science that is attentive to psychoanalysis because it has effected a rethinking of

[1] This book forms the first part of the present research.

[2] The essential findings of this large research project on Ricoeur's interpretation of psychoanalysis and its theoretical role in his philosophy are re-considered and re-actualised in the second part of this book.

epistemology. In fact, the "psychoanalytical question" is counted among the highlights of the evolution of the philosophy of science in the twentieth century.

The situation is different for Jürgen Habermas – different, but not entirely separate. As we will see in this book, in fact, in *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (1968) he finds in psychoanalysis not only the possibility of founding the humanities and social sciences, but a real *analogon* of his *critical philosophy*. Therefore, even in his case, we can speak of *epistemological* interest (characterised "instrumentally", because it does not directly and exclusively address the clarification of the status of psychoanalysis, but it is useful for other things).

The most recent collapse of the neo-empiricist conception of scientific theories has only consolidated, broadened and further articulated this orientation of interest (Parrini 1998, 7).[3] (It has been a collapse that has forced the theoreticians and epistemologists of science to reconsider the relationship among the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, and to rethink the criteria of knowledge and certainty for a scientificity *without foundation*).

In this regard, we can bring Paolo Parrini into the discussion. Introducing the chapter entitled "Psychoanalysis in philosophy of science" in his book *Sapere e interpretare* (*Know and Interpret*), he writes:

> I will discuss only the epistemological assessments relating to the scientificity of the psychoanalytical theory. And I'll do it in order not to offer a comprehensive historical reconstruction, but to draw some general theoretical understandings about the nature and the tasks of the epistemological analysis of scientific theories. In short, my interest goes more to the philosophy of science than to the question of the scientific nature of psychoanalysis as such (*Ibidem*).

Here, too, then, we identify the reason for a kind of involvement we can define as "instrumental". It is precisely on this most recent epistemological horizon that we find an explanation for the *continuation* of the debate on the relationship between depth psychology and hermeneutics. (Which horizon? A horizon characterised by a crisis of foundations, of the certainty of knowledge about the classical conception of scientific theories, a crisis that induces analytical philosophers to rethink the models and scientific criteria on which the relationship between hermeneutics and epistemology is based). It is a theoretical disposition that is surprising in many ways considering that the hermeneutical line follows a centuries-old debate (and is part of the wider controversy on the epistemology of psychoanalysis intertwined with the so-called *Methodenstreit*).

As mentioned, a different discourse is developed if we move from the philosophical terrain to the ground of psychoanalysis (of the *praxis* of psychoanalysis, or of psychotherapy in general), or if we look at psychoanalysis from a different philosophical perspective than the strictly epistemological or theoretical/scientific (from the perspective of *a* hermeneutical philosophy). I believe that not only will the full force be proved, but the full problematic potential inherent in the relationship(s) between hermeneutics and psychoanalysis will also become clear. In fact, the (exponential) increase in attention given to neuroscience these days – which in fact has

[3] For an insight into Parrini's research, see Lanfredini, Peruzzi 2013.

catalysed a series of questions that in the last century were basically triangulated among Cartesianism (or, rather, the *philosophies of the subject*), phenomenology and psychoanalysis (or, more specifically, *Freudianism*) – has only marginally affected the sphere of *therapeutic practice*. More than is the case with neuroscience, the *territorium* here is disputed between psychoanalysis and an increasing number of new forms of psychotherapies, and psychological in addition to psychiatric approaches. In this regard, the advances of pharmacology in psychiatry are considerable and respectable, although they are accompanied by a widespread – and undoubtedly alarming – ideological *drug culture.*

Today, apart from a few nations (France and Argentina, for example), the popularity of psychoanalysis can be considered to be waning. However, this does not diminish its importance in relation to research on the hermeneutical interpretation of psychoanalysis, for this (as is pointed out here) is conducted mainly by taking into account the *practical* implications of the question. Psychoanalytical practice, in fact, continues to work as a *laboratory* for the development of therapeutic strategies and/or for the discussion of issues widely connected to proceedings focused on *word*, *behaviour* and *relation*. To this discourse we must add the datum of the latest generation of psychoanalysts to hermeneutical interpretation, following the approximations and "looting" of the 1970s, especially by the North American analytical world.

This research does not seek to make a ruling on the epistemological status of psychoanalysis, to be a "defence" of Freudianism, or even to be understood as a "simple" philosophical work on Paul Ricoeur and Jürgen Habermas, the two authors on whom this text will mostly be focused. My intention is to contribute to an evaluation of the possibility of a *hermeneutical* interpretation of psychoanalysis, particularly with regard to therapeutic practice. This book is also an investigation into the *philosophical* implications of a *hermeneutical* re-reading of psychoanalysis. My belief is that it has had a major impact on the philosophy of the human being: from the question of the formation of personal identity to that of inter-subjectivity; from the constitution of a new characterisation of the reality of the subjective human life to a new questioning of the classic dilemmas related to individual, social and moral emancipation; and thence to the mind–body problem and the dilemmas related to the formation of a sense of the other and of moral sensibility in general.

In comparison with philosophy (more precisely, with contemporary Continental philosophy) with interpretation in the hermeneutical key, psychoanalysis has ended up assuming a position of ponderous debt. On the theoretical level, the work of Ricoeur and Habermas has been fundamental, additionally for their subsequent application and basic insight into the practical/clinical field (to be clear, insights and applications not immediately made *cum grano salis*, as they say…). In fact, it is on the basis of their studies that a hermeneutical perspective of psychoanalysis was developed in the early 1970s. In distinct yet similar ways, these two thinkers lead to the maturation and synthesis of those countless interpretative elements dispersed and largely fragmented around the areas of concern regarding *Freudian* methodology and epistemology. The epistemological difficulties of psychoanalysis, along with the new epistemological and methodological perspectives opened up by

Gadamer's hermeneutics (considered by both Ricoeur and Habermas), present *tout de suite* optimal conditions for a new reading and a new synthesis. However, it should be a synthesis that, while remaining anchored to the epistemological discourse, intercepts the themes of ancient *Methodenstreit* that both dispute the status of psychoanalysis, which ends up further complicating and confusing the picture. However, this occurs only within the boundaries of the Continental area. Overseas, in fact, the hermeneutical perspective penetrates directly to the ground of theoretical and analytical practice, no doubt bolstered by the repeated failed attempts at a *systematisation* of Freudian metapsychology.

The hermeneutic paradigm seems capable of replacing the biologistic conception underlying Freud's theorisations. The year 1970 can be marked as the starting point of this change – certainly, partly symbolic – the year of publication of Ricoeur's *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud* in English. The work appears with an inversion between the title and subtitle, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, a distortion that from the start prompts a misunderstanding of the original intent of the French philosopher, which was primarily to develop a philosophical study of interpretation. Thus began the legacy of misunderstanding of Ricoeur's reading – which does *not* defend the thesis of a hermeneutical psychoanalysis, but a double and irreducible epistemological register from psychoanalysis (including energetics and hermeneutics) – that inaugurated, however, the success of the book and its hermeneutical orientation.

Something similar happened to Habermas' *Erkenntnis und Interesse*. Published in Boston in 1971 under the title *Knowledge and Human Interests*, it was immediately taken up in the analytical arenas by virtue of its psychoanalytical reading of *depth hermeneutics*. However, the work does not engage psychoanalysis simply as an example of self-reflection in a methodologically critical science – an example similar to Marxism, and used by Habermas to illustrate his *critical philosophy*. But, to further support this thesis, Habermas develops an interpretation of psychoanalysis as *Reflexionswissenschaft* rather than as *Tiefenhermeneutik*, the latter interpretation being closer to Alfred Lorenzer's conception. (It should be noted, however, that, at the same time, Habermas contributes to the construction of the concept of depth hermeneutics, and that, beyond their differences, both Ricoeur and Habermas essentially characterise psychoanalysis as *Sprachanalyse*). Such a misunderstanding, even in this case, constitutes a betrayal of the author's intent. In fact, from his perspective, which largely reflects the influence of the Frankfurt School, psychoanalysis should not so much operate under the influence of a psychologistic conception centred on the individual, precisely as depth hermeneutics, but rather under the imprint of a sociological conception of a critical theory of society, as a hermeneutics of emancipation or a critical philosophy.

It must be said that, unlike Ricoeur,[4] the Habermasian text clearly lends itself to an ambiguous reading. Not only does it appeal to the concept of *Tiefenhermeneutik* –

[4] Ricoeur keeps the thesis of an irreducible double epistemology in Freudianism, as a specific configuration of psychoanalysis. He is misunderstood because this interpretation is entirely seen from a philosophical/hermeneutical perspective. His interest and philosophical orientation provoke a basically distorted analysis of Freud's psychoanalysis.

betraying the epistemological approach given in the essay – but it is also strongly connected, without distinction, to the point of view developed by Lorenzer. In fact, Habermas begins his reading of psychoanalysis in terms of the Lorenzer's linguistic theory, eschewing the Freudian texts without examining the possible theoretical and practical connections of an interpretation of Freud in the hermeneutical key. Excluding the issue of interpretation (on which my considerations are focused, and coming to a substantively *opposite* judgement), the whole Habermasian reconstruction remains on the "surface" of the hermeneutical hypothesis. Although this may be, in part, justified by the above argument – that the intent of Habermas is not so much to advance and sustain a hermeneutical interpretation of psychoanalysis as to illustrate an example of a reflexive science comparable with his critical philosophy – still, nothing in his exegesis seems to favour a hermeneutical perspective on Freudianism.

Of course, it would be different if the discourse were to abandon the Freudian perspective, even in the context of critical analysis. However, it is the same Habermasian setting, explicitly focused on the Freudian work, that imposes the methodological procedure of subjecting the text of Habermas to the screening of Freud. This is precisely what I intend to do in this book: to demonstrate that an interpretation of psychoanalysis in a hermeneutical key, developed by looking on the one hand at the concept of interpretation and on the other at Freud's work (as in the case of Habermas), is unsustainable reading.

The hermeneutical hypothesis can be embraced in Freudianism only in a fragmentary and restricted manner – for example, in comparison with the interpretation of dreams or symbols, or with the first theoretical and technical conceptions of the analysis, or even with the application of the psychoanalytical interpretation in the *cultural* field. However, this should not and cannot be read as a condemnation of *some* hermeneutical approach or hypothesis in the field of depth psychology. Psychoanalysis is, in fact, a vast and varied domain, apart from hermeneutics. The Habermasian reading is a linguistic interpretation centred on a specific conception of hermeneutics, essentially considered as an *interpretation of symbols* (a reading in vogue in the 1960s, an additional element that is similar to Ricoeur's philosophy of psychoanalysis). Moreover, Habermas' interpretation lies, as previously mentioned, within the confines of Freudian psychoanalysis, always considering the *theoretical* and *textual* spheres (just one secondary level discourse of his touches on the field of praxis). In light of this, the hermeneutical "gamble", so to speak, remains open on several fronts.

First, consider the schools that succeeded the Freudian school. It is quite surprising to find that hermeneutics as an interpretation of symbols has led neither Habermas nor Ricoeur to the study of Jungian concepts, such as, for example, one famously centred on a conception of mental life as being *symbolic*, which is much closer to the idea of psychoanalysis as depth hermeneutics. Here, one of the paradoxes of the history of hermeneutical interpretations of psychoanalysis, or rather, of the dialectic between Freudianism and hermeneutics, comes to light. The Freudian source of the paradox is undoubtedly found in the epistemological problematic inherent in psychoanalysis, combined with the character of the *talking cure* of ana-

lytical technique. To this we can add, the contradictions of Freud as scientist and psychoanalyst, divided between the purely scientific orientation of the positivist neurobiology of the late 19th century, and the psychological *vocation*, anchored in the literary and philosophical culture of his time. In Freud's view, psychological and linguistic perspectives should apply in psychoanalysis only provisionally, as a kind of substitute formation, pending the development of neurobiological knowledge and an appropriate explanatory apparatus capable of establishing precise causal links and physiological relationships between *mental* life and *cerebral* structure.

For 30 years, E.-J. Sulloway's research has highlighted how Freud's conception of the mind has been largely conditioned by his culture and by his professional training in biological studies, as encapsulated, particularly, in his text *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (1979). Both Freud's education and his early career were grounded in the medical/biological sciences, particularly in neuroanatomy (a discipline in which his name was already known before the spread of psychoanalysis). This marks a period and an aspect of his work life that many generations of experts on Freud, even psychoanalysts, have considered "wasted" or "useless", or at least, not relevant to the history of the creation of his new discipline. Yet, beyond Sulloway's work, which portrays the father of psychoanalysis as maintaining a fundamentally biologistic conception of the mind and therefore a *scientific* conception of depth psychology, it seems important to underline that, precisely from this scientific approach (combined with the character of the psychoanalytical *object*, and the novelty of the analytical *technique*), Freud has produced an epistemologically problematic and ambiguous discipline.

From one angle, it is this problematic space (amplified by the *Methodenstreit*) that the hermeneutical hypothesis has entered. From another, it is the *metaphorical* and *narrative* language used by Freud to illustrate the technique, and to reconstruct and analyse cases, that still animates such an approach. If Freudianism finds this approach different by defining and limiting the attachment points, in later psychoanalytical schools and perspectives it is revealed to be more compatible.

Thanks to a *circular* mechanism of theoretical legitimation/justification between psychoanalysis and philosophy, the hermeneutical interpretation paradoxically ends up working as a cornerstone of Freudianism. This is precisely the critical point, because "if Freud were alive today" – an argumentative game of Sulloway's – not only would the formation of the analysts remain closed to the medical/psychiatric sphere, but psychoanalysis would also probably work more closely with neuroscience than with psychology and philosophy. How can we deny that much sustainability, in addition to the interest of hermeneutical interpretation, is grounded in the *psychological/dynamic* orientation, which evolved from psychoanalysis after Freud?

My research endorses the inadmissibility of an *entirely* hermeneutic reading of Freudianism, but leaves open the post-Freudian psychoanalytical schools – except for those that historically have been configured *hermeneutically*, because, as mentioned, this configuration would perhaps be expected to confer upon itself a theoretical legitimisation on the basis of Freudianism under a "philosophical short-circuit". These schools must be re-examined using the same process of *radical*

analysis that I have tried to put into practice in this work to test the sustainability of the Habermasian interpretation.

A second front that has remained open to the scrutiny of hermeneutics invests in the more *practical* plane of analytical over theoretical experience, and concerns a conception of hermeneutics in the *narrative* key (a dominant conception between the 1970s and 1980s). It seems that psychoanalysis, in its dimension as therapeutic practice, generally takes much more favourably to a similar hermeneutical setting, rather than the narrow interpretation of symbols. Moreover, such an approach seems to concretely answer the most current and active philosophical and scientific questions, interests and orientations addressing the contemporary psychoanalytical world. From this point of view, the theme of psychoanalysis/hermeneutics remains of the first order.

In the light of developments in the field of psychoanalysis, the dialectic between psychoanalysis and hermeneutics constitutes a formidable field in the study of narratives of identity. Equally essential is Habermas' concept of *emancipation* – also developed in connection with the interpretation of depth psychology – which is key not only in terms of psychology and psychotherapy, but also pedagogy and sociology, in addition to political philosophy, moral philosophy etc. In this regard, I do not hide a sense of impression and concern for the rationalist optimism expressed by Habermas' interpretation of psychoanalysis as *Reflexionswissenschaft*, which clearly reverberates in the idea of emancipation. Such an interpretation is bound to a specific philosophical line, one that, as known, entails a rich and complex conception built around the notion of *communicative action*. In reference to this, we notice that the reading of Habermas softens, absorbing into the circle of critical reflection that deep and powerful dimension unveiled by psychoanalysis: the uncontrollable and irrational, impulsive and pre-symbolical dimension of the self; the subjective dimension that often dominates, overhangs and subverts the ego. We read in the teachings of Freud: "*Das Ich ist nicht Herr im eigenen Haus*". (The history of the 1900s, and the most recent, has shown all too clearly that barbarity in size can throw a man off course, despite his sense of civility, rationality, moral and legal order, and democracy).

Another paradox of Freudianism can reduce the tension with the position of Habermas. This paradox was revealed for the first time in 1936 by Ludwig Binswanger, and concerns Freud's anthropological conception: on the one hand, the pessimism inherent in his naturalistic idea of man, and on the other, an extraordinary confidence in the primacy of rational consciousness, which comprises the investigation. The "I" that is the *subject* of psychoanalytical discourse is presented to us as strong and auto-assertive, as a whole, unlike the "I" as *object*, which is ontologically fragile.

There is an *Illuminist* side of Freud's psychoanalysis: that of the analyst, to whom Habermas evidently looks. This represents a perfectly coherent perspective within the *meaning* of his own interpretation, that the figure of the analyst precisely creates the figure of his *critical philosopher*.

It is on this point that the "superficiality" of the hermeneutic proposal really finds justification. It is a criticism that Habermas can reject through the argument that the

orientation of his research is not psychological or metapsychological but *philosophical*. In other words, the abiding interest guiding the Habermasian reading is basically the *use* of psychoanalysis in terms of *social criticism*, and not the real determination of the content of psychoanalysis *as* a psychological discipline.

I agree with Habermas here; and, although his work has contributed heavily to the spread of the hermeneutic perspective of psychoanalysis, the determination of the effective validity and of the possibilities inherent in a depth hermeneutics must still traverse the analysis of other texts. Take, for example, Lorenzer. However, if I am indicating an additional element to make my judgement relative, or at least partial, considering *Erkenntnis und Interesse*, the outcome is clear and remains steadfast: nothing contained in this work makes a *hermeneutical* conception of Freud's psychoanalysis sustainable. Furthermore, the close connection of the psychoanalytical interpretation to Habermas' ideas inevitably produces a *philosophical* result from my criticism of his conception.

What is the outcome, therefore? The presence in the therapeutic process of *different* forces from those of rationality, and the presence of *different* dynamics from those of reflexive communication hinder the full connection between the psychoanalytical work and the *critical philosopher*, suggesting a less enlightened conception of human emancipation. The rationalist optimism of Habermas is compatible with psychoanalysis maintaining the look of the analyst, the *subject* of psychoanalytical discourse. The attempt to extend this look to the *object* can be defined as an attempt at rationalisation: on the one hand, it makes the linguistic and hermeneutical hypothesis of depth psychology sustainable, but on the other it cancels and denies that which by its nature is trapped outside the sphere of language and rationality – the instinctual, the irrational, the pre-symbolic, the emotional, the passionate and the affective. Thus, although it is true that the essential condition of emancipation is the work of reflection (into critical communication, into auto-reflection), on the other side, precisely *in light of psychoanalysis*, we know that there can be no true emancipation if the meeting is not powered by a genuine human interest, and if the exchange is not likely to traverse the deep emotional and instinctual sphere. That is to say, everything that makes a human being a *human being*. The look from the *I* as the *object* of psychoanalytical discourse evaluates the Habermasian proposal as a diminished perspective of psychoanalysis, if not as anti-psychoanalysis.

In conclusion, after revising the psychoanalytical hermeneutics of Habermas and Ricoeur, we find two perspectives on the human being, which, beyond the partial elements of conflict, seem to justify, prove and demonstrate the speculative fertility of a hermeneutical psychoanalysis, and, above all, the domain of their philosophical anthropology.

Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction: *Methodenstreit* and Psychoanalysis as Hermeneutics

1.1 *Methodenstreit* and Psychoanalysis

The idea of psychoanalysis as a hermeneutical practice is attributed to Imre Hermann, who, in *Die Psychoanalyse als Methode* (1934), argues in favour of the merging of the concept of meaning onto the concept of cause and the centrality of the exegetical method onto the positivist method embraced by Freud (which is essentially because of John Stuart Mill's classic eliminative inductivist model; see Grünbaum 1984).[1] Hermann legitimatises it through the idea of causal psychic occurrences and through the notion of the deterministic and pervasive nature of this causalism. However, the rise of the hermeneutical perspective in the debate, as both an epistemic stance and a theoretical–clinical praxis, dates only to the second half of the 1960s. In fact, the contributions of Ricoeur, Lorenzer, and Habermas came about during these years.

An element that characterises this hermeneutical application is, as mentioned above, its connection with epistemology. It is a strong connection that arises from the *querelle* on the status of psychoanalysis, which is connected to contemporary philosophical hermeneutics. Epistemology (and ontology) is one of its main thematic/problematic areas. In Wilhelm Dilthey, in particular, we can identify the most remote and fertile roots of the epistemological interest of hermeneutics in psychoanalysis. We see it taking cues from *Entwurf einer Psychologie* (1895), Sigmund Freud's forgotten project.

The *Entwurf* constitutes Freud's attempt to place psychoanalysis – and, with it, psychology – among the natural sciences by introducing the quantitative criteria of experimental physiology into the representation and explanation framework of mental processes. With this, he re-proposes the relationship of the subordination of

[1] It is perhaps useful to remember that Freud translated into German a volume of essays by Mill, for the *Complete Works* edited by Theodor Gomperz. He certainly knew the model proposed by the English philosopher, integrating it into his naturalism, where idealistic morphology and vitalism, evolutionism and determinism converged. See Assoun 1981.

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psychopathology to physiology established by Theodor Meynert, embracing the thesis of substantial identity between the psychological and the physiological at the neuronal level. The attempt failed, but Freud did not abandon the idea that psychoanalysis could be analysed scientifically, like chemistry and physics (see, for example, Freud 1955c).

Nonetheless, since its initial rise, psychoanalysis has been situated in the epistemologically problematic context of psychology. Freud was immediately aware of this predicament. In fact, it is from this awareness – and from the needs intrinsic to the new psychology – that his commitment to ground the discipline in theoretical/scientific and methodologically solid bases originates. He continued along this path opened up by psychological positivism, accepting the ideas of strict determinism and mechanism inherent in the processes of the psychic life of Wilhelm Wundt's experimental psychology. From his point of view, the same determinism is at work in the new reality (the unconscious) that he discovered. (This reality, however, requires an *interpretative* rather than a *descriptive* approach, because it does not offer a direct mode of observation and analysis; besides, it requires the substitution of introspection for the experimental regulations of free association).

The naturalistic and scientistic orientation given to psychology from positivism exists in contrast to the *Geisteswissenschaften* orientation conceived by Dilthey's school, which locates in psychology the unifying moment of the human sciences (just when Freud was working on the *Entwurf*). His *Ideas for a Descriptive and Analytic Psychology* (1894) and *Contributions to the Study of Individuality* (1895–1896) correspond to this period. In 1883, with *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (*Introduction to the Human Sciences*) – at a time when Freud is taking his first steps with the physiologist Joseph Breuer, treating hysteria through hypnosis – Dilthey is laying the basis for a systematic opposition between *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*, equipping the latter with a precise and distinct theoretical status. Certainly, the idea of hermeneutics as a specific type of knowledge can be traced back to Johann Gustav Droysen, who, as early as 1854, distinguished between the "explaining" (*erklären*) of the natural sciences and the "understanding" (*verstehen*) of the historical sciences. However, it is only from Dilthey that we know hermeneutics as a discipline with a defined epistemological status, and as one of the founding human sciences. In fact, he abandons his first position, a position that, as we said, considered psychology to be the keystone of the human sciences, to embrace the idea of the centrality of hermeneutics. The institutionalisation of the division (in the foundational sense) between the *natural sciences* and *humanities* occurs with Heinrich Rickert and Wilhelm Windelband. The latter reconsiders the antithesis between the sciences on the basis of a difference in methods. He establishes the distinction between nomothetic and idiographic sciences[2] prompted by:

[2] The first group pertains to those sciences oriented toward the identification and description of laws governing facts (*science of laws*). They are natural sciences based on a judgement of facts, and, according to Rickert, characterised by a generalising methodological approach. The second group pertains to those sciences that address singularity, as in individual, historically determined objects (*historical sciences*). They are the cultural sciences related to a judgement of values, and

1. The opposition between nature and spirit
2. The lack of a corresponding contrast between the modalities of knowledge
3. The impossibility of the human sciences deriving facts solely from internal perception
4. The impossibility of placing psychology between the natural and the human sciences

Rickert, Windelband's successor, returns to this distinction between the nomothetic and the idiographic, attempting, in the essay *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft* (1899), to develop some philosophical implications for this distinction beyond the methodological.

Windelband and Rickert establish a determinate and clear distinction between the characters and components of the cultural sciences and the natural sciences, between the nomothetic sciences and the idiographic sciences, marking a moment of "equilibrium" in the *Methodenstreit* ("dispute over methods"). Thus, the epistemic alternative had already been outlined when Freud laid the foundations of his discipline; thus, trying to place it among the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) actually exacerbated the problematic of this operation. Freud stubbornly continued to pursue the direction of scientific placement, despite the failure of his *Entwurf*, and the epistemological turning point occurred within the *Methodenstreit.* He never allows for the possibility of the methodological dualism inherent in psychoanalysis, or even the possibility of it being of a different "scientific nature". Moreover, he continues to follow the line of a positivist *naturwissenschaftliche Psychologie*.

In fact, the innovations made in epistemology by the historicists and neo-criticists of the Baden School still do not resolve the question of the status of psychology. In this context, the *Methodenstreit* is not minimalised. Despite its aporetic condition, the "naturalistic" position gains ground thanks to Freudian psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, this epistemological revolution portends significant consequences, provoking the secular *querelle* on the status of psychoanalysis. In fact, if those schools worsened the aporetic nature of the position of psychology among the natural sciences, then, gradually for psychology, a clear and distinct alternative between *Kulturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften* emerges.

The first important step in this direction comes from Karl Jaspers' *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* (1913). He applies to psychopathology the double explanation/understanding model, establishing not only a linguistic but also a methodological duality, thereby establishing comprehensive psychology (Jaspers 1997).

In Jaspers, two different methods of investigation for *Verstehen* and *Erklären* are to be found. Alongside objective and naturalistic psychopathology, Jaspers posits a subjective and phenomenological psychopathology: comprehensive psychology, based on the assumption that the psychic "arises from the psychic in an understandable way for us". This understanding is articulated in different ways: there is static understanding and then genetic understanding. To understand someone means both

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are distinct from the first because of their individualising approach (see Windelband 1907). Regarding the distinctive couple generalising/individualising, see Rickert 1902, 236 f.

to know the objective contents of his psyche (seizing what he knows and the actualisation of his mental states) and to intuitively grasp the relations among the happenings penetrating his mental life through mental life. Therefore, in Jaspers, *verstehen* essentially constitutes a dual understanding: rational and empathetic, where the empathetic element (*Einfühlung*) enjoys a fundamental position. (In his work, Jaspers uses the expression "empathic understanding"[3]). Moreover, *verstehen* denotes an "understanding" that as static understanding is sometimes connected to "interpretation", but interpretation in a specific sense.

This is the central idea through which Jaspers builds his most important critique of Freud's psychoanalysis. First of all, one of the main merits of psychoanalysis would be identified in the method of comprehensive observation as the ultimate source of knowledge, i.e. the means by which to achieve the original content of psychopathology. However, Freud turned the task of understanding into an interpretive operation (subordinating the *verstehen* to the *deuten*), thus rendering it an endless and all-encompassing procedure. Methodologically, he centralised static understanding and freed it from all limitations. Moreover, Freud's interpretation presupposes a specific way of interpreting that determines a specific way of understanding: the *als-ob* (*as-if*) understanding, which always maintains doubt regarding the reality of what has been understood. In fact, as Paul Natorp observed, the *als-ob* understanding lies in the domain of the art: it is a sort of hermeneutical allegory.

However, this negative evaluation somehow opens the way to the hermeneutical interpretation of psychoanalysis. This is the path followed by Jaspers in his 1913 work on schizophrenia, in which he bluntly affirms that Freudian psychoanalysis has nothing to do with causal explanation, because it concerns the psychology of meaning (Jaspers 1974).[4] Thus, it is with Jaspers, as before with Hermann, that the perspective later called hermeneutical is entered into the debate on the epistemological status of depth psychology.

1.2 The Hermeneutical Perspective

Generally speaking, hermeneutics characterises the European epistemic position, as opposed to the scientific position privileged in the USA and the UK. In France, Jacques Lacan's work is a special case, because it finds a middle ground between the two alternatives. Lacan rereads psychoanalysis through the structural linguistic

[3] "Rational understanding always leads to a statement that the psychic content was simply a rational connection, understandable without the help of any psychology. Empathic understanding, on the other hand, always leads directly into the psychic connection itself. Rational understanding is merely an aid to psychology, empathic understanding brings us to psychology itself" (Jaspers 1997, 304).

[4] To Jaspers' interpretation we can connect Jean Hyppolite's psychoanalytical interpretation. In France, around the mid-1950s, Jean Hyppolite noted a striking contrast between Freud's positivist language and the character of his discovery; thus, he too began promoting psychoanalysis as hermeneutics.

perspective of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson. Despite an explicit intention of returning to the true Freud, Lacan rejects the thesis of scientific psychoanalysis (see Simms 2007, 165n). Effectively, Lacan offers new possibilities for hermeneutical psychoanalysis, both theoretically and clinically, with his linguistic conception of the unconscious and the idea that "interpretation is nothing but the unconscious itself".[5]

In Germany, the whole picture is considerably different, compared with the dominant trend in France. In fact, despite the predominance of the hermeneutical perspective, German thought has developed a strong interest in connection with the problem of determining the nature and value of Freudian knowledge. (In this regard, Ludwig Binswanger represents a particularly significant case; see Binswanger 1963).

The epistemological component clearly emerges with a multi-level articulation in Habermas' philosophy of psychoanalysis. In *Erkenntnis und Interesse*, Habermas deems Freud's scientific placement of psychoanalysis to be wrong. Any scientific debate on the epistemology of psychoanalysis is rendered meaningless: Freud has fallen into a "scientistic self-misunderstanding".[6]

Habermas' hermeneutical orientation is "dialectically" founded in Lorenzer's work, which took advantage of Habermas' lesson. However, he later came to polemicise the philosopher, rejecting the hermeneutical/linguistic hypothesis. Lorenzer criticises the linguistic focus of Habermas and Lacan, namely the excessive importance given to language and symbols in both the psychological analysis of the subject and the social dynamic study of relationships. Furthermore, he criticises the pre-eminence of language compared with practice. For him, it would be the latter that determines the former through its pre-linguistic forms of socialisation and interaction.[7]

Despite these criticisms, Lorenzer's position is still set within hermeneutics, as an epistemic perspective and interpretative psychoanalysis, and as clinical rethinking. Lorenzer interprets psychoanalysis from the same perspective as hermeneutics and its critique of ideology, which characterises Habermas' philosophy of psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, whereas the latter points psychoanalysis in the direction of

[5] It is a perspective today that balances between abandoning and overcoming interpretation, yet it remains dialectically anchored to the hermeneutical perspective. As Jacques-Alain Miller says, Lacan's era is over: the interpretation era is behind us (see Miller 1996). Some analysts are trying to leave the interpretative paradigm behind (see Pancheri 1998; Benvenuto 1988). Jean Laplanche's case is famous: borrowing from Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist paradigm, he tries to profile an anti-hermeneutical methodology, with its free-dissociation technique, for deconstructive psychoanalysis (Laplanche 1995, 1997).

[6] "The scientific self-misunderstanding of psychoanalysis (*das szientistische Selbstmißverständnis der Psychoanalyse*) inaugurated by Freud himself, as the physiologist that he originally was […]" (Habermas 1972, 214). In the essay he says, "Freud did not take methodological cognizance of the characteristic that distinguishes psychoanalysis from both the empirical-analytic and exclusively hermeneutic sciences. Instead, he attributed it to the peculiarity of analytic technique" (189).

[7] In Germany, even W. Loch (1967), M. Perrez (1972) and H.J. Möller (1978) have worked against the hermeneutical perspective.

critical hermeneutics, the former tries to steer it on and translate it into a materialistic hermeneutical course. Lorenzer's proposal in particular tries to develop a real clinical hermeneutics based on a metapsychology anchored in the concept of symbols.

Something similar had been outlined outside of Europe in the early 1970s, with a series of interpretative orientations to psychoanalysis in terms of hermeneutics that had important implications for clinical praxis. Reference can be given to Roy Schafer (*A New Language for Psychoanalysis*, 1976), George S. Klein (*Psychoanalytic Theory*, 1976), and R.S. Steele (*Psychoanalysis & Hermeneutics*, 1979). The European influence should be noted, specifically the German influence. However, to grasp the specific turn of American hermeneutics, it is necessary to bear in mind the cultural context of the late 1930s in the USA. It was during this period that a group of Freudian analysts from various European countries settled in the USA and formed an important variant of psychoanalysis called ego psychology.

This denomination embraces the work of Heinz Hartmann, Rudolf Loewenstein, Ernst Kris and David Rapaport. Although their research and contributions are not reducible to a unified project, they show the kinds of correlations typical in such schools of thought. The passage of this brand of psychoanalysis throughout American culture with its corresponding mentality, which is geared towards scientism and experimentalism, leads to the biological point of view. The consequence of this is the enhancement of a natural and scientific component of psychoanalysis. Analysis of the mental life from the ego's perspective and a focus on its functions, especially compared with instinctual dynamics and external world relations, immediately characterise this school. On the one hand, such polarised research on ego-instances connects the school to the latest developments of Freud's psychoanalysis, in particular to *Abriss der Psychoanalyse* (1938) and to Anna Freud's *Das Ich und die Abwehrmechanismen* (1936) on the defensive functions of the ego. On the other hand, it recaptures the naturalistic and biologistic approach of Freud's first *Project*, of "Freud, Biologist of the Mind". Hartmann's *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation*, published in 1939, became the school's manifesto; it attempts a return to the metapsychology project, moving past these latest psychoanalytical developments. It also refers to specific theoretical content drawn from genetic and experimental psychology, through which the comprehensive psychoanalytical apparatus is dismantled and an explanatory biologistic approach is introduced. The psychoanalytic theory of the ego is re-interpreted in terms of an evolutionary biological organicism, which is conceptualised in terms of the environmental adaptation of the organism and its neurobiology (terms already adopted by Freud in his *Project*), such as an energetic dynamics of instinctual drives and unconscious investments. For Hartmann, psychoanalysis is a science like the natural sciences, and is founded on the inductive method. It is a natural science of the mind, and as such, is firmly anchored in biology.

Rapaport's *The Structure of Psychoanalytic Theory: A Systematizing Attempt* (1960) represents the most significant attempt to scientifically articulate and make a foundation for psychoanalysis. In this work, Rapaport attempts a systematic reconstruction of psychoanalytical theory based on the concept of *psychic energy*. He

embraces the ambitious project of a general psychology founded on psychoanalysis.

Rapaport's work is certainly not devoid of weaknesses and problems. In particular, this concept of "psychic energy" immediately attracts criticism from theorists and clinical professionals. Even within Rapaport's school and among the Ego Psychology pioneers, concerns about a radical biologistic approach are raised. The point is that not only is the school ultimately destroyed, but some of its followers elaborate new theoretical models in which even a moderate biologistic approach is rejected. Klein and, later, Schafer fundamentally re-tuned their hermeneutical models in ways radically dissonant to those traditionally conceived by the old school. Pure hermeneuticism characterises their particular orientation, despite the obvious respective differences. This is revealed in several ways: by almost total detachment from the scientific question of the status of psychoanalysis; by abandonment of the theory of psychoanalytical instincts and its corresponding analytical/explanatory language; by the development of a hermeneutic model focused on meaning and interpretation, which is radically opposed to the naturalistic model that focuses on cause and determination; and, finally, by the abandonment of every metapsychology and meta-theorisation of *clinical theory*, which, by its nature, adheres to experience and praxis.[8]

The distancing of this hermeneutics from the European trend can be observed in the different way in which it enters the debate on the epistemology of psychoanalysis. Even Lorenzer's clinical hermeneutics, where the "clinical" contains the fundamental point, seems to distance itself from these other clinical theories, owing to Lorenzer's speculative and ideological connection to philosophy. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the fact that these perspectives are derived from European hermeneutics, particularly from the philosophical line applied to psychoanalysis in the 1960s, at the heart of which, essentially, lay the works of Habermas and Ricoeur.

In *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud* (1965) Ricoeur attempts to forge a reconciliation between the hermeneutical registers of meaning and interpretation, and the energetic registers of instinct and causal explanation, which is in effect a mediation between the hermeneutical and the scientific/biological characteristics of psychoanalysis. According to Ricoeur, this possibility is manifested through Freud's interpretation of dreams theory and praxis. In fact, he showed how dreams encompass symbolic meanings that are interpretable and that are at the same time the "effect" of impulses from the deep life. In his *Introduction à l'épistémologie freudienne* (1981), Paul L. Assoun observes that Ricoeur's mediatory pretence does not achieve its purpose because *De l'interprétation* is basically dominated by Ricoeur's critical interest in language to the detriment of the instinctive biological sphere. It should be noted that, in Ricoeur, the relationship between language and psychoanalysis has little to do with Lacanian linguistics (despite common references, in addition to the long trail of controversy). Ricoeur's psychoanalysis is in fact a hermeneutics,

[8] This approach connects Klein and Schafer to the two other important dissidents: Holt and Gill. In reference to the dismissal of metapsychology and the critical hermeneutic interpretation, see Holt 1989, 324–344.

whereas Lacan's not. For him, psychoanalysis is not always about to reveal a hidden knowledge, but rather stands as a kind of ascetic practice to bring out the unconscious truth from a diachronic interior reality that knows no regularity or accumulation (see Vegetti Finzi 1990, 392). Ricoeur's interpretation has evolved over time, particularly in connection with the narrative developments of his philosophy. The transition from a symbolic to a narrative hermeneutics coincided with a shift in focus from Freud's theory of psychoanalysis (in the 1960s) to clinical psychoanalysis and clinical experiences and works of other non-Freudian schools (1980s).

In contrast to Ricoeur's "Freud", Adolf Grünbaum, one of the most famous contemporary epistemologists, stakes his objections. In fact, he demolishes the entire hermeneutic perspective. According to Grünbaum, Ricoeur

> …sets the stage for his proposed hermeneutic reconstruction by truncating the domain of occurrences to which psychoanalytic theory is to be deemed relevant. For he immures its substantive purview within the *verbal* productions of the clinical transaction between the analyst and the patient. Its subject matter, we are told, is "analytic experience [in that dyadic transaction], insofar as the latter operates in the field of speech" […]. And, thus, he stipulates at the outset that "the ultimate truth claim [of psychoanalytic theory] resides in the case histories", such that "all truth claims of psychoanalysis are ultimately summed up in the narrative structure of psychoanalytic fact" (Grünbaum 1984, 43).

According to Grünbaum, in Ricoeur's work, the whole treatment is carried out in a crude dichotomy – observation/theory – in which a reductive behavioural psychology acts as a paradigm for a "scientific psychology". In response to this criticism, we recall that Ricoeur's work does not intend to posit a reading of Freud, but essentially a philosophical interpretation. Actually, Grünbaum re-reads Ricoeur under the influence of the reception of Ricoeur's work in the USA. If the 1965 essay provides considerable material for a hermeneutical interpretation of psychoanalysis, careful examination of his book clearly reveals that Ricoeur takes forward the thesis of a double, irreducible, epistemological register of psychoanalysis, both energetic and hermeneutic.

Grünbaum's critical gaze even targets Habermas, with the same argumentative orientation and intent: to destroy any hermeneutical possibility for psychoanalysis. Contrary to Habermas' re-reading he argues

> …that it was not Freud but Habermas himself who strapped the clinical theory of psychoanalysis to the Procrustean bed of a philosophical ideology alien to it. Indeed, the relevant point is not that Freud idolizes the natural sciences ("scientism"), but that Habermas misconceives them. Thus, far from giving a philosophical elucidation of the clinical theory, Habermas obfuscates and misdepicts it in an exasperatingly undisciplined way (Grünbaum 1984, 42).

1.3 The Scientific Debate on Psychoanalysis: A Look

This synthesis cannot be concluded without expanding the broader perspective of the scientific debate on psychoanalysis. As previously mentioned, the premise of this debate has already been established through the *Methodenstreit,* thus in

continental Europe. Yet, the question of the scientific nature of psychoanalysis exploded in the USA in the 1950s. Immediately, it was problematised, unlike the hermeneutic proposal, which only reached maturity in the mid-1960s with Ricoeur's *Freud and Philosophy*. In the third part of his book, Ricoeur refers to the New York symposium of 1958, viewing it as a critical step in the process of introducing hermeneutics into the epistemological debate on psychoanalysis.

By 1957, Hall and Lindzey (1957) emphasise that Freud's writings contain his conclusions but not the data on which these conclusions are based: neither an indication of methodology or data analysis, nor a systematic exposition of the empirical results of his research. In addition, because Freud made no attempt to quantify the data he collected, it is impossible to determine the statistical significance of his conclusions (Schultz 1969). The symposium, which presented a varied programme of operationalists, physicalists and behaviourists (Pumpian-Mindlin 1950; Feigl and Scriven 1956; Frank 1961), included, among others, the philosopher Sidney Hook, the psychoanalyst Heinz Hartmann, the anthropologist Abram Kardiner, and philosophers of science Ernest Nagel, Wesley C. Salmon, Arthur Pap and Michael Scriven.[9] Nagel, in particular, argues that the Freudian psychoanalytical concepts are vague, metaphorical, and not empirically verifiable, and that they do not offer the objective criteria to validate an interpretation of the phenomena studied. His contribution (rightly or wrongly) made a strong impression, becoming representative of one of the two major epistemological lines of the conference, contrary to Hartmann's position.

The New York symposium influenced the beginning of a series of attempts to rethink Freudianism. Although much time has passed, several important works from the 1970s and 1980s can be traced to this debate: works that try to reformulate psychoanalytical principles biologically (B. Rubinstein), that follow the informational approach (Peterfreund 1971), that are based on a cognitivist orientation (Schafer 1982), or that pursue a learning approach (Gedo and Migone).[10] Altogether, this represents a positive dialectical moment, even for the hermeneutical proposal, unlike Grünbaum's work 20 years later. In fact, his strong attack in *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis* and in other essays represents a radical refutation of the hermeneutical perspective. In this book, he pursues three different objectives: to demonstrate the unacceptability of the idea of psychoanalysis as a hermeneutics through the confutation of the interpretations of Habermas, Ricoeur and Klein (a criticism that affects Schafer and Spence, and other narrative perspectives too); to demonstrate that psychoanalysis as a science can be submitted to Popper's falsificationist criterion; and to demonstrate the weakness of psychoanalysis as a science through the falsificationist methodology and from the point of view of John Stuart Mill's inductivist approach. In the 1980s, this book reopened the debate on the epistemological status of depth psychology provoking polemical reactions in the Anglo-Saxon world: in particular, we recall Marshall Edelson's *Hypotheses and Evidence in*

[9] The conference proceedings are published under the direction of Sidney Hook (1959).

[10] Works directly or indirectly connected to the symposium are considerable; in particular, Sherwood 1969, and Rubinstein 1975.

Psychoanalysis (Edelson 1984) and Laudan's *Mind and Medicine* (Laudan 1983). In his "La question de la preuve dans les écrits psychanalytiques de Freud" (1982 [1977]), Ricoeur quotes Grünbaum as an example of epistemological confusion about the status of psychoanalysis. He examines the question from the proof perspective. In "La psychanalyse confrontée à l'épistémologie" (1986), he writes:

> Le récent livre d'[Adolf] Grünbaum *Foundations of Psychoanalysis* confirme le malentendu qui règne entre psychanalystes et épistémologues formés à l'école du Cercle de Vienne, prolongée par le positivisme logique. Ce relatif insuccès de la psychanalyse à se faire reconnaitre pour science résulte de la négligence de tous, dans les deux camps également, à poser certaines questions préliminaires (Ricœur 1986, 211).

Within this introduction only a summary sketch has been proposed about a huge and complex hundred-year old debate. The inner "logic" has been to present the general context or setting as a reference point for the critical study of Habermas' and Ricoeur's interpretation of psychoanalysis, which now follows as the first part of this book.

Part I
Habermas' Interpretation of Freud

Chapter 2
From the *Kritische Theorie* to the *Tiefenhermeneutik*

2.1 The Frankfurt School: A Theoretical Body Without Praxis

2.1.1 The Passage Through Frankfurt

Habermas has always shown a certain resistance, when his earliest philosophical work (up to about 1970) is considered within the tradition of the Frankfurt School, even though he is undeniably a prominent representative of its "second generation" (see Wiggershaus 1994).[1] In a 1981 interview, he stressed that a personal path had brought him close to the philosophical and political positions of the Institut für Sozialforschung (Habermas 1981, 126–155). Speaking with Honneth, he observes:

> In retrospect, I sometimes get the impression that a student, who had worked his way with systematic interest between Kant and Hegel, Schelling included, and then continued through Lukács, up to Marx, could rediscover the Critical Theory of the thirties (*Ibidem*).[2]

Habermas approached those positions and themes gathered under the heading *Kritische Theorie* during a period when the Institute was shedding its intellectual past, specifically its "Marxist radicalism" (Petrucciani 2000, 10–11). Max Horkheimer, who was the chief representative of the Institute, together with Theodor W. Adorno and Herbert Marcuse, was concerned that, in anti-Communist post-war Germany, the studies collected in the journal of the Institute (the *Zeitschrift für*

[1] In 1956, Habermas became Adorno's *Forschungsassistent* of social philosophy and collaborator at the Institute. He remained there until 1961. The protagonists of the early history of the Institute were C. Grünberg, F. Weil, F. Borkenau, K.A. Wittfogel, H. Grossmann, F. Pollock, M. Horkheimer. L. Lowenthal, T. Adorno, E. Fromm, H. Marcuse and W. Benjamin, who came later during the 1920s and the 1930s.

[2] Later, he declares that his philosophical work was already focused on the search for a " *theory* of modernity" and the problem "of the distorted realisation of reason in history". Evidently, it was a matter that grew in the same soil that nourished Marxist thought.

V. Busacchi, *Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics*,
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Sozialforschung) and connected to Critical Theory would make the Institute's life difficult, damaging the image of the school. Perhaps for this reason and also because, in 1954, Horkheimer resumed teaching in the USA, he had already terminated his research in the Institute, and was very careful about evaluating the contributions of new members. Adorno, also, used to write critical essays on culture and held seminars on Hegel (see Habermas 1981). Thus, in the 1950s, young scholars such as Habermas did not have the possibility of appreciating the full depth of Marxism in the history of the Frankfurt School, or of gaining an understanding of *Kritische Theorie* as a consistent doctrine (*Ibidem*).[3]

Horkheimer's role in the Institute, combined with the political situation of post-war Germany, made his relationship with the young scholar Habermas difficult. Adorno's mediation did not play a significant role: in fact, his first major contribution was a work connected to Marxism (*Literaturbericht philosophischen zur Diskussion Marx und um den Marxismus*, 1957). However, the main difficulty was the strong dissonance among the style, domain, and method of research promoted by the Institute compared with the German universities, which were largely stifled by the weight of the philosophical tradition and marked by a certain provincialism. Habermas received his education at the Universities of Gottingen, Zurich and, above all, Bonn, developing a systematic *forma mentis,* which certainly made him a "foreign element" (see Habermas 1981) in the eyes of his Frankfurt colleagues. The Institute's anti-academism was not simply a style effected by its protagonists, but the precise political and methodological programme of the school, pronounced from the time of its foundation. In his 1924 inaugural address, the first director Carl Grünberg

> …stressed the need for a research-oriented academy in opposition to the then current trend in German higher education towards teaching at the expense of scholarship. Although the Institut was to offer some instruction, it would try to avoid becoming a training school for "mandarins" prepared only to function in the service of the status quo (Jay 1996, 32).

Habermas' systematism certainly opposed an open approach, such as that of the Frankfurt School, which addressed problems and issues by freely handling philosophies and philosophers such as Hegel, Marx and Freud as if they were contemporaries. Habermas admits that when he met Adorno and saw how he spoke, improvising on the fetishism of goods, and applying this concept to both cultural phenomena and everyday life, he was initially shocked (see Habermas 1981).

However, it was Adorno who exerted the greatest influence on the young scholar. His way of directly dealing with the "thinkers", regardless of their critical literature, and addressing specific, real-life problems, quickly modified Habermas' methodological approach.

Habermas' problem was already a theory of modernity, a theory of the pathology of the modern spirit, from the point of view "of the distorted realisation of reason in

[3] Habermas explains that it was the young intellectuals who rediscovered Critical Theory at the end of the 1960s. They clarified that the theory must once have been of a systematic nature. As for the term "Frankfurt School", R. Wiggershaus remembers that it was a label that the Institute became stuck with in the 1960s, but at one point the Institute began to use it (see Wiggershaus 1994).

history". Thus, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* naturally became crucial; and, further, Habermas indelibly tied his name and his work to the Frankfurt School.

2.1.2 Psychoanalysis in the Frankfurt School

Adorno's teaching characterises Habermas' reading of Freud, particularly the way in which the philosopher uses the Freudian *Gesammelte Werke*, despite the fact that psychoanalysis was not central to Adorno's interests (although, like Horkheimer, some of his more "fruitful" [Wiggershaus 1994] ideas were inspired by psychoanalysis). As is known, the work of Erich Fromm – who was simultaneously a member of the Frankfurter Psychoanalytische Institut and the Institute for Social Research – elevated psychoanalysis to play a critical and analytical role within *Kritische Theorie*, with an importance comparable with that of the Hegelian dialectic and dialectical materialism. Marcuse's research further strengthened this position. Fromm's "Über Methode und Aufgabe einer analytischen Sozialpsychologie" appeared in the first issue of the *Zeitschrift* in 1932, along with an essay by Horkheimer (1932). In this article, Fromm, like Horkheimer, tried to identify the basic principles of social psychology. In the next issue, he published "Die Psychoanalytische Charakterologie und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozialpsychologie" (1932), and, in 1935, his much discussed essay "Die gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit der psychoanalytischen Therapie". Marcuse, who became a member of the Institute around the end of 1932, contributed to the realisation of the important collective volume *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung* (Paris, 1936), in which the critical importance of psychoanalysis for the Institute started to take shape. In Marcuse's work, Freud began to assume importance only after the publication of *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Social Theory* (1941), and following the dramatic events related to the Spanish Civil War and Moscow's "clean-up" operations.

Actually, the Frankfurt School's initial encounter with psychoanalysis happened very early, although it was not received as favourably as in France, where it was buoyed by the widespread attraction of Freud among many neo-Marxists (see Jay 1996, 62 ff). According to the account of M. Jay, who is the most reliable source about the first 20 years of the school, in Frankfurt the relationship between psychology and sociology was already a frequently discussed topic by the 1920s. At that time, it was Horkheimer above all who was interested in Freud's theory, encouraged in part by Leo Lowenthal, a sociologist of literature. Lowenthal – a friend of Fromm and member of the Institute since 1930, but who had been in contact with it since 1926 – had a series of psychoanalytic sessions with Fromm's wife, Frieda Reichmann. Horkheimer, too, underwent analysis for a short period in 1928, with Karl Landauer, a student of Freud (see *Ibidem*). Adorno, driven by Horkheimer – with whom he shared a concern about the irrational detour inherent in Freud's *unbewusst* doctrine – finished in 1927 a long dissertation, "Der Begriff des Unbewussten in der transzendentalen Seelenlehre" (unpublished), on the relationship between

psychoanalysis and Hans Cornelius' (Adorno's teacher) phenomenology. Meanwhile, Landauer, supported by Adorno and Horkheimer, worked on the constitution of the aforementioned Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute, which opened in 1929 (with the approval of Freud). Its headquarters were hosted in the building of the Institut für Sozialforschung. Fromm quickly became the main figure of the new Institute. Through Fromm's work at this Institute, the Frankfurt School sought, for the first time, to combine and harmonise Freud with Marx (*Ibidem*; see Marcuse, Habermas et al. 1978, 9–62).

Fromm found an element of synthesis in the anthropological point of view, thanks to an original vision of man (partially in contrast to Freud's biologism), which somehow managed, through his religious sensitivity, to tie the underlying anthropology to the *Economic–Philosophic Manuscripts*, without at the same time denying Freudianism (see Jay 1996, 62 ff). The key to this passage from a psychological to a sociological analysis had been identified, since 1932, in the psychoanalytical concept of the "superego" and, more extensively, in the idea of the family as an "agent of society" (an interpretation immediately welcomed by the Frankfurt School). Underlying the attempt to tie Freudianism to Marxism, the conception of a reunified psychological and social understanding of man, a broken perspective thanks to Marx and Freud, was in operation.

This analysis contained an obvious critical element. In fact, in the eyes of Fromm, Marxism had failed to reconstruct the genesis of ideology because it lacked the investigative approach to the mind of man; and psychoanalysis, which possessed this knowledge, lacked the ability to perform a rigorous social analysis. Fromm's critical considerations focused on psychoanalysis and gradually escalated to the point where an initially orthodox Freudianism changed into open revisionism. It culminated in the 1940s with the abandonment of the libido theory. (In previous years, the philosopher and analyst Fromm had already criticised Freud's *Ödipuskomplex* and therapeutic model, instead preferring the theories of G. Groddeck and S. Ferenczi [see *Die gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit*]). This revisionist trend, which also involved other members of the Institute, provoked conflicts within the Frankfurt School. In 1946, Adorno, took an explicit position in favour of Freud's doctrine by publishing "Social Science and Sociological Tendencies in Psychoanalysis" in Los Angeles. In this essay, he harshly attacked the revisionists and countered Fromm – who had already detached from the Institute, in 1939, precisely because of these disagreements. However, behind this criticism was hiding a certain disillusionment towards Marxism and its ideal of revolution, a disillusionment that brought with it a new approach to Freudian psychoanalysis by Adorno and others in an attempt to understand the root causes of the obstacles in the process of social and human emancipation.

Jay explains that Freud's moderating influence was clearly evident in much of the Institute's work in the 1940s, i.e. in *The Authoritarian Personality*, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and in Lowenthal's *Prophets of Deceit*. After the reopening of the Institute in Germany, the influence of psychoanalysis continued to play a significant role, in both its theoretical and its empirical research (*Ibidem*). Thus, after Fromm's

drift, the Institute launched itself into a new Marxist approach to Freud, this time more detailed and "participatory".

If Adorno's rapprochement with psychoanalysis expressed (and, as in Horkheimer, strengthened) a certain pessimism, the meeting with Marcuse, who until then had not dealt with Freud, had the opposite effect: it helped to generate a real *utopian* vision. In his eyes, the idea of a "revolutionary Freud" was not a *myth*, as Fromm had claimed. The point was to correct the mistake of applying psychoanalysis in terms of culture – that is, shifting the focus from the unconscious phenomena to the product of consciousness – a mistake that was not without setbacks related to Fromm and other neo-Freudian social analysts. According to Marcuse, it marked a real betrayal of Freudianism, because Freud's analysis of instincts and unconscious dynamics was precisely the basis of his theory and his therapeutic technique. Therefore, a form of psychoanalysis applied to society had to first grasp the instinctual level; and it could undoubtedly critically measure the relationship between this dimension and social reality, outlining the perspective of a healthy and free civilisation without repression, in which individuals could enjoy the experience of being in the world.

Marcuse agrees with Freud that repression is the "price of civilisation", which carries with it the burden of neurosis and unhappiness, but Marcuse differs by saying that this is not true for every civilisation *tout court*. A certain degree of control of the instincts is necessary for social life, and in this, the *pleasure principle* inevitably bends the *reality principle.* But operating in an authoritarian society (as we do), the reality principle has generated a surplus of repression, which is totally unjustified, pushed far beyond the amount needed for the strict *maintenance* of the human community. Individual happiness must be the only social finality. This is the thesis of *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (1955),[4] a theoretical masterpiece borne from a series of lectures delivered in 1950–1951 at the Washington School of Psychiatry. From this moment, Marcuse became the most important interpreter of Freud at the School. His subsequent works and speeches have a huge resonance within, elevating the Institute's prestige to the highest levels. Frankfurtian social research received a strong, revitalising push, also generated by the rediscovery and revival of those past "forgotten" works. In 1964, Marcuse published *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, a work in which he attempts what none of the old critical theorists had ever dared: to make a systematic synthesis of the analyses of late-capitalist society. The book enjoyed immediate success; student movements hailed him, and, in Berlin in 1967, the German left applauded him as the "teacher of the new left" (see Wiggershaus 1994).

[4] Fromm's replication was swift, unlike Adorno and Horkheimer, who strictly maintained their disagreement (see Wiggershaus 1994, 510–521). From the pages of *Dissent,* he particularly targeted Marcuse's interpretation of Freud's Eros/Thanatos dialectic. Fromm accused Marcuse of *nihilism,* judging his interpretation as unfair and emphasising his lack of therapeutic experience (see Fromm 1955–1956).

During those years, Habermas started studying the work of Freud, taking part in the "Wednesday discussions" at the Sigmund Freud Institute, directed by Alexander Mitscherlich, an old acquaintance of the Institute who was not well received by Adorno and Horkheimer. Habermas read the manuscript *Der Prozess des Verstehens in der psychoanalytischen Operation* by Lorenzer, his colleague in Frankfurt who also was a student of Mitscherlich. The paper interprets the phenomenon of genesis and the removal of the symptoms described by psychoanalytical theory as a process of de-symbolisation and re-symbolisation, an interpretation that strongly marks Habermas' reading of Freud and his opening to hermeneutics.[5] It is a reading that is very different from that of Marcuse, although Habermas mentions him in his *Erkenntnis und Interesse*, along with the other Frankfurters. *Erkenntnis und Interesse* puts Habermas on the side of H.-G. Gadamer and K.-O. Apel's philosophical hermeneutics, placing his interpretation of psychoanalysis between hermeneutics and a critique of ideology.

However, the credit for having awakened in Habermas an interest in Freud lies with Marcuse. Indeed, it was during a series of events organised by the Institute for the centenary of Freud's birth, in 1956, that Habermas, following Marcuse's closing remarks ("Die Idee des Fortschritts im Lichte der Psychoanalyse"), became convinced of the critical potential inherent in psychoanalysis (see Wiggershaus 1994). A first step in this direction was the sociological investigation *Student und Politik,* a piece of empirical research carried out between 1957 and 1959 at the Institute (published in 1961). In its introduction, the young philosopher carries out a systematic processing of the policy-making and juridical/political analyses of "bourgeois" students, re-interpreting their answers with depth psychology and social psychology, a process that tends to produce "images of the society" (see *Ibidem*).

2.1.3 The Characters of Kritische Theorie

It is certainly useful, but not easy, maybe even questionable in some ways, to try to define the characters of Frankfurtian *Kritische Theorie* through the criticism of Habermas, not so much with regard to the historical evolution of Critical Theory as for its *dialectical* nature: for Critical Theory is more of a critical procedure aimed at social reality and at other philosophical systems, rather than a theoretical system in itself. It is significant to know the critics of Habermas and the connections between his research of the 1960s, especially in relation to psychoanalysis and the Frankfurt School's "lesson". In fact, the first critical research by Habermas (within which

[5] This is a re-managed work, published in 1970 in two separate volumes: *Kritik des psychoanalytischen Symbolbegriffs*, and *Sprachzerstörung und Rekonstruktion: Vorarbeiten zu einer Metatheorie der Psychoanalyse* (Lorenzer 1970a, 1970b). Setting the preface to *Sprachzerstörung und Rekonstruktion* alongside Habermas' preface to *Erkenntnis und Interesse* helps us to understand how this meeting has been productive for the development of hermeneutical research in Habermas along with the analytical research in Lorenzer.

psychoanalysis played a specific role) has not affected any radical change in the *Kritische Theorie*'s way of working. It has influenced, however, an evolution of the Theory, which can be seen in the Habermas' early work. Habermas himself clearly states that Marx and the tradition that goes back to Marx and Hegel were, and remained so at the beginning of 1980s, the most important point of reference for him – as they were for Adorno and Horkheimer as well. Only with the *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* does Habermas overcome Critical Theory, after a long process of re-elaboration and interior appropriation of its critical "logic" (the *Kritische Dialektik*).

Therefore, it is an evolution without radical change, although it progresses *linguistically* and *communicatively.* The initial project on the *Kritische Theorie* was a critical and dialectical form of neo-Marxism. It broke with the traditional idea of "theory", counterpoising it the "critical theory". Horkheimer in his *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie*[6] (1937) emphasises that the first conception does not consider the social genesis of the problems and does not reflect on the reasons why it is used: it lacks the *critical* character and, consequently, the ability to indicate the possibilities and ways of transforming the social world. In this respect, the methods of the natural sciences are useless because the logic of non-contradiction, deductibility, verifiability, accumulation (of empirical observations), and the neutrality of descriptive knowledge constitute a *deterministic* and *formalistic* epistemology. According to Horkheimer, this amounts to a kind of knowledge that can in no way help man to know himself; it is missing, in fact, a critical interest for society. He continues to explain that knowledge of this type cannot provide an order conforming reason to society, because it is based on the quantitative element: it thinks of truth, objectivity and reality simply in mathematical terms, which is an abstract perspective. Ultimately, it promotes a justificationist attitude, feeding a neutral approach through its methodology, a critical neutrality towards society.[7] Critical Theory contrasts the sectionalism of traditional theory, opposing the philosophical category of *totality* – a concept of a clear Hegelian descent, but of a Hegelianism without idealism and without Hegel himself, considering Horkheimer's criticism against those philosophical systems that are "closed" and "accomplished". In the *Kritische Theorie*, the Hegelian concept of the dialectic functions in a specific way compared with Hegelianism and Marxism, as both an empirical and a meta-empirical scientific criterion.

Referring to the totality, the cognitive concepts transcend any operating field, but their transcendence is of an empirical nature because it makes the facts recognisable for what they really are (Marcuse). The dialectic is the self-criticism of logic in light

[6] Horkheimer's article was published among the others in *Zeitschrift* between 1932 and 1941, and is now collected in Horkheimer 1968.

[7] The attack against positivism is clear here. It began with Horkheimer's article "Der neueste Angriff auf die Metaphysik" (1937; now in Horkheimer 1968), reaching its peak at the 1961 Tübingen conference "Tagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie" on the methodological problem of sociological research, in which Adorno and Habermas opposed the neo-positivists Karl Popper and Hans Albert (Adorno et al. 1961).

of its social consequences; it is the necessary tension between empirical research, speculative thought and emancipatory criticism. Social research is the fundamental ground on which the dialectical criticism is exercised, and it clearly breaks with Hegel's ontology, because reality is not purely and simply conceived in accordance with rationality.

This aspect of the Critical Theory cannot be understood without the fundamental work of the Hungarian philosopher Georg Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* (1922), which Habermas read as a student. The first critical theory of society identified with Marxism must be ascribed to Lukács, for his reference to both the basic values and the critical tools of society (critics of positivism, reification, alienation, etc.). With Lukács, it is necessary to take into account Korsch's reading of Marxism in terms of theory and social science. In fact, he transforms Marxism into the first modern social science and theory.

In terms of methodology, the specific character of the Frankfurt School is to apply an interdisciplinary approach by developing a multi-level analysis of social phenomena and of political processes, with a view toward the formation of a preliminary critique that, at the same time, wants to assert a political denunciation of irrationality, authoritarianism, and the "logic of profit" of the advanced capitalist society.[8] It is a critical theory that, thanks to its strong interdisciplinary approach, breaks the narrow perspectives of the social theory of Lukács and Korsch, enriching its technical and critical arsenal with psychoanalysis. This passage from Freud takes social theory in the direction of social psychology and a philosophical/critical theory mostly free from political ideology.

2.1.4 A Theory Without Praxis

Axel Honneth examines the change in Critical Theory through its transformation "von Adorno zu Habermas" in an essay from 1976. This work today serves as an introductory text to the discussion of the relationship between Habermas and Adorno in light of *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* (see Honneth 1982).[9] And, in anticipating the work of 1981, it clearly puts in focus the features of the early philosophical theorisation of Habermas, in addition to the elements of the revision of Critical Theory related to this theorisation. Honneth's thesis is that a true "theoretical breakthrough" takes place in Critical Theory in the transition from

[8] Among the differences between Lukács and Korsch on the one side and the Frankfurt School on the other, there is the refusal of the School to act in accordance with Communistic International lines. Second, the School has always pursued a specific line of critical innovation interpreting the "political commitment", first of all, as commitment "in the discourse" (consequently diluting every dialectical connection with militant action).

[9] For Honneth, in the *Theory of Communicative Action* Habermas not only for the first time attempts to determine his theoretical relationship with Adorno, but also realises a change of position in relation to him, going so far as to develop an aesthetic theory of society, something heretofore reserved for Adorno, with the expansion of the concept of rationality to the domain of expressive action.

Adorno to Habermas, strongly connecting Habermas' philosophy to the tradition of the Frankfurt School. Outside of his "theoretical breakthrough", Habermas would become the heir of the *Kritische Theorie*, and the upholder of the Frankfurt tradition.

According to Honneth, before his *Theory of Communicative Action* Habermas preferred to avoid a direct confrontation with Critical Theory, which would have clarified his relationship with the theoretical tradition of the Frankfurt School (see *Ibidem*). Habermas' philosophy could be seen as the redevelopment and reworking of Critical Theory itself. From Honneth's perspective, the "logic" of Critical Theory survives in Habermas' critical theory of society, with the epistemological point of view of the linguistic turn playing a predominant role, instead of Hegel's philosophical tradition and criticism. Furthermore, it now penetrates the classical tradition of sociology not as a critique of ideology, but rather with an interest in achieving theoretical acquisitions.

Beyond Honneth's objective, and to demonstrate Adorno's centrality in Habermas' philosophy, we can isolate a specific trait of Habermas' early thought: namely, not limiting the philosophical work to a critique of ideology, instead pursuing theoretical acquisitions.

In the second part of the conversation previously mentioned, Habermas indicates three fundamental weaknesses of the Critical Theory from his point of view:

1. The inability to reference any form of empirical or discursive analysis of social conditions
2. The adherence to a (Hegelian) *philosophical* idea of truth "incompatible with the fallibility of the scientific work"
3. The underestimation of the "bourgeois democracy" in political theory (see *Ibidem*).

When considering the shortcomings related to the first point, Habermas tries to overcome them through a theory of communication and communicative understanding, providing the criteria for a critique "not more founded in terms of the philosophy of history", but in terms of a theory of language. Regarding the second point, a proper balance can be established on the grounds of hermeneutics between the need for scientific criteria (with their inevitable delimitation of "areas of reason" and epistemological justification) on the one hand, and the necessary consolidation of scientific discourses into some sort of higher synthesis on the other. Finally, with regard to the theory of democracy, Habermas argues that, in terms of political institutions, the legal and constitutional bourgeois systems express superior "formal characteristics" compared with those of traditional societies ("superior" in relation to response ability to practical moral questions).

The problem set out in the second point had already in some ways been isolated by Habermas in the 1960s. At that time, resolving this issue was the central focus of his thinking.

In his *Theorie und Praxis*, a collection of essays written in 1961–1962, Habermas inaugurates the first full season of original reflection free from Frankfurtian theoretical weight (see Petrucciani 2000, 18). In analysing this period, a greater emphasis

on practical orientation with regard to the Frankfurt theory can immediately be recognised. From this perspective, the *Kritische Theorie* seems to have run out of a *destruens* function without *pars construens*, that is, a negative and essentially *theoretical* criticism of society without a concrete indication of the practical operational outlets.

According to Habermas, a philosophy of history that is practically orientated as a foundation of revolutionary practice has the task of formulating projects (that is, theoretical hypotheses based on the present condition of feasibility) *in view* of action and social change. Here, certainly, there are some elements that are fully amenable to the Frankfurt view. In fact, in agreement with the conclusions of the aforementioned essay, "Traditionelle und kritische Theorie", Habermas clarifies that empirical analysis cannot be derived from an empirical research methodology orientated to the technique, but from sociological research understood as a *critical theory of society* based on the category of totality and on the dialectical method, instead of on a *practically orientated* dialectic. Drawing on these elements for a project of social change through empirical analysis applied to the social reality, this dialectic is configured as an engine of theory orientated to political praxis, i.e. to *emancipation*. In fact, it is a *hermeneutically* equipped engine, because the empirical analyses are constitutively and irreducibly endowed with an interpretative component. In this regard, the essay "Analytische Wissenschaftstheorie und Dialektik" (gathered in *Der Positivismusstreit in der deutschen Soziologie*), explains that "the laws, the historical-dialectical regularities of this kind indicate movements that normally occur through the consciousness of acting subjects. At the same time they claim to express the objective sense of a historical complex of life. In this sense a dialectical theory of society proceeds hermeneutically" (Adorno et al. 1961, 473–501; author's translation).

On the one hand, Habermas denounces the abstract nature of the *Kritische Theorie* and the absence of a real practical orientation; on the other, it is undeniable that precisely a practical orientation, inspired by Marx, guided the thinkers of the Frankfurt School in the direction of a Critical Theory that was operable from the perspective of a transformation of social reality (as opposed to the purely descriptive and "neutral" procedure of the dominant scientific models). Ultimately, Habermas' first research project seems significantly blended with Frankfurt *Kritische Theorie*; comparatively, it resembles a variation of it. However, it should be added that, from this position, Habermas' theory rapidly evolves into a *critical philosophy* with a strong original connotation, substantially independent of the Frankfurt project. In fact, when fully developed, his new philosophy includes a theory of history with a specific anthropology, a theory of the social system, a historical analysis of the present, and a logic of the research or critique of science (see Donolo 1969, 6; author's translation). The above is the real dimension of Habermas' research project in his first philosophical moment.

2.2 Habermas' First Critical Philosophy

2.2.1 The Opening Lesson of 1965 (Frankfurt)

Analysing this first moment, Stefano Petrucciani points out three thematic lines of major importance for their originality and centrality in the development of Habermas' thought: "the reflection on the status of Critical Theory […]; the distinction between two modalities of action, one *technical,* the other *practical* […]; the investigation on democracy that focuses on the public sphere theme" (Petrucciani 2000, 18; author's translation).

In some ways, the first aspect represents the heart of Habermas' discourse. In it, the link between theoretical and practical underpins both the analysis of action and the investigations related to the theme of democracy. This connection has brought into focus the need for epistemological and methodological clarification and determination. In fact, aside from the solution found in *Theorie und Praxis* as a response to the specific question (namely, a process that operates between a philosophy of history and a critique of ideology), the idea of theory as *theoria* in the classical sense (as a theory capable of expressing practical guidance because it contains constitutive elements or praxis) can be found (Habermas 1973, 1 ff). The same need emerges in the deepening of the concept of acting, and particularly demonstrates that the question of the relation between theory and practice is not a simple, speculative matter. Here, Habermas is searching for a theory of concrete guidance of social action. In the essay "Analytische Wissenschaftstheorie und Dialektik", which compares empirical with critical theory, Habermas reveals how the methodologies of the two theories have deeply influenced his approach to historical facts, highlighting how a critical theory orientated towards social action requires a dialectical approach to history. This critical theory is rooted in history, considering dialectically both history and social reality. Habermas opposes a dialectical theory aimed at social praxis, preferring an empirical theory aimed at techniques/technologies whose knowledge "helps to interpret human needs starting from the horizon of historical possibilities, and then orientates action in order to change the conditions which make the satisfaction of such needs impossible" (Donolo 1969, 9; author's translation).

Certainly, this knowledge requires accuracy, but because these needs must be met without simultaneously betraying their aims, it is not sufficient to bring the confrontation with science onto a critical/dialectical ground. There is an inherent limitation here, and in philosophy as a specific discourse. Consequently, "to develop an appropriate categorical scheme, Habermas is induced to formulate the problem of the relationship between theory and practice against the background of a philosophy of history practically orientated and 'empirically falsifiable'. It should establish the connection between the history of realisation of humankind, interest in emancipation and the possibility of an emancipative praxis and theory. However, according to Habermas, the recovery of this broader theoretical framework is no longer possible in the simple form of a philosophy, but only as an immanent critique of

scientific theories and their self-understanding, and as a theory of the present. Then, in a similar project, what remains as philosophical is only the criticism. On the contrary, the contents are necessarily imposed by the socio-political praxis and the praxis of scientific research" (Donolo 1969, 6; author's translation).

The key terms in the second point identified by Petrucciani are, on the one hand, the concept of *interest*, in its connection with knowledge and the concept of action, and on the other, the idea of *emancipation*, as the highest mode of action and as a constitutive element of a true critical philosophy. Petrucciani's reading of Habermas is developed (on the basis of Hannah Arendt and H.-G. Gadamer) along the lines of the classical concepts of *theoria*, *praxis*, *poiesis* and *techne* through which he outlines a phenomenology of action related to the concept of knowledge, and interprets the metamorphosis of modernity (which is always related to the forms taken by the link between knowledge and action). Starting from modernity, practical action is no longer referred to as a *phronesis* or as a *prudentia*, which is heterogeneous with regard to *theoria*, but rather it must be guided by a rigorous science of nature and society as a social intervention able to produce changes under known laws (see Petrucciani 2000, 29). "With this, the classical distinction between practical acting and technical acting drops: the technique tends to lend itself as 'imperialistic' […], as the general model of action or, more exactly, as the model for rational action […]" (*Ibidem*). This is a development of analysis that, if, on the one hand, it enriches the relationship between theory and practice, on the other, it develops a more essential categorical link between knowledge and interest. The centrality of this relationship categorically is already evident in the inaugural Frankfurt lecture of 1965, which introduces *Theorie und Praxis*.

This inaugural lecture establishes the pre-eminence of the categories of knowledge and interest in relation to the problem of the relationship between theory and praxis, but it is with the volume *Erkenntnis und Interesse* that a systematic study is accomplished, to the point that the pair knowledge/interest finally becomes the core of Habermas' discourse. As stated in the preface to the work, this study is carried out through the reconstruction of "the prehistory of modern positivism" (Habermas 1972, VII). It is an operation that does not have the character of mere historical reconstruction, but of a real kind of Hegelian phenomenology in which dialectical reason retraces "abandoned stages of reflection" (*Ibidem*), from the dissolution of the theory of knowledge to the moment of the synthesis of knowledge and interest in the form of the Critical Theory, or to the moment of the connection of knowledge to interest as the self-realisation of critical reason.

To summarise Habermas' idea, the empirical/analytical sciences are the result of a theoretical interest rooted in instrumental action, which, like the historical/hermeneutic sciences, are being driven by a practical interest rooted in communicative action. Finally, the critically oriented sciences are inspired by an emancipatory interest that goes beyond theoretical and practical interests. The latter have the character of self-reflection. The connection of knowledge and interest lets us critically define the functions and boundaries of the specific sciences. Habermas explains that, historically, this connection has always been achieved through *work*, *language* and *domain*, but adds that, although all three are emancipatory elements of the socialisation process, it is actually language that directly and fundamentally binds

emancipation. For emancipation is potentially in the structure of language; and language (in full, communication) is the means by which emancipation is realised.

This structure of categorical connection is articulated on some level within the categorical pairs of repression and emancipation. The critical potential consequently released invests different domains driving the discourse on science and technology to penetrate the universe of social life. A non-emancipatory society manifests its non-emancipatory nature at all levels. It lacks differentiation between separate, corresponding types of knowledge, interests and forms of action. The connection between theory and practice is (at all levels) in line with the procedurals of empirical/natural science and instrumental action. The prevalence of the empirical/analytical sciences tends to methodologically and determinately affect the historical/hermeneutic sciences, with serious repercussions for knowledge, devoid of its determinations and reduced to science (with the degradation of a theory of knowledge to a simple scientific "methodology"). From the point of view of social and political practice, the effect is a loss of the essential critical/hermeneutical component, which is the element of *interpretation* of individual needs, in addition to the interest in individuals per se. Thus, the political practice comes down to *technique.* In particular, the deterioration of social action to instrumental action generates a loss in critical judgement and determines an adaptive type of behaviour, conforming to an automaton model and powered by a real compulsion to repeat, which reduces the social community to a depoliticised mass, vulnerable to exploitation.

According to Habermas, when faced with a similar process of reduction and degradation, only a philosophy that can proceed from a critical auto-reflection of science, and that is driven by a genuine practical/critical interest will have the credentials and the potential to actually be an interpreter of reality and lead to emancipation. The search for this critical philosophy is the quintessence, the *ubi consistam* of Habermas' philosophical engagement.

2.2.2 *Knowledge and Interest*: *Psychoanalysis as Critical Philosophy*

A decisive point has now been reached. In fact, this philosophy finds a useful *analogon* in psychoanalysis. Similar to Marxism, psychoanalysis has the same critical structure of a philosophy orientated towards emancipation – in short, a critical philosophy – whereas psychoanalysis is a critical theory. It is necessary to retain this perspective when considering and evaluating Habermas' interpretation of Freud in *Knowledge and Human Interests*, because it is one of its most useful interpretative keys. The connections with the Frankfurt School are so evident here that it is unnecessary to add anything. However, in this book, the thematic line of psychoanalysis as a critical engagement is much less explicit than in the epistemological one.[10]

[10]The entire critical/philosophical potential of Habermas' interpretation of psychoanalysis will be revealed in his subsequent speculative developments, starting from the dispute on Hermeneutics and the Critique of Ideology. *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik* is the title of a collection of essays published in 1971 to document this dispute (from the end of 1960s) between Karl-Otto Apel, Claus

The epistemological discourse constitutes the second of the main interpretative principles without which it is practically impossible to grasp the theoretical/practical meaning and implications of Habermas' interpretation of Freud. The question of the epistemic position of Freud's psychoanalysis explicitly passes through the text of *Erkenntnis und Interesse*. The reference to the Frankfurt School is equally manifest here, but not totally reducible. In fact, Habermas' analysis around the status of psychoanalysis certainly lies along the lines introduced by the Frankfurt School, but he also follows an original direction, throughout the *Positivismusstreit*. After the Tübingen conference and the first edition of his *Theorie und Praxis* he carries on the controversy with Popper's pupil, Hans Albert, through a harsh attack against positivism, publishing *Erkenntnis und Interesse* and the essay "Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie'" (for his part, Albert mobilised a series of critics against the essential points of Habermas' 1963 essay "The Analytical Theory of Science and Dialectics" [Habermas 1961]).

Habermas compares the two forms of social science, analytical and dialectical, a distinction originating from the differentiation between Popper's functionalist concept of "system" and Adorno's dialectical concept of "totality". He develops and considers four problematisations: the problem of the relationship between:

1. Theory and object
2. Theory and experience
3. Theory and history
4. Science and practice (this last one is deepened in relation to the question of *Wertfreiheit* and the problem of basic propositions).

In reference to the first problematisation, only "dialectically" is it possible, according to Habermas, to satisfy the demand of a full correspondence to the object from the construction and from the conceptual structure of a theory. In fact, on the one hand, we have determinate knowledge of the ontological correlation between the scientific categories and the structure of reality (a fact that shows the limit of the concept of "system" in relation to the domain of experience; see Habermas 1961); on the other hand, the dialectical approach stimulates a circular "movement" between knowledge and interpretation, which projects the progressive equilibrium of the scientific construction onto the object of study. In reference to the relationship

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von Bormann, Rüdiger Bubner, Hans Joachim Giegel, and Gadamer contra Habermas (Apel et al. 1971). The dispute goes far beyond questions of a philosophical or methodological nature; and beyond the first lively discussions in the aftermath of the output of *Wahrheit und Methode* on the "ambiguity of the relationship with Hegel"; beyond even the foundation of the historical and social sciences. What is at stake is the issue of human emancipation taken in its disorientation and returning it to its historical reality and concrete possibility of change (Gadamer). What is at stake, on the other side, is freeing it through the process of a meta-psychoanalysis of ideology at the pre-linguistic and at communicative levels (Habermas). Coming to psychoanalysis, Gadamer summarises in his *Replik* the concept underlined in Habermas' interpretation of Freud. In it, he precisely expresses the two pivotal nodes of Habermas' reading: the interpretation of psychoanalysis as a reflective technique, and his interpretation as an example of emancipatory practice. It is precisely around this concept of emancipation that Gadamer and Habermas develop dissonant perspectives in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik.*

between theory and experience, the dialectical theory of society turns the analytical/empirical approach downwards: the preliminary experience of society as a totality guides a theorisation in which this totality is articulated in itself, and through the construction of which it is controlled by experiences. At work here is the idea of a hermeneutic circle that attacks (again) the concept of a system. To the functionalistic concept of the system as a predetermined and fixed theoretical apparatus, Habermas opposes the idea of a "hermeneutical anticipation of totality" in the context of a dialectical process from theory to experience, and from experience back to theory. With reference to the third question, regarding the relationship between theory and history (resulting from the dialectic between theory and experience), Habermas emphasises how the analytical/empirical approach is characterised by an indifference in the nomological hypothesis between what are referred to as natural phenomena and those referred to as historical materials. It is an approach that reflects a limited conception of "law", and an undifferentiated correlation between historical and natural, an unacceptable non-differentiation from a dialectical theory of society. Finally, the problem of the relationship between science and practice was thematised by Albert in his 1964 "counter-attack", *Der Mythos der totalen Vernunft*, in which he observes that Habermas' project is only aimed towards a philosophy of history that is practically oriented and scientifically equipped (see Albert 1961). Connecting science and practice, Habermas reveals the problematic possibility of a correlation between analytical and dialectic, but explores the possibilities, convinced of its necessity. Albert, who interprets Habermas' operation as tentative of the objective justification of the practical acting on behalf of history (*Ibidem*), condemns this operation as inharmonious with the targets of a rigorous scientific approach. Albert upends the construction of Habermas, criticising even the notion of the "dialectic", which to him is a vague philosophical concept. Moreover, like Adorno, Habermas could have fallen into an erroneous understanding of what constitutes positivism and critical rationalism (*Ibidem*). Habermas' reply arrives the same year, with "Gegen einen positivistisch halbierten Rationalismus", collected in the volume *Der Positivismusstreit*, and after in *Theorie und Praxis* (as the essay "Analytische Wissenschaftstheorie und Dialektik"). According to him, Albert misunderstood and distorted his thesis. In reference to psychoanalysis, the question of the methodological function of experience seems to be preeminent; it is one of the four criticisms on which Albert focused, next to the problem of the base, that of the relationship between methodological and empirical assertions, and that of the dualism of facts/criteria. The psychoanalytical discourse is involved in the discussion about the methodological and epistemological relapses of a different (analytical or dialectical) approach in sociology. This is part of Habermas' speculative project, and he accepts Albert's criticism about the function of different kinds of experiences in the analytical/empirical sciences, in which they have only to satisfy the condition of being translated into a controllable hypothesis. But he underlines how this rule is the equivalent of understanding the functionality of only one type of experience, with sensible experience being disposed of in lieu of some "experimental" rules and systematic observation. From Habermas, it is an approach dependent upon the same scientific criteria being applied to experience. It is at this point that Habermas

introduces the example of the therapist/patient transferral relationship in psychoanalysis as an example of a change of perspective in terms of feeling, value, and understanding, that is, an example of a different kind of experience at "work". This short but important passage throughout psychoanalysis helps Habermas to clarify his problematic. Psychoanalysis helps to solve the tension between analytical and dialectical epistemology in sociology because it shows how available and useful a hermeneutical approach is to experience; it is able to receive and redress its dynamic changes. This perspective constitutes a reinforcement thanks to the particular Habermasian point of view on knowledge, which is understood as always being connected with human interest, and which is never fully objective or neutral.

Psychoanalysis shows the reach of this scientific conception of knowledge as "interested knowledge", and its implications in terms of sociological knowledge, but only through the specific (Frankfurtian) interpretation of psychoanalysis as social psychology. It is an interpretation that readdresses the project of a critical philosophy that is close to the social sciences, hermeneutically orientated, and interested in emancipation.

For Habermas, empirical/analytical research produces technically useful knowledge, but does not produce any kind of knowledge to help subjects gain a better understanding of their own acting and doing, and thus of themselves. In fact, an analytically/empirically orientated sociology would study auto-preservation or auto-destruction of social systems only in the case of a pragmatically successful process of adaptation, because they can know nothing about a person's conception of himself, the part of the interior (non-pragmatic) dimension of human beings. Following Freud, Habermas notes that a missed identity of the subject who affirms himself and a missed communication of a subject who speaks to another are auto-destructions that, in the end, have physical or psychosomatic effects, as psychoanalysis demonstrates. Thus, unsatisfied exigencies or a lack of authenticity and realisation reflect unsatisfactory institutions or a systematic lack of them to attend to the social goals of authenticity and realisation.

In *Knowledge and Human Interests* Habermas maintains the same perspective. This derives from the *Positivismusstreit*, developing a new interpretation of the Critical Theory, which is significantly connected to psychoanalysis as a hermeneutical discipline of depth (*Tiefenhermeneutik*) applied to society. This is the main advancement of Habermas' thought in *Knowledge and Human Interests.*

As Petrucciani underlines, Habermas' position constitutes a radical critique that modifies the classical table of the sciences, provoking the crisis of a positivist (and pragmatic) idea of rationality. The empirical sciences could not expect to have a "monopoly" on scientific knowledge, because their approach to reality lies under a specific technical interest in dominating natural processes (see Petrucciani 2000, 43). They are legitimate sciences, but they do not absorb the inner domain of rationality (see *Ibidem*). On this basis, Habermas can articulate a new table of science distinguishing between the empirical sciences, the hermeneutical sciences, and the critical/emancipatory sciences. It is in reference to this new table (and his underlying "logic") that Habermas can consider psychoanalysis to be a critical philosophy, accusing Freud of scientific misunderstanding in conceiving of his discipline as an

empirical science. Previously, Habermas had connected psychoanalysis to hermeneutics as a social exercise of depth criticism; but, now (in *Knowledge and Human Interests*) it "works" autonomously from hermeneutics thanks to the distinction between the hermeneutical sciences and the critical/emancipatory sciences, thus serving as an example of a critical philosophy or an emancipatory science. However, following Lorenzer, Habermas ascribes to the methodology of psychoanalysis the orientation of a hermeneutics, but a hermeneutics strongly orientated to emancipation.

Chapter 3
Reflexionswissenschaft versus *Tiefenhermeneutik*

In the foreword to his 1968 work, Habermas, in addition to specifying that the function of psychoanalysis is illustrative in his theory, immediately clarifies that his knowledge of it "is limited to the study of Freud's writings" (Habermas 1972, 8). Therefore, no other school of psychoanalysis, or any "practical experience of analysis", is referenced in his work. However, he adds that the "Wednesday discussions" at the Sigmund Freud Institute in Frankfurt played an important role for him. In particular, as previously mentioned (see Preface), Alfred Lorenzer's *Sprachzerstörung und Rekonstruktion* served as a fundamental reference.

With his work, Lorenzer contributed by incorporating hermeneutics into the tradition of the Frankfurt School, trying to build a meta-theory of psychoanalysis as a critical theory of the subject. In this manner, psychoanalysis assumed the configuration of a hermeneutics of depth, which Habermas tried to interpolate in his text *Knowledge and Human Interests*. It would be interesting to develop a comparison between Lorenzer and Habermas, recognising the substantial similarity in their reinterpretation of Freud's methodology. To do this accurately, it will be sufficient to follow Habermas' argumentation. However, Habermas' statement that his knowledge "is limited to the study of Freud's writings" invites us to consider the hermeneutical interpretation of Freud, first of all referring to his writings.

3.1 Psychoanalysis as Auto-Reflection

The discussion of Freud starts off in "Self-Reflection as Science: Freud's Psychoanalytic Critique of Meaning", the third part of chapter 10 of *Knowledge and Human Interests*. A brief reference to the main thesis of the book – Freud's scientistic self-misunderstanding – guides us to immediately perceive the theoretical and, at the same time, technical core of psychoanalysis: the interpretation of dreams. As Habermas reads it, psychoanalysis is initially displayed only as a special form of interpretation. It provides theoretical viewpoints and technical rules for the

V. Busacchi, *Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics*,
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interpretation of symbolic connections. Freud has always focused dream interpretation on the hermeneutical model of philological work.[1] However, contrary to the philological work, psychoanalysis demands a hermeneutics that specifically encompasses a new dimension (Habermas 1972, 215).

If Dilthey's philological hermeneutics recognises the vulnerability of a set of meanings connected only through external interventions (which also remain in the space of consciousness), it is through internal operations (from the unconscious "space") that psychoanalysis interprets the risk of a change, and even destruction, of these symbolic connections (both conscious and public). It is this mixture between the level of consciousness and the unconscious that connects linguistic analysis (an analysis analogous to the work of philology) to the "*psychological investigation of causal connections*" (217).[2] Wittgenstein's image of the language game (*Sprachspiele*), which Habermas sums up by presenting the psychoanalytic process as linguistic, facilitates this contrast between Dilthey and Freud, but also masks the significance of Freud's reference to philology. With Habermas' focus on language, psychoanalysis immediately results in a hermeneutics, as the following passage reveals:

> The ongoing text of our everyday language games (speech and actions) is disturbed by apparently contingent mistakes: by omissions and distortions that can be discounted as accidents and ignored, as long as they fall within the conventional limits of tolerance. These *parapraxes* (errors), under which Freud includes cases of forgetting, slips of the tongue and of the pen, misreading, bungled actions, and so-called chance actions, indicate that the faulty text both expresses and conceals self-deceptions of the author (Habermas 1972, 219).

The linguistic/hermeneutic prerequisite guides Habermas' reading of Freud, where it should be taken hypothetically, in a problematised position. To what extent could psychoanalytic interpretation be placed alongside hermeneutic work? What does the psychoanalytical technique of interpretation do? In what way does therapeutic hermeneutics contribute to therapy? These would be some of the preliminary questions to resolve, in addition to issues related to the nature and constitution of the unconscious, which determine the calibration (of the use) in psychopathology of concepts such as *text*, that is, concepts with a linguistic register. Freud certainly uses similar concepts (and thus the recurrence of a word like "text" in his work cannot be accidental), but to determine what is metaphorical rather than what is descriptive, or vice versa; and it is a metapsychological question of primary importance to establish the limit and possibility of psychoanalysis as a hermeneutics of depth. Indeed, the problem could be solved by recognising Habermas' interpretation of Freud's

[1] "Initially, psychoanalysis appears only as a special form of interpretation. It provides theoretical perspectives and technical rules for the interpretation of symbolic structures. Freud always patterned the interpretation of dreams after the hermeneutic model of philological research" (Habermas 1972, 214).

[2] Original: "Ein verdorbener Text dieser Art kann in seinem Sinn zureichend erst erfaßt werden, nachdem es gelungen ist, den Sinn der Korruption selber aufzuklären: das bezeichnet die eigentümliche Aufgabe einer Hermeneutik, die sich auf die Verfahrensweisen der Philologie nicht beschränken kann, sondern *Sprachanalyse mit der psychologischen Erforschung kausaler Zusammenhänge vereint*".

psychoanalysis through the metapsychology of Lorenzer. But his interpretation of Freud was meant to be just "a reading" of Freud, rather than a reformulation of psychoanalysis. On the other hand, Freud undoubtedly lends himself to a possible hermeneutical interpretation – both for the original epistemological problematic, detected by Habermas, and for the theoretical approximations and uncertainties that have invariably affected psychoanalysis since its inception. This is further demonstrated in the popular nature of many Freudian publications, which require a more colloquial and less scientific language, resorting to the wide-scale use of the concepts and images responsive to this mentality, and, additionally, in the components today recognised as the rhetorical way of doing science in the 19th century, marking the language and practices of 19th-century culture. *Die Traumdeutung* synthesises and expresses all of this; and, not surprisingly, Habermas immediately takes note. For example, "text of the dream" is an expression that Freud takes up several times in this work by comparing the unconscious content hidden in the images of dreams with a rebus or to hieroglyphic writing. The following excerpt is well known:

> The dream-thoughts and the dream-content are presented to us like two versions of the same subject-matter in two different languages. Or, more properly, the dream-content seems like a transcript of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression, whose characters and syntactic laws it is our business to discover by comparing the original and the translation. The dream-thoughts are immediately comprehensible, as soon as we have learnt them. The dream-content, on the other hand, is expressed as it were in a pictographic script, the characters of which have to be transposed individually into the language of the dream-thoughts. If we attempted to read these characters according to their pictorial value instead of according to their symbolic relation, we should clearly be led into error. Suppose I have a picture-puzzle, a rebus, in front of me (Freud 2010, 295–296).

Freud often uses the concept of "text" to compare the work of analysis to the work of translation from one foreign language into another. Careful consideration of the *Traumdeutung* and, above all, the study of the metapsychological writings reveals, however, that this is a merely illustrative, metaphorical use.[3] A hermeneutical conception of mental life would impose a uniformity between the conscious and unconscious dimensions, and even a rationalisation and linguistic reduction of the unconscious. But all of these processes are discordant with the Freudian view. In fact, the *unbewusst*, first of all, is the "place" of instincts rather than of language and text. The *Interpretation of Dreams* has already shown that the *modus operandi* of the unconscious has nothing to do with the logical/rational processes. The thematic of the dream and its interpretation is open to a wide use of linguistic and hermeneutical metaphors because unconscious productions occur halfway between the conscious and unconscious, as formations of synthesis. In this case, these metaphors effectively approximate the psychic reality of the dream mechanisms discovered by Freud, and, in addition to offering instrumental critical support to the psychoanalytical *talking cure*, describe the phenomenon of the dream as it appears: to be told, to be interpretable, and to be meaningful. However, to extend this language to the

[3] See as a counterpart, a passage from *Wege der psychoanalytischen Therapie* (1919) in which Freud connects psychoanalytical work to chemical analysis, to orthopaedic or surgical incisions, and to an educator's influence.

whole of psychoanalysis, it is necessary to screen the entire metapsychology. It is not enough to appeal to the fact that dreams and dream theory are, in Freud's conception, the kingdom of psychoanalysis. Considering the work of analysis literally as a work of translation, as a talk therapy, it would follow that the efficacy of therapy resides entirely in the epistemic power of the analyst's interpretation or in the critical force inherent in rational communication. These ideas were both rejected by Freud, as demonstrated by this famous passage:

> This brings us to the *technical* errors which are to be seen in the doctor's procedure in this alleged case. It is a long superseded idea, and one derived from superficial appearances, that the patient suffers from a sort of ignorance, and that if one removes this ignorance by giving him information (about the causal connection of his illness with his life, about his experiences in childhood, and so on) he is bound to recover. The pathological factor is not his ignorance in itself, but the root of this ignorance in his *inner resistances*; it was they that first called this ignorance into being, and they still maintain it now. The task of the treatment lies in combating these resistances. Informing the patient of what he does not know because he has regressed is only one of the necessary preliminaries to the treatment. If knowledge about the unconscious were as important for the patient as people inexperienced in psychoanalysis imagine, listening to lectures or reading books would be enough to cure him. Such measures, however, have as much influence on the symptoms of nervous illness as a distribution of menu-cards in a time of famine has upon hunger (Freud 1957b, 225).

Sustaining the idea that hermeneutical psychoanalysis combines linguistic analysis with the psychological research of causal connections, Habermas certainly tracks an important distinction; however, it is a distinction that allows him to retain psychoanalysis in the field of a particular hermeneutics, a depth hermeneutics.

In the following passage (part of which has already been quoted above) the metaphor of the "text" comes out of the *Traumdeutung,* investing wider areas of psychopathology and, as a backlash, affecting the general theoretical conception (once again, by supporting the concept of the "language-game").

> The ongoing text of our everyday language games (speech and actions) is disturbed by apparently contingent mistakes: by omissions and distortions that can be discounted as accidents and ignored, as long as they fall within the conventional limits of tolerance. These *parapraxes* (errors), under which Freud includes cases of forgetting, slips of the tongue and of the pen, misreading, bungled actions, and so-called chance actions, indicate that the faulty text both expresses and conceals self-deceptions of the author. If the mistakes in the text are more obtrusive and situated in the pathological realm, we speak of symptoms. They can be neither ignored nor understood. Nevertheless, the symptoms are part of intentional structures: the ongoing text of everyday language games is broken through not by external influences but by internal disturbances. Neuroses distort symbolic structures in all three dimensions: linguistic expression (obsessive thoughts), actions (repetition compulsions), and bodily experiential expression (hysterical body symptoms). In the case of psychosomatic disturbances, the symptom is so far removed from the original text that its symbolic character first has to be demonstrated by the work of interpretation (Habermas 1972, 219).

It would be useful to continue this reading of the text, because another concept, in addition to the language game, greatly supports this hermeneutical interpretation – and, in general, any hermeneutical interpretation of psychoanalysis. It is the concept of the "symbol", whose widespread and invasive use suggests that in

Habermas there might be a tendentious deformation of the Freudian text (certainly dependent on Lorenzer's lesson).

> Neurotic symptoms in the narrower sense are located as it were between the parapraxes and psychosomatic illnesses. They cannot be belittled as accidents; at the same time their symbolic character, which identifies them as split-off parts of a symbolic structure, cannot be permanently denied. They are the scars of a corrupt text that confronts the author as incomprehensible (*Ibidem*).

It would certainly be useful to develop here a comparative analysis between Lorenzer's volume *Kritik des psychoanalytischen Symbolbegriffs* and the theory of the symbol in Freud. But this theory plays a limited role in psychoanalysis, a marginal role in many ways. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, symbolism has been listed among the mechanisms of the dream, and, in Freud's psychoanalytical writings, symbolic metaphors are rarely used, among both the scientific and the more popular. However, Freud's work is uneven: the theory of psychoanalysis has followed a troubled path. Freud gives some attention to the phenomenon of symbols in conjunction with the developments of Carl Gustav Jung's research, even after the rupture of relations with him. But what Habermas expresses seems to be a revival of the Freudian concepts outlined in his studies on hysteria[4]; some ideas are subsequently reconsidered and retained only in part. The forgotten *Project* of 1895, the *Entwurf einer Psychologie,* contains a conception of symbolism as larger than the *Traumdeutung* (because it referred to any substitute formation of removed contents). And, in addition, it maintains the idea of a somatic symbol that Freud, starting from his observation of the phenomenon of hysterical symbolism, had initially extended to the whole field of neurosis. The idea was subsequently abandoned in favour of a more cultural conception of the phenomenon of symbolic production.[5]

For many pages, Habermas' study follows a line of comparison between psychoanalysis and hermeneutics, avoiding radically analysing the problem of the constitution of Freud's *Deutung*, even though on some occasions there was such a possibility. He effectively reinforces the impression of a sustainable interpretation of psycho-

[4] In this regard, the following passage from Breuer and Freud's *Studien über Hysterie* (1895) could be considered: "In other cases the connection [between the symptom and the occurrence which provoked it] is not so simple. It consists only in what might be called a 'symbolic' relation between the precipitating cause and the pathological phenomenon – a relation such as healthy people form in dreams. For instance, a neuralgia may follow upon mental pain or vomiting upon a feeling of moral disgust. We have studied patients who used to make the most copious use of this sort of symbolization" (Breuer and Freud 2000, 5).

[5] Other passages demonstrate that Habermas adheres to a broad interpretation of symbolism, such as the following: "The object domain of depth hermeneutics comprises all the places where, owing to internal disturbances, the text of our everyday language games is interrupted by incomprehensible symbols. These symbols cannot be understood because they do not obey the grammatical rules of ordinary language, norms of action, and culturally learned patterns of expression. They are either ignored and glossed over, rationalized through secondary elaboration (if they are not already the product of rationalizations), or reduced to external, somatic disturbances. Freud uses the medical term 'symptom' to cover such deviant symbol formations, which he studied in the dream as an exemplar" (Habermas 1972, 226).

analysis in a hermeneutical key, although it was already established as a consequence of the a priori placement of psychoanalysis in the linguistic field. For example:

> The technique of dream interpretation goes beyond the art of hermeneutics insofar as it must grasp not only the meaning of a possibly distorted text, but the meaning of the text distortion itself, that is the transformation of a latent dream thought into the manifest dream. In other words, it must reconstruct what Freud called the "dream-work". The interpretation of dreams leads to a process of reflection that takes the same course as the genesis of the dream text, only in reverse. It is complementary to the dream-work (Habermas 1972, 220–221).

This passage does not constitute a problem in itself. It describes using rationalising language what in fact is expressed by Freud's theory of dreams. The problem is that the entire body of work by Habermas follows these rationalistic tones. It constitutes a real "strategy" in the construction of psychoanalysis as hermeneutics. The analytical work is basically "translated" into the work of interpretation; the therapeutic process is reduced to reflective and auto-reflective processes; the unconscious is resolved as an organ of construction and dissimulation of meaning; neuroses are reduced in the sense of deformations; and so on. No room is given to the irrational as such, or to the instinctual, or to those elements of the therapeutic process, such as transference or counter-transference, without which the hermeneutical work cannot be claimed to be an effective cure. Otherwise, it runs the risk of becoming the equivalent of a weekly confession to a Catholic priest or an exchange between friends over a good cup of tea. The hermeneutic *diktat* rationalises psychoanalysis, bending towards the linguistic register resistant concepts such as "mechanism" and "strength". In this passage, the linguistics helps to establish a priori a connection between the mechanical dimension and the dimension of meaning, without reference to the issues of the reality of *unbewusst* and psychological dynamism (which comprise the real bench test, next to Freud's theme of *Deutung*, for the possibility of a hermeneutical metapsychology).

> Thus the term "censorship" is meant literally: both psychological and official censorship suppress linguistic material and the meanings articulated in it. Both forms of censorship make use of the same defense mechanisms: the procedures of prohibiting and rewriting a text correspond to the psychic mechanisms of omission (repression) and displacement (Habermas 1972, 225).

This is how, according to Habermas, psychoanalysis works as a technique:

> The analyst instructs the patient in reading his own texts, which he himself has mutilated and distorted, and in translating symbols from a mode of expression deformed as a private language into the mode of expression of public communication. This translation reveals the genetically important phases of life history to a memory that was previously blocked, and brings to consciousness the person's own self-formative process. Thus psychoanalytic hermeneutics, unlike the cultural sciences, aims not at the understanding of symbolic structures in general. Rather, *the act of understanding* to which it leads is *self-reflection*. […] Repressions can be eliminated only by virtue of reflection [*Verdrängungen können nur kraft der Reflexion aufgehoben werden*] (Habermas 1972, 228).

Even Lorenzer has finished criticising Habermas' reconstruction of psychoanalysis. In fact, according to Lorenzer, rather than *Tiefenhermeneutik* (for which

Habermas just grazes the problematic), Habermas idealistically speaks of *Reflexionswissenschaft*, of psychoanalysis as a reflective science (see Lorenzer 1974, 833 ff). This concept of reflection does not seem entirely clear: in some cases, in fact, he recognises that the analytical operation of making something conscious is a process of reflection in the fact that it is not only a process at the cognitive level; at the same time it dissolves resistances at an emotional level (Habermas 1972, 229). However, beyond similar distinctions, the reflective is essentially identified with the critical work. It would be this critical work, this reflective process in the sphere of cognition, that determines retroactively a change in the state of the removed affect:

> Analysis has immediate therapeutic results because the critical overcoming [*die kritische Überwindung*] of blocks to consciousness and the penetration of false objectivations initiate the appropriation of a lost portion of life history; it thus reverses the process of splitting-off. That is why analytic knowledge is self-reflection (Habermas 1972, 233).

The argument presented from the beginning, that psychoanalysis would essentially be a therapeutically direct form of self-reflection ["*eine therapeutisch angeleitete Selbstreflexion*"], continually returns in different ways. This is a thesis that follows on from and enforces the rejection of the position of psychoanalysis between the exact sciences, which amounts to a net refusal rejecting the hypothesis that depth psychology might proceed at a level of causal explanation. In this regard, the following passage is extremely eloquent and full of implications:

> Psychoanalysis does not grant us a power of technical control over the sick psyche comparable to that of biochemistry over a sick organism. And yet it achieves more than a mere treatment of symptoms, because it certainly does grasp causal connections, although not at the level of physical events – at a point "which has been made accessible to us by some very remarkable circumstances". This is precisely the point where language and behaviour are pathologically deformed by the causality of split-off symbols and repressed motives. Following Hegel we can call this the causality of fate, in contrast to the causality of nature. For the causal connection between the original scene, defence, and symptom is not anchored in the invariance of nature according to natural laws but only in the spontaneously generated invariance of life history [*Invarianz der Lebensgeschichte*], represented by the repetition compulsion, which can nevertheless be dissolved by the power of reflection[*durch die Kraft der Reflexion auflösbaren*] (Habermas 1972, 271).

At this point, it is useful to consider the Freudian text *Zur Einleitung der Behandlung* (1913), so as to begin to determine the nature of the Freudian *Deutung* and the therapeutic elements of the technique. Habermas' interpretation seems to have more similarities with the less advanced stages of the psychoanalytical technique, those in which Freud had not yet put *transference neurosis* at the centre of his therapy. This idea may not have been established, but the idea that the therapeutic process was connected to something like a fight against resistance was already clear. In the following passage, Freud develops some essential considerations proceeding from a clinical case:

> The mother of a hysterical girl had confided to me the homosexual experience which had greatly contributed to the fixation of the girl's attacks. The mother had herself surprised the scene; but the patient had completely forgotten it, though it had occurred when she was

> already approaching puberty. I was now able to make a most instructive observation. Every time I repeated her mother's story to the girl she reacted with a hysterical attack, and after this she forgot the story once more. There is no doubt that the patient was expressing a violent resistance against the knowledge that was being forced upon her. Finally she simulated feeble-mindedness and a complete loss of memory in order to protect herself against what I had told her. After this, there was no choice but to cease attributing to the fact of knowing, in itself, the importance that had previously been given to it and to place the emphasis on the resistances which had in the past brought about the state of not knowing and which were still ready to defend that state. Conscious knowledge, even if it was not subsequently driven out again, was powerless against those resistances.
>
> The strange behaviour of patients, in being able to combine a conscious knowing with not knowing, remains inexplicable by what is called normal psychology. But psychoanalysis, which recognizes the existence of the unconscious, it presents no difficulty […]. The patients now know of the repressed experience in their conscious thought, but this thought lacks any connection with the place where the repressed recollection is in some way or other contained. No change is possible until the conscious thought-process has penetrated to that place and has overcome the resistances of repression there. […] For the sake of complete accuracy, however, it should be added that the communication of repressed material to the patient's consciousness is nevertheless not without effect. It does not produce the hoped-for result of putting an end to the symptoms; but it has other consequences. At first it arouses resistances, but then, when these have been overcome, it sets up a process of thought in the course of which the expected influencing of the unconscious recollection eventually takes place (Freud 1961c, 141–142).

Habermas' idea of self-reflection orientated by the therapy implies that the therapeutic function is to guide the patient's auto-reflection. It suggests that the analyst directs the patient's thinking, leading him to reflect on himself and on his pathological mechanisms. It is easy to see here the absence of the concept of interpretation as interpretation, which proceeds on a channel that puts into relation patient and analyst in their wholeness. Psychoanalysis is not a simple self-reflective process; it is a (therapeutic) process of emancipation. The idea of psychoanalysis as "self-reflection therapeutically directed" seems to rest on an Enlightenment conception of the power of the normalisation, liberalisation and emancipation of reason to which Freud himself is not immune, but which, nevertheless, touches only one side of the psychoanalytical discourse. There is no reference to such ideas as instinct, resistance, irrationality, the unconscious and to the dynamics of forces and tensions as integral parts of the therapeutic process: a patient's self-reflection should be enough in itself to achieve normality. Again, from Freud's *Einleitung*:

> The primary motive force in the therapy is the patient's suffering and the wish to be cured that arises from it. The strength of this motive force is subtracted from by various factors – which are not discovered till the analysis is in progress – above all, by what we have called the "secondary gain from illness"; but it must be maintained till the end of the treatment. Every improvement effects a diminution of it. By itself, however, this motive force is not sufficient to get rid of the illness. Two things are lacking in it for this: it does not know what paths to follow to reach this end; and it does not possess the necessary quota of energy with which to oppose the resistances. The analytic treatment helps to remedy both these deficiencies. It supplies the amounts of energy that are needed for overcoming the resistances by making mobile the energies which lie ready for the transference; and, by giving the patient information at the right time, it shows him the paths along which he should direct those

> energies. Often enough the transference is able to remove the symptoms of the disease by itself, but only for a while – only for as long as it itself lasts. It only deserves the latter name if the intensity of the transference has been utilized for the overcoming of resistances. Only then has being ill become impossible, even when the transference has once more been dissolved, which is its destined end (Freud 1961c, 143).

In psychoanalysis, the process of emancipation is not a simple self-reflective process. Certainly, the psychoanalytic method appeals to critical and reflective resources of rationality, but it is together with the release, channelling and redeployment of forces in the dynamism of the therapeutic relationship that self-reflective resources become part of not only a conceptual but also a mutative process. This is the real emancipation and (psychological and moral) liberation from personal inhibitions, anxieties and neuroses. Habermas is not of the same opinion. To him, the efficacy of therapy is displayed in the efficacy of the linguistic analysis:

> The ego's flight from itself is *an operation that is carried out in and with language* [*eine Operation, die an und mit der Sprache durchgeführt wird*]. Otherwise it would not be possible *to reverse the defensive process hermeneutically, via the analysis of language* [sonst wäre es nicht möglich, den *Vorgang der Abwehr hermeneutisch, auf dem Wege einer Sprachanalyse rückgängig zu machen*]. In a linguistic framework, Freud attempted to render the act of repression comprehensible as a severance from language as such of ideas representing the instincts (Habermas 1972, 241).

3.2 Interpretation in Psychoanalysis

From Habermas' perspective, research around the possibilities (and limits) of psychoanalytical interpretation in the hermeneutic key requires an attentive study of the procedure of interpretation in psychoanalysis. Its main elements have already been considered, but, for a more in-depth examination, a wider articulation of Freud's conception is in order. According to Habermas' procedure, it is necessary to be focused strictly on Freud's writings, and, accordingly, to be faithful to his perspective, on psychoanalytical interpretation in particular, because this is where Habermas concentrates his hermeneutical operation.

He quotes a number of metapsychological concepts, but predominantly the concept of the unconscious, which is the true core of a study orientated towards a radical distinction between hermeneutics and depth psychology, one that is deeply connected to interpretation. On the whole, this concept is linguistically reduced by Habermas, as the following passage shows:

> Starting with the experiences of the physician's communication with his patient, Freud derived the concept of the unconscious from a specific form of disturbance of communication in ordinary language. For this he would really have needed a theory of language, which did not exist at the time and whose outlines are only just beginning to take form today (Habermas 1972, 238).[6]

[6] Consider, even, this passage: "Metapsychology deals with just as fundamental a connection: the connection between *language deformation* and *behavioral pathology*. In so doing, it presupposes

If, on the one hand, even though Habermas' metapsychology contains many elements of his hermeneutical re-interpretation of Freud, on the other, the general question of interpretation somehow remains the thematic axis of his research.

3.2.1 Theory and Practice in Psychoanalysis

The analysis of the relationship between theory and practice in psychoanalysis constitutes the starting point for the study of the specific nature of interpretation.

Psychoanalysis must first be considered as a professional practice rather than as a theory, because its nature fundamentally lies in clinical work. A psychoanalyst easily recognises that the professional practice of psychoanalysis is founded on the concrete and private qualities of (real) life, of one's personal daily life. Thus, daily life and inner life are the objects and fundamental interest of psychoanalysis, on which basis it develops theorisations useful for auto-critical examination and redirection. In other words, theory is a *function* of practice. With this, the circular movement from the practical/operational dimension to an enriched theorisation via verification, confirmation or refutation of a certain hypothesis [theory], is not denied; it is the order of priority that is underlined. The connection established between theory and practice works not as a horizontal, but as a vertical circularity; not for the "extension of knowledge", but for more "intensity" in terms of therapeutic ability. As Freud writes, systematisation is not of interest in psychoanalysis:

> My professional colleagues may find a guarantee in this admission that the theory is nothing other than the product of continuous and ever deeper-going experience. What is born of speculation, on the contrary, may easily spring into existence complete and there after remain unchangeable (Freud 1953, 271).

This reading of Freud's writings reveals a predominant practical concern about the configuration of the new therapeutic technique, rather than a theoretical concern about rationalisation and systematic clarification. The Miss Lucy R. case could be cited as a telling example: there is a passage in which Freud describes how, at a certain moment, he pressed the head of his patient communicating to her that she would immediately be able to pursue the course of her free associations (which actually happened; see, Breuer and Freud 2000). This "technique" does not receive any theoretical explanation, neither in Freud's previous works nor in the context of

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a theory of ordinary language having two tasks: first, to account for the intersubjective validity of symbols and the linguistic mediation of interactions on the basis of reciprocal recognition; second, to render comprehensible socialization – that is, initiation into the grammar of language games – as a process of individuation. Since, according to this theory, the structure of language determines likewise both language and conduct, motives of action are also comprehended as linguistically interpreted needs. Thus motivations are not impulses that operate from behind subjectivity but subjectively guiding, symbolically mediated, and reciprocally interrelated intentions" (Habermas 1972, 255).

this case history. It is not a theoretically justified procedure, but a practically effective action.

On many occasions, Freud perceived the risks of a psychoanalysis-hardened form of premature theorisation, weakening the productive possibilities of a creative approach to the therapeutic encounter. At the same time, he expressed on many occasions the necessity to fix psychoanalytical knowledge in a *corpus* able to preserve, accumulate, organise and correctly transmit his discipline and technique, beyond the variety and fragmentation found in local and partial theories that characterise his various essays and case histories (see Vegetti Finzi 1990, 99).

It is certainly the insolubility of this conflict, in connection with the unending scientific dialectic of theory and practice, that has prevented Freud from realising his metapsychology (see *Ibidem*, 99–103) program, as occurred with the *Entwurf.* The pioneering nature of this discipline, combined with the state of 20th century knowledge in the domains of psychiatry and neuro-biology, effectively blocked a similar development from the beginning. And still, this could be recognised as a substantial endeavour.

The subsequent slide towards the mythology of *Eros* and *Thanatos* demonstrates the attempt to associate the work of theoretical elaboration and re-elaboration with clinical practice, and at the same time reveals the risks of a speculative procedure detached from practical reality (perhaps, a speculation developed under a certainly too ambitious "Faustian" pretence of penetrating the secrets of Nature, as the young Freud once believed possible; see Freud 1985, letter of 21 May 1894). This change must be considered in relation to the particular aspect of the relationship between analytical practice and theorisation in psychoanalysis, which is always *in progress,* always in tension and in perpetual evolution. Beyond Freud and his research, it is always impossible to establish a definitive general methodology, fixing once and for all the psychoanalytical technique (see Vegetti Finzi 1990, 42). For, not only is a stable theoretical system not obtainable in psychoanalysis, but even a general model of the therapeutic technique cannot be established. From the specific viewpoint of psychoanalysis in itself, what is necessary is:

1. To grasp sufficient knowledge to realise a cure
2. To have a theorisation of and for the technique
3. To understand mental pathologies as pathologies

In *Analyse der Phobie eines fünfjährigen Knaben* (1908/1909), Freud writes:

> For a psycho-analysis is not an impartial scientific investigation, but a therapeutic measure. Its essence is not to prove anything, but merely to alter something (Freud 1961a, 103–104).

With reference to Fairbairn, Lacan and Bion's tentative theory of systematisation, Giovanni Jervis observes that the epistemological status of such theorisations is unclear, even ambiguous. A realistic way to evaluate these theorisations could be to consider them as partially explanatory models strictly derived from practice, or as critical and meta-critical instruments perpetually referencing the concrete analyst/patient setting. "Thus, these are not theoretical constructions entirely extra-clinical.

[…] It could be affirmed that even those more systematised aspects of Freud's metapsychology do not escape from this strict dependence on clinical practice, and then they must not be examined as autonomous constructions" (Jervis 1994, 56–57; author's translation).

The consequence of this discourse is that only a psychoanalyst as a clinical therapist can judge and know psychoanalysis correctly. Indeed, the contribution of philosophers and theorists to psychoanalysis has been enormous importance. (In this sense, the case of Ricoeur's *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud* is emblematic). The previous passage merely underlines the risks of forgetting the therapeutic nature of psychoanalysis as its main feature. Any theoretical construction needs a direct, strict, reference to the practical dimension. However, this perspective could be rejected, claiming the value and the importance of a purely speculative approach, even in psychoanalysis. In this regard, Freud's work offers in itself some clear examples, through *Totem and Taboo* (1912–1913), for example, or through the construction of the Oedipus complex (from Sophocles' *King Oedipus* tragedy), in which the speculative theorisation appears to be theoretically legitimate.

3.2.2 The Relationship Between Analyst and Patient

In the practical domain, the psychoanalytical interpretation must confront the concrete, specific, and ever changing reality of the relationship between analyst and patient. A therapeutic model can be theoretically defined, but under the condition of a specific therapeutic setting, it will be subdued to tensions and torsions, or rather to aporias and confutations. A patient's personality is a factor that influences the exercise of interpretation as a technique; it could even determine the meaning of interpretation, in its content and in its finality. In *Zur Einleitung der Behandlung,* Freud writes:

> The extraordinary diversity of the psychical constellations concerned, the plasticity of all mental processes and the wealth of determining factors oppose any mechanization of the technique; and they bring it about that a course of action that is as a rule justified may at times prove ineffective, whilst one that is usually mistaken may once in a while lead to the desired end. These circumstances, however, do not prevent us from laying down a procedure for the physician which is effective on the average (Freud 1961c).[7]

"Variation" is a new element that psychoanalysts largely recognise as relevant today, for the analyst's personality must be factored into this discourse. With Pierre Daco it could be said that even if two analysts possess similar therapeutic abilities, it is the one who possesses better human comprehension, communicative ability,

[7] In his *La psicoanalisi come esercizio critico*, Jervis underlines a similar conception; he says: "Psychoanalysis is not a strict therapeutic machine, or a standardised psychological itinerary like a process always identical to itself. On the contrary, it is a flexible instrument, adapted from the psychoanalyst to the singular patient, which is generally focused on specific interior psychological aspects" (Jervis 1994, 96; author's translation).

compassion, inner strength etc., who will be able to accomplish the better work (see Daco 1965).

Freud was actually well aware of this aspect. For example, in *Ratschläge für den Arzt bei der psychoanalytischen Behandlung* (1912), he exposes certain rules of the psychoanalytical technique, plainly declaring:

> I must […] make clear that what I am asserting is that this technique is the only one suited to my individuality; I do not venture to deny that a physician quite differently constituted might find himself driven to adopt a different attitude to his patients and to the task before him (Freud 1961b, 111).

Through this, the core of psychoanalytical interpretation reappears, with its specific character, which is not exclusively mental or rational. It is an important constituent that needs wider clarification.

3.2.3 Rationality and Irrationality in Interpretation

It seems that psychoanalytical interpretation cannot be reduced to a simple "translation" of unconscious content in terms of conscious language via linguistic analysis and the critical exercise of rationality. In psychoanalysis, interpretation is not simply a critical exercise; rather, it requires the complete involvement of analyst and patient, and not simply in considering the quality of their communication or of their specific (clinical) setting. The interpretative contents emerge from a dynamic whole or "movement" among emotions, feelings, intuitions and, of course, rationalisations. This interpretative work is therapeutic because a specific relational disposition or mental state that is different from analytical attention comes into play. Thus, it is a different type of interpretation. The analyst "enters" into a mental state in which he is able to freely swing between rationality and irrationality. In Sacha Nacht's opinion, if rational reason is not founded in the fertile humus of irrationality, it can become a trap for the patient and for the analyst. Why is this? Because a rationalising treatment stimulates the patient to stay and "play", maintaining his defensive tendencies (see Nacht 1978). Nacht speaks of "intuitive comprehension" and Jervis remembers that "Freud himself recommended analysts to use their unconscious as a 'receiver organ' […], leaving the narrower domain of the rational interpretation of a symptom or a verbal enunciation" (Jervis 1994, 73; author's translation). Jervis is implicitly referring to a well-known passage from Freud's *"Psychoanalyse" und "Libidotheorie"*, two encyclopaedia entries of 1922, in which, speaking about the "art of interpretation" in psychoanalysis, he writes:

> Experience soon showed that the attitude which the analytic physician could most advantageously adopt was to surrender himself to his own unconscious mental activity, in a state of *evenly suspended attention*, to avoid so far as possible reflection and the construction of conscious expectations, not to try to fix anything that he heard particularly in his memory, and by these means to catch the drift of the patient's unconscious with his own unconscious (Freud 1955c, 239).

3.2.4 Interpretation and Transference

In its development, Freud's psychoanalysis establishes transference neurosis as the core of treatment. It is under this dynamism that the psychoanalytical work of interpretation reveals its curative power, fully demonstrating its particularity. The thematic of transference represents a new element in favour of the thesis that the therapeutic axis of psychoanalysis is not in the critical and reflective component. The fundamental value of transference in psychoanalytical therapy lies in the fact that it constitutes a way of remembering and reliving. It could be said that the purpose of therapy is to freely remove contents via the emotional re-appropriation of meaning – through the re-actualisation of ideations, situations and traumatic experiences. In Freud's understanding, it is essentially repression that blocks this re-actualisation by the work of defence mechanisms. Nevertheless, the unconscious fragments of emotional life can be relived in the dynamism of the relationship with the analyst.

The analyst's first concern is to determine a sufficiently stable and effective transference addressing this dialectic between repression and liberation in a positive way. Proceeding with the therapeutic work, transference overtakes the entire communicative and relational area, monopolising analysis. More and more of the patient's libido is projected onto the analyst, and intensified until the patient unconsciously brings forth his original conflicts, which are the basis of his neurosis. A large part of clinical work is then devoted to the examination of transference and interpretation, thanks to which the analyst manages to control and to orientate the psychic processes in a curative direction. It is this direction that Habermas calls emancipation. Thus, the interpretative process works within the channel of transference, and it is under this particular condition that it assumes its therapeutic effectiveness.[8]

[8] A schematic synthesis of Freud's doctrine of evolution: at the beginning, psychoanalysis was a technique applied to analyse unconscious psychic contents through a work of excavation. Subsequently it worked analysing the Ego's resistances that blocked the emersion of the removal. During these first two phases, psychoanalysis essentially works with the meanings of the anamnesis, of the past reconstruction, and of the work of interpretation as investigation (a procedure that Freud associated with archaeological work). After the discovery of the central function of transference in therapy, the interpretation of transference becomes the main instrument. It is in this last development that the concept of interpretation in psychoanalysis finds its full and particular determination. In fact, if during the two first moments psychoanalytical interpretation tends to work on a (predominantly) rational level, during the advanced phase it invests the entire sphere of the patient and analyst's psychical life. At that time, Freud rejected his first idea of interpretation as *Deutung* for an idea of interpretation as *Konstruieren.* In his *Konstruktionen in der Analyse* he writes: '"If, in accounts of analytic technique, so little is said about "constructions", that is because "interpretations" and their effects are spoken of instead. But I think that "construction" is by far the more appropriate description'" (Freud 1961e, 261).

3.2.5 *Psychoanalysis of Culture, Therapeutic Interpretation, and The "Wild" Exercise*

A final, important psychoanalytical aspect must be considered when evaluating Habermas' interpretation of Freud: that of the aspect of psychoanalysis as speculation, which is the relationship between psychoanalysis and culture in addition to the psychoanalysis of culture. No discipline influenced science, culture, art, literature and symbolism in the 20th century in the way in which psychoanalysis did. Furthermore, the meta-critical work around psychoanalysis as a technique and a science, along with a philosophical perspective on the human being, has experienced a vast and varied development, with important implications for other sciences and disciplines. But what is the status of the meta-critical work in psychoanalysis? More specifically, what is the scientific justification for the psychoanalytical interpretation of culture?

Freud's writings demonstrate his strong aptitude for speculative theorisation. His work is largely traversed by literary, philosophical and aesthetic analyses that cannot simply be justified by Freud's style and erudition. They are constitutive parts of his methodology, theorisation, and explanatory apparatus. The case of *Oedipus Rex* is one example; others include Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Goethe's *Faust*. Even the Freud's documented influence by Schopenhauer and Nietzschean philosophy constitutes an important element; so too his imaginative work in *Totem and Taboo*, and the series of artistic (psycho-)analyses of "Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci" (1910), "Der Moses des Michelangelo" (1913 [1914]), *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion: Drei Abhandlungen* (1934–1938), and others.

The theoretical difficulty is determined here by the narrow binding established by Freud among the symbolic, oneiric and creative processes and activities (or sublimations) from one side, and mythic, artistic and cultural products from the other.

It is a binding complicated by the idea that mental life is something dynamic, constantly swinging between normality and pathology, but simplified by a radical biologism through which "the motivating forces of artists are the same conflicts which drive other people into neurosis and have encouraged society to construct its institutions" (Freud 1955a, 187).

In light of this, could it be possible to consider a work such as "Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci" as a simple cultural exercise of psychoanalysis (as would follow Ricoeur's interpretation)? The answer seems to be negative, particularly considering Freud's introduction to an essay on Leonardo da Vinci in which he writes:

> When psychiatric research, normally content to draw on frailer men for its material, approaches one who is among the greatest of the human race, it is not doing so for the reasons so frequently ascribed to it by laymen. "To blacken the radiant and drag the sublime into the dust" is no part of its purpose, and there is no satisfaction for it in narrowing the gulf which separates the perfection of the great from the inadequacy of the objects that are its usual concern. But it cannot help finding worthy of understanding everything that can be recognized in those illustrious models, and it believes there is no one so great as to be

> disgraced by being subject to the laws which govern both normal and pathological activity with equal cogency (Freud 1957a, 63).

Clearly, it cannot be expected that the use of psychoanalysis in extra-clinical contexts is accorded the same technical/methodological and psychotherapeutic validity as psychoanalysis in treatment, as *psycho*-analysis. Thus, this use of the psychoanalysis of culture must be considered merely as "an application", as a cultural exercise. However, the point is to clarify its status in relation to psychoanalytical theory and methodology. It is a point that refocuses the theme of therapeutic interpretation.

Both patient and analyst participate in the process of constructing the interpretation. The idea that the analyst is the custodian of a secret and symbolically sacred knowledge of the unconscious, like a priest, constitutes a sort of mythology. Perhaps, early in Freud's career, this was somehow expressed in his understanding of the analyst's role in the therapeutic context; however, he subsequently modified his perspective.

In general, it could be said that when the analytical work is detached from the therapeutic work of constructing interpretation, the analysis starts to assume that "wild" configuration that Freud recognised in his "Über 'wilde' Psychoanalyse", an important critical work that was against the free use of psychoanalysis by physicians without training. This concept of "wild psychoanalysis" could certainly be extended, even if it is primarily focused on a series of unadapted therapeutic conditions for therapy (the deficient cultural condition of the patient, the inadequacy of the moment, insufficient training or unsuccessful counter-transference analysis by the analyst). By extension, then, "wild" becomes a therapy in which the analyst anticipates a truth or intuition simply by guesswork, and not because it could, at a certain moment, be useful for the patient.[9] Or an interpretation is "wild" when it is exclusively based on written documents, such as the text of a dream, for example, which, without the added element of a patient's free associations, the analyst interprets only by following his own conscious understanding or unconscious links. The latter situation seems to indicate the possibility of extending the adjective "wild" to

[9] In his *Einleitung der Behandlung*, Freud says: "It is not difficult for a skilled analyst to read the patient's secret wishes plainly between the lines of his complaints and the story of his illness; but what a measure of self-complacency and thoughtlessness must be possessed by anyone who can, on the shortest acquaintance, inform a stranger who is entirely ignorant of all the tenets of analysis that he is attached to his mother by incestuous ties, that he harbours wishes for the death of his wife whom he appears to love, that he conceals an intention of betraying his superior, and so on! I have heard that there are analysts who plume themselves upon these kinds of lightning diagnoses and 'express' treatments, but I must warn everyone against following such examples. […] Indeed, the truer the guess the more violent will be the resistance. As a rule the therapeutic effect will be nil; but the deterring of the patient from analysis will be final. Even in the later stages of analysis one must be careful not to give a patient the solution of a symptom or the translation of a wish until he is already so close to it that he has only one short step more to make in order to get hold of the explanation for himself" (Freud 1961c, 140).

certain cases of "cultural" usage of psychoanalysis. Why? Because if it is true that only in the therapeutic relationship is there a correct and controlled psychoanalytical process, then only in therapy can a psychoanalyst advance a certain interpretation and construction demanding to reach something true in the patient's psychic life. Thus, a cultural interpretation of a dream of Goethe, rather than that of Bismarck or anyone else, even on the bases of epistolaries or other kinds of testimonies, cannot be expected to be fully, certainly and truthfully "diagnostic" and explicatory.

Essentially, psychoanalysis as psycho-analysis is connected to what is alive and present. This aspect is intrinsic and constitutive to it; it is differentiated from a psychoanalytical hermeneutics in which the static interpretation runs along the lines of a conscious work of understanding and memory applied to objectivised (recent or remote) texts and objects, projecting onto these objects and texts the author's psyche, with his background of convictions, knowledge, beliefs, emotions, interests and ends. Jervis writes:

> Psychoanalysis in its critical essence and in its dialectic concreteness, does not accept the conclusiveness of enunciates and descriptions, but rather demands to put attention on the motivations behind them. It always reverts back to the life world, beyond the text (Jervis 1994, 122; author's translation).

Without a doubt, cultural psychoanalysis is a specific "hermeneutics" able to consistently address many interpretations concerning art, philosophy, anthropology, sociology etc. in a productive and useful way. It is definitely not possible to prevent the philosophical work of psychoanalysis and its application to culture. However, the point here is to recognise the specific nature of psychoanalysis as a therapy and its distinction from the use of psychoanalysis as a philosophy or as a hermeneutics of culture.

Returning to the text of Habermas after the previous analysis, what was stated about his interpretation has been fully confirmed. First of all, his idea of the centrality of interpretive practice in therapy is unilateral, as is its connection to a widespread rationalism (both evident in Habermas). It is not compatible with mature Freudianism. Habermas builds his interpretation remaining largely fixed on the conception of the early Freud, in which psychoanalysis conveys many elements conducive to a reading in the hermeneutical key. Among them:

1. There is an enlightened conception of reason (recognisable behind the idea of the epistemic force of the analyst)
2. A rationalised idea of the work of interpretation in which the analytical task is understood as (archaeological) excavation, investigation, (philological) translation and (hermeneutic) interpretation
3. A reading through the symbolism of psychopathological phenomena. As previously underlined, this last element is derived from Lorenzer. Next to rationalism, it constitutes the second cornerstone of Habermas' interpretation. But this is an inadmissible conception for Freud. Psychoanalytical practice is read as interpretative work on symbolic connections, and by the critical dissolution of resistances

and of these connections. We have seen how interpretation, or rather the *Konstruieren*, appears in psychoanalysis as incisive, not so much by virtue of reflection, but by the complex of dynamic forces that (connected to the cognitive dimension) enter into the therapeutic relationship, dynamic forces that are constantly transforming the flow of words, images, and interpretations in a sea of emotions, tensions and memories, and that have to be accepted, countered, redirected, interpreted, regulated etc.

Part II
Ricoeur's Interpretation of Freud

Chapter 4
Ricoeur: The Encounter with Psychoanalysis and His First Philosophical Research

4.1 Psychoanalysis Interpreted by Ricoeur's First Masters

A series of historical, cultural and personal circumstances determined the youthful encounter between Ricoeur and Freud's psychoanalysis, between the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s; and a series of intimate and moral motivations contributed to transforming this encounter into something extremely important in his philosophical research.

There were three figures in particular, who deeply influenced and orientated Ricoeur towards psychoanalysis: Roland Dalbiez, who was his first professor of philosophy at secondary school, Gabriel Marcel and Karl Jaspers.

Psychoanalysis did not arrive in France smoothly. This is understandable considering the distance, in culture and mentality, of France from Germany, with particular respect to the political/ideological tensions that characterised the relationships between the two nations at that time (Roudinesco 1986). The new psychology, with its notable arsenal of theories, discoveries and clinical/experiential data, was crashing into the solid "wall" of French research on medicine, psychology and psychiatry. Especially psychiatry, with its secular tradition of clinical and scientific research in prestigious and influential institutions, only later turned its attention to psychoanalysis. Freud was practically ignored until the 1920s. However, psychiatry itself became one of the best approaches to psychoanalysis at a particular moment, thanks to the "role of mediation" played by the Zurich school, which was applying the new technique in treating psychosis. A second approach to psychoanalysis in France came via culture and art. This also started in the 1920s, around the *Nouvelle Revue Française* and continued with the artistic and literary work of the Surrealists. Suddenly, psychoanalysis was culturally fashionable.

Surrealism contributed to developing a political/ideological interest and the use of psychoanalysis too. In fact, the political *milieu* became a primary place of encounter between psychoanalysis and philosophy. In the 1920s, the Surrealists, including Breton, Aragon and Éluard, would participate with figures such as Politzer

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and H. Lefebvre in the activities of the PCF, the Communist political party in France. At an academic level, the first philosopher to write on psychoanalysis was Charles Blondel: his "Réflexions critiques sur la psychanalyse" was published in 1923. The essay attacks the libido theory, particularly the aspect of infantile sexuality, and develops a strong criticism of Freud's method of investigation and cure, denouncing its lack of scientific structure. Psychoanalysis is "obscenity elevated to a rank of science"; and its therapeutic success does not prove the validity and correctness of its constructions. Blondel's criticism would become one of the principal arguments from the detractors, close to the critique of pan-sexuality and immorality.

From the second half of the 1920s, the French philosophers' interest in psychoanalysis (and vice versa) increased. A specific, common terrain of judgement is observed in the medical/scientific and philosophical/cultural fields: the acceptance of psychoanalysis as a technique, as a clinical practice on the one hand, and the refusal to recognise it as a psychological doctrine and a philosophy on the other. This refusal would become evident throughout the cultural sector, from the philosophical to the intellectual, to the medical and theoretical/scientific worlds. Nevertheless, psychoanalysis as a therapeutic technique would be tested in France, after the initial resistance of psychiatrists, following the results and success of its use in the Burghölzli psychiatry hospital in Zurich. In 1923, the review *L'Encéphale* published the earliest results of the application of psychoanalysis from the first French psychiatrists. In the end, the efficacy of psychoanalysis as a treatment was proven, but Freud's theory persistently remained unrecognised. Even around the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (SPP), which was close to the group *L'évolution psychiatrique*, there was strong resistance to Freud's ideas (Mijolla 1982). It is in this historical/cultural context that the young Ricoeur came across psychoanalysis, introduced by his first teacher Dalbiez.

Above all, Dalbiez was interested in the scientific problematic of the work and the use of interpretation as a technique of knowledge and cure. He soon got in touch with the psychoanalytical movement, via the *Société Psychanalytique*, participating in their meetings as a philosopher without specialisation in psychology or psychiatry.

His work *La méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne* is a book in two volumes, published in 1936 and republished in 1949. It contributes a radicalising dualism between psychoanalysis and Freudianism, as the conjunction "*et*" (and) of the title immediately underlines.

According to Dalbiez, to have been unable to overcome the method from the doctrine is one of the two main mistakes of Freud (Dalbiez 1949, I, 1). "This confusion – he explains – is of the same way of identifying, in biology, the cellular theory with the discovery of the microscope" (Dalbiez 1949, 51–52; author's translation, as is the following). From one side, Freud puts scientific theories and facts on the same level; and, from another, he "does not proceed by accumulation of simple and demonstrative examples", but "he throws himself in interpretation that a critical mind may not judge as unverifiable" (*Ibidem*).

Dalbiez wants to separate the analytical procedure from Freud's metaphysical construction, and, at the same time, develop a systematisation of the technique's methodology. In fact, psychoanalysis as a technique shows a valid gnoseological and epistemic status. Thus, following a certain criterion, through psychoanalysis a researcher and a physician may reach the true content of knowledge. The work contributes to the advancement and progress of psychological methodologies. "La psychanalyse est avant tout une méthode, un instrument d'investigation" (Dalbiez 1949, 63).

Dalbiez's book was destined to greatly influence many domains. Remembering his master in his *Intellectual Autobiography*, Ricoeur recognises that it was Dalbiez who pushed him to integrate the unconscious and psychoanalysis into his reflective perspective on the voluntary and the involuntary (Ricœur 1995, 13).

Dalbiez received a Roman Catholic, Neo-Thomistic education. Ricoeur recalled that the privileged antagonist in philosophical discussions was idealism, for the radical separation of thought from reality; because of its self-referential and narcissistic character, it resembled psychotic dereism. In this context, Freud was essentially appreciated for his naturalist realism, which placed him on the side of Aristotle rather than that of Descartes or Kant (*Ibidem*, 12). Evidently, psychoanalysis was seen as being firmly rooted in the auto-evidence of reason, in the certainty, absoluteness and centrality of the rational function, on which all modern forms of philosophy were based, from Descartes to Hegel. Thus, Freud appeared to be the one who had introduced doubt into the last unconquered citadel of certainty. Freud induced doubt about the fact that consciousness could really be as it appears in itself. This verity was not in question for a philosopher educated in the school of Descartes.

Giving credit to Dalbiez for having "awakened" the young philosopher from the dogmatic Cartesian and Kantian reveries through psychoanalysis (see *Ibidem*, 34–35) is particularly significant, because Ricoeur returns several times to the question of Cogito. Precisely this psychoanalytical unmasking and demystifying function forms one of the main themes of the *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud*. In this essay, Ricoeur attributes to Freud the title of "master of suspicion", placing him in a particular historical and philosophical perspective alongside Marx and Nietzsche, as the "École du soupçon".

Marcel returned to the subject of the Cogito; he was Ricoeur's first great master. Ricoeur graduated during the academic year 1933–1934, with a thesis on the *Problème de Dieu chez Lachelier et Lagneau*, who had initiated and in fact incorporated him into the French tradition of reflexive philosophy. He studied Husserl's phenomenology and, during the years 1934–1935, moved to Paris, where he made contact with Marcel. At the time, Marcel's criticism was directed at the conception of objectivity in science, critiquing its reductive and schematising methods and interpretation of the "subject of knowledge". According to Marcel, in positivism, idealism, Hegelianism and in critical Kantian idealism, the subject emerges as an abstract ego, as a subject without concreteness, as a pure abstraction (Ricœur 1947, 20). Marcel wanted to counterpoise this with the real man, a subject that exists. His critique was rooted directly against the Cartesian Cogito. Marcel's imperative

moved from the abstraction of reason to the reality of experience, starting from the human being.

Ricoeur found concerns about Descartes in Marcel, concerns that Dalbiez had similarly harboured. Furthermore, in Marcel he found a source of additional credit about Freud's naturalist realism, much lauded by Dalbiez. However, while Freud had brought the human being "down to earth", creating a psychology of the real human (which could connect Freud to Marcel), he also promoted the idea of a depth psychology with a scientific, objective configuration. Consequently, Marcel's criticism against descriptive and schematising language and against abstracting and objectifying scientific methods also affected psychoanalysis. Ricoeur realised this in his first monograph, *Gabriel Marcel et Karl Jaspers. Philosophie du mystère et philosophie du paradoxe*. Published in 1947, the work is basically a rereading of his teacher's thinking by comparing an interpretation of Jaspers with his philosophy.

Marcel calls "primary reflection" the abstracting and systematising reflection of scientific thought. He dialectically connects this to "secondary reflection", which is a form that removes the abstract elements of the first moment, thereby rediscovering the concreteness, which is the substance of immediate experience. It is a critical movement or, rather, a dialectical/Socratic movement leading from "a critique of the primary reflection to the fragmentary and precarious elaboration of a new kind of reflection called secondary which is properly constitutive of the *philosophical* moment in the Marcelian thought" (Ricœur 1992b, 49; author's translation). In Ricœur's 1947 essay, he explains that Marcel never planned to carry out a critique of scientific knowledge (Ricœur 1947, 52). His main objective was to put impersonal thought into an economy of the whole spirit through thinking freed from schematism, by "an affirmative, but not dogmatic, thought; an exploratory, non-interrogative, thought, sensitive to the mystery, but rebellious to the hermetism, hostile to the spirit of abstraction and systematisation, but concerned with precision" (Ricœur 1992b, 51; author's translation). According to Marcel, objectivity is therefore the reign of the problem as opposed to the realm of mystery. In the realm of systematising knowledge, the "problem" is nothing but a kind of gap in knowledge, which can be overcome by an appropriate technique that is valid, reportable, and verifiable for all. "Thus, problems are of a determinate kind. They put at stake a limited number of variabilities that the mind confronts without considering the implications" (Ricœur 1947, 57). The scientific problem always ends up missing the concreteness of reality in which the subject of knowledge is abstract and interchangeable, and the object, the problem, is always outside of itself and anonymous.

According to Ricoeur's reconstruction, in Marcel, psychoanalysis falls into the form of objectifying scientific knowledge, representing a schematising, an abstracting and an impoverishing, which claims to achieve a true and certain knowledge, but which actually is lost in abstraction. Psychoanalysis moves away from what is true and meaningful because being (*l'être*) always escapes from a comprehensive and inclusive analysis. Ricoeur refers back to Marcel's judgement of Freud in a new passage from the 1947 essay, analysing the famous book *Être et Avoir* (1935).

Like psychiatry and psychology, psychoanalysis, as a manifestation of the technical world (that is, the interpretation in a technical and instrumental key of the real world and the lifeworld), and as an expression of scientific rationality, remains far from an understanding of the concrete subject and the real human being. Basically, the Freudian concept of man is biological and psychological. Freud's man lives and moves under impersonal forces, governed by a "bundle of functions". He is confined to a subjective dimension that cannot be overcome, where an openness to the world of others is inessential. In Freud, subjectivity is a function. Existential suffering comes from imbalanced energies or from a balanced, painful equilibrium: it is a kind of accident that breaks into conscious life. Subjectivity is merely the place of action for this dynamic. The psychic life is a sort of theatre, where the basic biological forces represent "performances" with defined "parts" that the "spectator", meaning the subject, is forced to watch/endure. All that is man (character, personality, interior life, existence, suffering, joy, etc.) derives from these absolute and primitive natural forces.

To be is nothing more than to have. Psychoanalysis is an expression of the loss of the sense of wonder, mystery, and sentiment of man for the human being and for the world. It is the way of interpreting and considering the world, which leaves man prostrate on the ground of functionality, empiricism, exteriority, instrumentality, poverty and sadness.

The year in which Ricoeur approached Marcel's thought is the same in which he began studying Husserl, specifically his *Ideen* (which he would translate into French a decade later). These are also the years of his meeting with Emmanuel Mounier, and of his first collaboration with the magazine *Esprit*. Between 1935 and 1939, Ricoeur studied German; in September 1939, Germany declared war against France, and Ricoeur was called up for military service. Captured, he remained in prison until 1945, where he studied Jaspers' philosophy of existence. Ricoeur had previously been introduced to Jaspers by Marcel who, in 1932–1933, published "a very favourable article" on him entitled "Situation fondamentale et situation limite chez Karl Jaspers". Jaspers dealt with Freud's psychoanalysis, both as a psychiatrist and a philosopher; and his philosophy must have represented for Ricoeur another opportunity to study psychoanalysis.

Under the horizon of his *Philosophie*, Jaspers' criticism of psychoanalysis is framed within the critique of positivism (Jaspers 1932). The first characterisation of positivism is, for Jaspers, to recognise the unique positive value of reality. All of "what is", that "there is", that "is given" and "done" is as pure and simple as being there. For positivists, the individual is seen to be governed by knowable determinations, from natural powers that respond to the laws of necessity. These laws are the will of being, personal interest, the will of prestige and eroticism. The second characterisation of positivism is to think of the Being as directed by consciousness, which is objectified, fully knowable, fully understandable, manageable and manipulable. According to Jaspers, real life is included in the polarity of instinctive vitality and technical rationality. The latter does not deny the former, but puts it under its service. If one's life threatens to be scuppered under the causal and incalculable motions of the soul, they have no reason to be there. It is sufficient to immediately

know and direct them. In psychoanalysis it is believed the most remote ends of the soul's impulses and psycho-technique must be understood so that their effects may be directed along the right road. As Edison dominated dead matter; thus, Freud sought to dominate the soul.

This interpretation is very similar to Marcel's reading. The gist of the criticism is almost identical: it claims to reach a real and effective, penetrating understanding of the depths of the psyche, but stops at the surface, at the threshold of Being. The psychoanalytical subject is an abstract entity lacking a soul and individuality, but is clearly and positively understandable because it is objectified. Psychoanalysis is nothing more than an expression of scientific ideology.

In the *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*, the critique of psychoanalysis takes place both philosophically and psychologically, both at a methodological and clinical level and at a theoretical level. Although Ricoeur places Freud alongside Feuerbach, Marx and Nietzsche in the "*école du soupçon*", Jaspers does not see any original unmasking power in Freud (*Ibidem*). According to him, only Nietzsche has really radicalised Descartes' doubt.

Jaspers also grasped the comprehensive capability of an existential psychiatry in Freud's psychology and his own, although with methodological and theoretical/doctrinal limitations. Psychoanalysis is part of a comprehensive psychology, which is in its nature a philosophical horizon. For Jaspers, a merit of psychoanalysis is the intensification of existential observation; for psychoanalysis is "a psychology of comprehension". Thus, Jaspers puts the name of Freud next to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, although not in an equal position. In fact, Freud would have repeated, enlarged, and reversed on a low level of mediocrity what Kierkegaard and Nietzsche did in the higher spheres for a true account of the spirit. With his comprehensive psychology, Freud would errantly provoke psychiatry and psychology, to prevent authors such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche from influencing psychopathology.

4.2 Husserl and Merleau-Ponty

From the 1940s, Ricoeur focused increasingly on Husserl's phenomenology, in particular on *Ideen I*, which he had begun to translate during his prison years. The translation of this work, edited with his extensive commentary, became the technical thesis presented for his doctorate, together with the *grande thèse* on a philosophy of the will. In the introduction to the work of the German philosopher, Ricoeur tried to separate the essential descriptive core of phenomenology from the idealistic coating adopted by its creator. In this way, "making good use of the rights of realist interpretation"(Ricœur 1995, 22), he articulated a (methodological) phenomenology that, freed from choosing between realism and idealism, could be reconciled with the existential instances of Marcel's and Jaspers' philosophies. In fact, it marked a distancing from Husserl's conception of the second transcendental reduction. As elaborated in the *Ideen*, the phenomenological reduction seemed to lead to

an absolutist interpretation of consciousness and to the metaphysical thesis of the primacy of consciousness in the world, as in Fichtean idealism.

As Ricoeur explained at the beginning of his *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty also resisted the orthodox interpretation of phenomenology in a similar way. According to Merleau-Ponty, phenomenological reduction opens up to the world-of-life via the immediate consciousness/world relationship, which is perception. In Merleau-Ponty, the reduction is radical to the extent that we see this new dimension, further on from the schism of our experience, in a reified corporality and in an incorporeal interiority. In the foreword to *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Merleau-Ponty explains that the greatest teaching of reduction is the impossibility of a complete reduction. This is why Husserl repeatedly questions the possibility of reduction. If we were absolute spirits, the reduction would not be problematic. But, because we are in the world and our reflections take place during the flow of time, there is no thought that can embrace all our thinking. Thus, the phenomenological reduction, far from being, as it was believed, the formula of an idealistic philosophy, is a philosophy of life (Merleau-Ponty 1945).

Ricoeur's connection with Merleau-Ponty in his interpretation of Husserl's phenomenology is clear. The refusal of the idealistic choice, the methodological use of phenomenology, and the realist interpretation that leads to a philosophical/existential outlet are all characteristics of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, and are largely present in Ricoeur's thesis, *The Voluntary and the Involuntary*. However, the intention of the book was to function as a counterpart, in the practical order, to the *Phenomenology of Perception*. If the latter seemed to form a description of the representative acts, Ricoeur's work satisfied the need to broaden the affective and volitional eidetic analysis of operations of the consciousness through the thematic choice of the voluntary and the involuntary.

Furthermore, this is important for the study of being in the present text, because, as an attentive reader and interpreter of Freud and psychoanalysis, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is of particular importance in Ricoeur's research. Consulting Merleau-Ponty's bibliography within his major works, one finds few books on philosophy among the many titles on psychology and psychopathology. His work is a rethinking of the results of scientific research to draw philosophical conclusions from the philosophical "materials" of his phenomenological research. Merleau-Ponty wanted to realise a scientific philosophy. The commonality between Merleau-Ponty and Ricoeur is that they were thinkers who (like their contemporary compatriots De Waelhens, Dufrenne, Sartre et al.), besides having led phenomenology down the path of the philosophy of existence, pursued with attention and interest the humanities and, particularly, psychology and psychoanalysis.

This is not an area to be underestimated. In his *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty grouped Freud along with Marx and Nietzsche (with Hegel and Kierkegaard) in what he calls the "school of phenomenology". According to Merleau-Ponty, Freud contributed greatly to the evolution and extension of the phenomenological method, showing that all human behaviour is a significant manifestation of meaning that is never understandable in terms of exteriority. Psychoanalysis is far from being a reductive concept. In fact, in his concrete analysis, Freud

abandons causal thinking, showing that symptoms are increasingly of a sense or are over-determined. This is tantamount to admitting that a symptom, when it is established, is always found in the subject's reasons for being, so that no event in life is, properly speaking, determined from the outside.

With the deepening of his ontological conception, Merleau-Ponty made further approaches to Freudianism, especially the notion of the unconscious. Around the end of the 1950s, he becomes aware of the impossibility of a direct ontological route, because there is a kind of threshold to cross in the depths of the subject. This not directly knowable dimension of the self is what Freud called *unbewusst*. In the preface to a book by A. Hesnard, published in 1960, he applies Husserl's phenomenological method to Freud's depth investigation. Phenomenology and psychoanalysis share the same interest in tending towards what is latent. As Gary Madison explains,

> Invoking in this preface the "unthought thought" of the late Husserl and phenomenology's discovery of the "archaeology" of the subject, Merleau-Ponty says that "this phenomenology which descends into its own subtraction more than ever converges with Freud's investigations". This should not be taken to mean that phenomenology says clearly what psychoanalysis says only confusedly, but rather that they are both turned "towards the same *latency*" (Madison 1981, 192).

On this point, the proximity of Ricoeur to Merleau-Ponty is particularly strong. Merleau-Ponty is credited with having pioneered the phenomenological treatment of the unconscious, which had only partially been problematised by Husserl; and then Ricoeur follows, developing an original alternative at the end of his phenomenology of the voluntary and the involuntary.

Chapter 5
The Unconscious as a Principally Affective Matter

5.1 A Phenomenology of the Voluntary and the Involuntary

Ricoeur's *The Voluntary and the Involuntary* must be linked to Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, first of all because of their common phenomenological "vocation". *Phenomenology of Perception* concretely shows the possibility of phenomenology of a broader perspective, of the field of investigation and of application.

In the first philosophical step of his research, Ricoeur assumes the primacy in the reality of the existing subject over the abstract Cogito, and the need to prevent the "irrational" drift of philosophy. In the phenomenological method, he finds the key to avoid this discursive weakness, to reconcile the transcendental dimension of meaning with the immanent dimension of real existence. However, he cannot find a way to overcome the constitutive Cartesian dualism, because the opening of phenomenology to the voluntary, that is the structures of practical Cogito, is not enough. Phenomenology is a limit in itself: the concrete reality of the world, and the factual and the objective dimensions of the subject cannot be fully considered.

Faced with corporeality, phenomenology cannot overcome the dualistic gap of the body-subject/body-object, because, in remaining in the subjective dimension, everything leads back to this dimension. It excludes the objective dimension of the subject; in short, it is an abstract discourse that does not fully penetrate the concreteness of the Cogito. However, phenomenology is the starting point for a philosophy of the integral Cogito, because it immediately solves the contradictory and fragmentary muddle of daily life by focusing on what is essential and constitutive. Thus, following the phenomenological approach, I immediately experience my voluntary dimension – and indirectly, by this, the involuntary. First of all, I understand myself to be a wilful subject, as "I want". This "I want" gives rise to the description of the wanted. It is, in principle, "what I decide, the project". "I decided this, *because*…" constitutes the first structure of the junction between the involuntary and the voluntary, allowing me to relate many functions, such as need, pleasure, pain etc., to their

V. Busacchi, *Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics*,
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perspective, which is the "I" of the Cogito. The involuntary, which is considered here, is connected to the sphere of the will as a "motivation" or "organ"; however, "not all the involuntary is a motive or organ of the will". There is something of the inevitable at play, an involuntary that is absolute in relation to decision and effort (Ricœur 1966, 8).

If the involuntary singles out the body, then the corporeal dimension deeply penetrates the Cogito down to its basic structure: the wanted. When expressed through the involuntary as need, pleasure, pain etc., corporeality approaches the decision. The *Cogito* is deeply rooted in the *sum*. At this stage, the structure of the dualism assumes a new formation. In it, the absolute involuntary stands as the terminus of the original act of will (*Ibidem*), and thus it relates to the "Cogito as I", as the alterity of the Cogito.

To this internal laceration, a second is added, as a consequence of the integration of the body into the Cogito. According to Ricoeur, the reconquering of the Cogito must be total; and it is within the Cogito itself that we find the body and the involuntary that it nourishes. The integral experience of the Cogito includes the "I desire", "I can", "I intend", and, in general, the individual experience of existence as a body. A common subjectivity is based on the homogeneity of the voluntary and the involuntary as structures. The description, attentive to what appears in self-reflection, moves in a single universe of discourse, a discourse on the subjectivity of the integral Cogito (Ricœur 1966, 9). Therefore, unity is possible, for Ricoeur, through subjectivity; and, indeed, this is the principle of unity. The "I exist" expresses "me" in my integrity and totality; and my body is not simply added to it, to me. It is not my body, for example, that feels pleasure or pain, but *me* feeling it through my body. Ricoeur fully rejects Descartes: the link between the voluntary and the involuntary is not located on the border of the two universes of discourse, one of which would be a reflection on thinking and the other a physics of the body. Cogito's intuition is that of the body joined to the will, which is affected and dominated by it (Ricœur 1966, 9–10).

It is at this point that the problem of dualism assumes the dualistic form of body-object/body-subject. According to Ricoeur, the resolution of this matter is not easy. The replacement of this dualism of substances with a duality of viewpoints is not an effective solution. The body as a subject and the body as an empirical object are not the same. Any study of an integral reunification starting from an empirical approach is out of the question, because the scientific point of view, connected to the empirical approach, tends towards a naturalistic reduction of the entire psychology of the Cogito. In this way, the subjectivity of the subject is destined to be lost.

To resolve this gap, in recomposing the Cogito's mind–body unity, Ricoeur comes to reconsider reality. He writes that a relationship must exist, "because it is the same body" (Ricœur 1966, 12). This sentence contains the key: in fact, if we understand the relationship between the objective and subjective dimensions of the body not as a relation of coincidence, but as a diagnostic correlation (*corrélation diagnostique*), then "each moment of the Cogito can be an indication of a body-object moment". Thinking in this way, scientific rationality is usefully transformed into an instrument, an indicator, of the practical and affective Cogito's intentional

structures, connected to the body, which is its objective expression. However, in order to reach the integral experience of the real Cogito, it is necessary to overcome the reflective and transcendental sphere. The dualistic problem faced until now has been a problem of comprehension, as a dualism of understanding, not a real dualistic Cogito condition. With the transition from a pure phenomenological description to actual existence (from the *cogito* to the *sum*), this dualism is re-actualised as a problem of existence, as a problem of the duality of existence.

This is a critical step, because it marks the return to the dimension of the real, existential subject, in recovering both its existence and its spiritual life. However, how is it possible to form a unitary discourse between "a *distinctive understanding*" of the voluntary and involuntary subjective structures, and the "*encompassing sense* of the mystery of incarnation"? (Ricœur 1966, 15). According to Ricoeur, it requires a unitary constitution based on a tensional modality. Primarily, it is a reflection of the living tension between the *cogito* and the *sum,* for which the philosophy of the human being appears as a living tension between an objectivity processed by a phenomenology measured on the Cogito and the meaning of embodied existence (Ricœur 1966, 17). The dissolution of this kind of duality is immediate for one who is able to recognise that "this body" is "my body" and that "this body – it's me". However, consciousness arises as the power to withdraw in relation to the reality of one's own body and the reality of things, as the power of judgement and rejection. The will is an unwill (Ricœur 1966, 18). The dualistic tension is rooted in existence and the living *pathos* and drama of being an embodied existence. The link between voluntary and involuntary is not more descriptive than structural, because this relationship expresses a struggle, a conflict against a sort of resistance. Which one? Following Domenico Jervolino's interpretation, this duality is the paradox of the human condition, which is restless, forced between freedom and nature, consciousness and corporeality. This duality is felt and expressed as a paradoxical tension and perpetual conflict (see Jervolino 1993, 13). The methodological and philosophical consequences are enormous: the researcher must pass from phenomenology to existence, from description to participation.

The discourse is no longer about the Cogito as a subject, but rather concerns the subject as a person. The final reconciliation is less ontological than ethical. Ricoeur's anthropological philosophy looks to a reconciled ontology, but the gap or the paradox of fundamental freedom *and* fundamental nature presents an ethical challenge. In fact, the correct configuration of this dualistic moment is as ethical dualism. Subsequently, the methodological pre-eminence of the philosophy of the subject is substituted by the ontological priority of the philosophy of the person developed via ethics. The voluntary/involuntary dichotomy is, initially, an ethical duality, the formal and descriptive expression of nature/freedom.

5.2 The Unconscious and the Hidden

For the principle of reciprocity, the involuntary eidetic is expressed starting from the voluntary eidetic. The intentionality of a decision emerges as the first phenomenological aspect of "to decide" as an expression of the will. In the sphere of the involuntary, motivation is related to it as the source, matter and "reason" for the decision. It originates from the corporeal dimension, because the body is the primordial source of most original motivations and *valeurs vitales*, which come from the incessant, spontaneous demands of life, echoing in the depths of our corporeality. Therefore, any description of the involuntary must begin from the "corporeal involuntary", or the "first involuntary". This link between motivation and corporeality immediately reveals this anthropocentric dialectical dualism between freedom and nature. Evidently, Ricoeur is thinking of a kind of motivation different from motivation as explanation, as a process of reasoning. Rather, it is motivation in the sense of the inner move (from the Latin *movere*), in the sense of emotional movement, emerging from the deepest realm, the emotional and non-rational of the individual.

At this first level of the eidetic of the involuntary, the body manifests as the total field of motivation. "The fact is that the body is not only a value among others, but also that it is in some way involved in the apprehension of all motives and through them of all values" (Ricœur 1966, 122).

At this point, it would be interesting to introduce the unconscious in its adjectival form, for it is this indeterminate region of motivation, which is a non-transparent and not immediately conscious region of affectivity. In fact, the closeness between Ricoeur's conception of corporeal motivation and Freud's concept of instincts (in German *Trieb*, from *treiben*, to push, move) is clear. Incorporating the body in the sphere of subjectivity, Ricoeur actually uses a Freudian anthropological perspective, which starts from the unity of *psyche* and *soma*, of mind and body. In Freud, the drive is the original source of all human motivation, subconsciously disguised from the censorial function, or modified or sublimated into rational, moral, or culturally "civilised" forms. For Freud, "motivation" is movement; it is a necessary biological push; it is determination strictly originating from the innermost psychical region, close to the organic dimension of life.

The theme of "involuntary" power follows the passage to the second level of the phenomenological analysis of the voluntary, the level that focuses on the eidetic of action. To act is the essential function of the will. Will is expressed through action, which is manifested and fulfilled in the world through the body. It is a circularity in which the subject's unity lies. But then, how does one think about action as a force that produces a change, a movement within the Cogito? In a certain sense, Cartesian dualism is unsurpassable, Ricoeur says. But if "this dualism is in all respects an outcome of method" (Ricœur 1966, 217), is it not abandoning, is it moving on? In the end, only phenomenology is able to conceptualise the Cogito as "the very intuition of a soul joined to a body" (Ricœur 1966, 219), as it considers consciousness including itself. Thus, think of Cogito as embodied consciousness. "To think", however, is not "to live": phenomenology stops short of the living

duality. The body is a rebellious power; it is not conquerable just by thinking, intuiting, or understanding.

The difficulty intensifies again for a third duality provided by the phenomenon of pathological dissociation, whereby normality can only be understood as the result of balance, as a condition of unity subtended by the dramatic duality of imbalance. The reality of human normality is the unsteady grip of the will onto functions rooted in the body. The possibility of its failure is constantly present. How does one account for this duality? How does one overcome it? Quoting Maine de Biran's motto, "*Homo simplex in vitalitate duplex in humanitate*", Ricoeur opposes the idea of the hidden unity of the human being to the immediate fact of dualistic reality. He writes, "The unity of the human composite is formed at too deep a level to be easily discoverable" (Ricœur 1966, 228). Nonetheless, this union is the *simplicitas in vitalitate* "more basic than all duality" (*Ibidem*).

It is certainly significant that the *simplicitas*, as the most fundamental of all dualities, is conceived as buried in the recesses of the involuntary. The fact that this *simplicitas in vitalitate* cannot be easily understood reveals its mysterious nature. Further, the fact that it is connected to the involuntary suggests that a part of the mystery of the incarnate Cogito lies in the recesses of the body. However, it is important to remember that phenomenology grasps that *simplicitas* immediately and intuitively. Perhaps in this sense, Ricoeur considers phenomenology to be the key to its revelation.

To continue, the conquest of this eidetic moment is overcoming the duality of the will and the body-object. The unity found and described is obviously ontological. The body is no longer a simple object, an object "moved by me". Thought and action are, in fact, variations of the Cogito. In other words, in Cogito the opportunity is recognised to translate will into action by moving the body. For that body is not just a body: it is the Cogito, which is acting; it is me.

The second dualism is resolved within the discursive sphere of action, according to the particular characterisation given by Ricoeur. It forms a unity around the dialectic between the body's resistance and docility via emotion.

Naturally, the body surrenders to the will, and the will impresses on the body. The human being is fundamentally free, as he or she is basically a unity (*simplex in vitalitate*), and tends to perpetually reaffirm this unity.

Moving onto the third movement of the voluntary, at this stage it takes the form of consent; and the involuntary takes the form of necessity or an absolute involuntary. At this very deep level of human subjectivity, the tension of the experienced wound is maximised. Corporeal necessity is the most radical aspect of the involuntary, articulated in one's *character*, *unconscious* and *life.* Confronted with it, human beings can do nothing but consent. "To consent" here, according to Ricoeur, is an act of freedom. Through my acceptance, my "yes", I express recognition of my freedom, my ability to choose. Thus, consenting is an act through which ontological and ethical dualism is practically overcome. This wounding constantly recurs, forcing the will to take a repeated stand, to "choose" again and again.

> Yes to my character, whose constriction I can change into depth, consenting to compensate its invincible particularity by friendship. Yes to the unconscious, which remains the indefinite possibility of motivating my freedom. Yes to my life, which I have not chosen but which is the condition which makes all choice possible (Ricœur 1966, 479).

The unconscious is a modality of necessity that is more radical than character. It is an element that has a more severe risk of freedom, because that element of non-dissimulation kept in character is lost. Ricoeur points out that, contrary to what emerges from characterology, the analysis of character reveals the irreducible transparency of this involuntary mode. Character refers to the freedom of the subject as closing, because of the limitation of being, and, at the same time, as opening, because of the expression of its freedom, of being. Characterology works in classifying tendencies, while saying nothing about its subject matter. Here the residual, somehow, shows a hidden inner reality.

Of this hidden realm, of this "*empire du caché*", the psychoanalytical unconscious is only a region. However, it is not an isolated region; rather, it is firmly anchored in the body from one part, and to the character from another part. Character, which previously seemed like a way of opening up and exposing the subject to the world, is now revealed as a way of retreat, of closing. Beyond closing, the character reveals the hidden, including hidden desires in the sense of lies and deception. But, it is within the unconscious that concealment and deception assume a radical position as a "crisis of freedom" that is more serious than character.

In the domain of the hidden, Ricoeur splits the "lie of the passions" from "the unconscious strictly speaking" (Ricœur 1966, 374). The unconscious is not the deceiver. On the one side, there is "the fundamental lie derived from the fault" (*Ibidem*), which is individual freedom that is deceiving by itself (or that chooses to deceive); on the other, there is the "hidden nature", which is the unconscious, or human nature, which conceals consciousness. This is just a descriptive split, because both are, in fact, hidden. "While the analysis of the unconscious tends to be expressed in the language of disguise and lie, the true lie tends to hide behind the involuntary deception which the unconscious produces in consciousness" (Ricœur 1966, 375).

The dialectic between the hidden of the unconscious and of freedom reveals, according to Ricoeur, the mistake of the Cartesian idea of the self-transparency of conscious and unconscious reality.

> We must first of all reject this apparent dilemma of a definite realism of the unconscious and a definite idealism of consciousness in order to pose correctly the new paradox of an *indefinite matter* of signification and an *infinite capacity* of thought (*Ibidem*).

Thus, Ricoeur's intention is not only to carry out a critique of Freud's unconscious. He wants to interpolate this dimension of subjectivity discovered by psychoanalysis in its phenomenological anthropology. However, this operation poses a serious difficulty in terms of methodology. In fact, Freud's scientific psychoanalysis contradicts phenomenology, both as a procedure and as a specific way of knowledge (with its specific rationality). On the one hand, Ricoeur succeeds in introducing psychoanalysis in a phenomenological drawing by resorting to an indicative,

diagnostic function; on the other hand, he is in a position to develop phenomenologically what psychoanalysis has indicated and diagnosed. Consequently, the psychoanalytical concept of the unconscious must be subjected to criticism, crossed by the eidetic and integrated into the Cogito to the level of the absolute involuntary. The problem is in deconstructing Freud's unconscious, freeing it from its naturalistic, objectivistic and realistic constraints.

In developing his criticism against Freud's realistic conception of the unconscious, Ricoeur explicitly starts by analysing his teacher's work, *La méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne*. Ricoeur intends to replace Freudian doctrine with a conception reconcilable with his *Philosophie de la volonté*.

Freud's doctrine of the realism of the unconscious is referred to as the primary and most flawed element (Ricœur 1966, 376). With this, the theoretical essence of Freud's metapsychology is practically rejected. From Ricoeur's perspective, to accept the "reality" of the unconscious obstructs the recognition of conscious, apodictic self-transparency. But even this Cartesian idea is problematic. Although Ricoeur refuses Descartes' solution to relegate the "passions of soul" (and all things unconscious) to the bodily mechanism, conversely, Ricoeur opposes unconscious realism with precisely this Cartesian argument, that is, me who thinks, and not an unconscious that thinks in me. But this assumption does not imply acceptance of the thesis of the complete transparency of consciousness to itself; in fact, the "not-thought" is, to some extent, confined to the body. Ricoeur explains:

> We believe that the philosophers who have for good reason refused to attribute any thought to the unconscious were subsequently wrong when they refused to attribute to thought this obscure ground and this spontaneity hidden within it which blocks its efforts to become transparent to itself. We believe on the contrary that consciousness reflects only the form of its actual thoughts. It never perfectly penetrates a certain *principally affective matter which presents it with an indefinite possibility for self-questioning and for giving meaning and form of itself.* The unconscious certainly does not think, but it is the indefinite *matter*, revolting against the light which all thought bears with it (Ricœur 1966, 378).

Thus, Ricoeur's position strikes a kind of middle way between Cartesianism and Freudianism. He accepts the idea that there is something that escapes, that hides consciousness. He calls this *principally affective matter* (*matière principalement affective*), establishing, on the one hand, a link between passion and reason, between the unconscious and thought, and, on the other, between *matter [hyle]* and *form.* Thought is tied to form as passion is tied to matter.

It is necessary to clarify what Freud means by the term "unconscious thought", because Ricoeur seems use it differently. If "unconscious thought" means a linguistic and conceptual construction underlying consciousness, then for psychoanalysis there are no "unconscious thoughts". If "unconscious thought" is better referred to as an "unconscious mind" producing unconscious thinking, then, once again, this has no place in Freud's conception. Freud extensively uses the term "unconscious content" (*latenter Inhalt*), rather than "unconscious thought". It is true that in different places in his work he even uses the expression "unconscious thinking", but, clearly, this is a term of expression generally referring to the affect of psychic dynamics. Unconscious thought, in fact, implies unconscious *thinking*, but in the

sphere of *unbewusst*, Freud does not acknowledge a "thought" or anything similar to it. Freud's unconscious does not have thought by itself, even if Freud admits that "some of these latent states […] differ from [those] conscious […] precisely in the absence of consciousness" (Freud 1957c, 168). The instincts, and all unconscious facts, have meaning for consciousness only, and never in and of itself. However, this does not imply that unconscious reality is simply unformed matter.

5.3 The Unconscious

With the adjective "unconscious", the early Freud indicates a set of contents that are not present in consciousness. The unconscious, first and foremost, in a topical sense, denotes one of the systems of the psychic apparatus constituted by removed contents, that is, from contents rejected by the conscience through the function of removal (*Verdrängung*). The metapsychological essay *Das Unbewusste,* published in 1915, clarifies that these contents are representative of drives. "Representative of instincts" (*Triebrepräsentanz* or *Triebrepräsentant*) indicates processes and factors through which and in which the drive results in psychic expression, in which it is psychically expressed. Basically, it only indicates an *ideational representative* (*Vorstellungsrepräsentanz*), but often it also includes the affective dimension (although Freud separates representation from the affective). From the earliest days, Breuer's first studies on hysteria produced evidence that the affective is not necessarily connected to representation. However, the removal mechanism does not intervene on the drive directly, for, being somatic, it is outside of the unconscious; rather, it works on the instinctual representation or, more precisely, the ideational representation. With this concept, Freud describes the relationship between the somatic and psychic dimensions, particularly between the drive and its unconscious expression. Although he did not specifically explain the concept of ideational representation, from his conception of the unconscious it can be understood that it is far from being like an unconscious thought; conversely, it approaches the irrational, which is closer to the drive.

In "A Note on the Unconscious in Psychoanalysis", first published in English in 1912, and then in German in 1913, Freud broadly refers to the use of such terms as "unconscious thought", "unconscious ideas", "latent concept" etc. But, sticking to the concept of the unconscious as it is clarified from his metapsychology of the first topic, it is commendatory to think that Freud had recourse to similar concepts for purely explanatory reasons. It is no coincidence that the article, originally conceived for an English audience, which was still far from knowing about psychoanalysis, opens by underlining his desire "to expound in a few words and as plainly as possible what the term "unconscious" […]" (Freud 1961d, 255) means. In discussing the hysterical mind, he uses the term "unconscious ideas".

Studien über Hysterie locates in a traumatic event the cause of hysterical symptoms due to "an inadequate" affective discharge. Two terms are called into play here: representation and affection. It is clear that the quoted passage must be

referenced for this theorisation. Therefore, for active yet unconscious "ideas" it must be understood as nothing but the instinctual representatives emotionally charged. Thus, in Freud's view, the theory of unconscious thinking shall not be allowed, and the existence of an unconscious thought, shall be allowed only in part, with a very specific meaning. Regarding dreams, Freud speaks of *latent dream thoughts*, but they are not thoughts determined by or contained in the unconscious. They are processed at the subconscious level as are the contents, which change the nature of instinctual representations in the process of emerging from the unconscious; they are rejected or not admitted to consciousness by censorial mechanisms. The latent content emerges as *significant* only in relation to consciousness, for it and from it. Latent dream thoughts are not "thinking" hidden behind the manifested thought; rather, they are meanings hidden from consciousness by the manifest or hidden meaning.

The question becomes more complicated when looking at the idea of the unconscious as it appears in Freud's second topic. Although a triadic articulation of psychic structure (Id, Superego, Ego) is given, the adjectival use of the term "unconscious" is now predominant. It no longer refers to unconscious content only, nor does it indicate the constitutive and dominant character of the Id. Now, instincts are what essentially characterises the Id. The Id is conceived as the amoral, chaotic reservoir of instinctual energy, which has the dual dynamic of *Lebenstriebe/Todestriebe*. The Id is chaotic, and at the same time resembles something with a certain degree of structure, which is partially intertwined with the other psychic dimensions (but differently from the first topic, which is a more systematised topic). These changes are not simply conceptual or theoretical; they extensively modify the representation and comprehension of mental life, in addition to the therapeutic procedure of psychoanalysis, which is now more focused on the function of the Ego in synthesising the "dialectic" between conscious and unconscious (whereas previously it operated around the repressed content and the mechanisms of defence: repression, regression, reaction formation, isolation, undoing, projection, introjection etc.; Ellenberger 1970).

On the basis of this new perspective we may re-evaluate the question of the existence of unconscious thoughts. In fact, if the unconscious can even work in the sphere of the Ego, then, somehow, unconscious thinking can be figured and distinguished from the Id's unconscious dynamism, which persists as a specific, distinguishable reality. On the one hand, this lets us explain the nature of those unconscious thoughts defined in the first topic as different from conscious contents only by virtue of a lack of consciousness. On the other hand, it is helpful to acknowledge the existence of unconscious thoughts without falling into the trap of the mythology of a hidden "entity". The Id does not have a language or a "will".

As Ellenberger, among others, has explained, for Freud, language is a function of the Ego. Unconscious content emerges from the Id as a primitive instinct and carries a symbolic, representative, or linguistic expression and representation, passing through the unconscious from the preconscious. With good reason, Ricoeur speaks of an "absolute necessity in man", in referring to the Id. In fact, it is something related rather to the corporeal dimension, to the energetic side of life, than to its

mental and spiritual side. But Ricoeur is wrong in maintaining (in his "Critique of Freudian "realism" of the Unconscious: The Mode of Existence of the Unconscious in Consciousness") that the unconscious "desires, imagines, and *thinks*" (Ricœur 1966, 385). As Freud himself explains in lesson 31 of the *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1933): "The Id of course knows no judgements of value: no good and evil, no morality. The economic or, if you prefer, the quantitative factor, which is intimately linked to the pleasure principle, dominates all its processes. Instinctual cathexes seeking discharge – that, in our view, is all there is in the Id" (Freud 1964, 92–93).

According to Ricoeur, Freud's unconscious is even "a psychological unconscious which perceives, remembers, desires, imagines, perhaps wills the death of another and its own, but is not aware of itself" (Ricœur 1966, 385).

Perhaps Ricoeur's second main idea regarding the unconscious, *matière principalement affective*, is closer to Freud's conception, even if the concept of "*matière*" (matter) seems to suggest the idea of something passive, whereas Freud's unconscious is dynamic (as is the entire psychic life). It could be a problem even to emphasise unconscious affective elements, because the second topic denies the coexistence of the affective element with a representative instinctive element. Ricoeur certainly conceives a non-Freudian concept of the unconscious, related to Husserl's phenomenological interpretation, and better connected to the logic of the first Freudian topic.

This interpretation of the unconscious as "affective matter" corresponds with Ricoeur's strategy of presenting a principle of homogeneity between the conscious and the unconscious (principally, by speaking of unconscious thoughts) and at the same time preserving the autonomy of will, or the freedom and superiority of the Ego onto nature (i.e. the Id dimension). Despite all of this, Ricoeur accepts the principle of continuity between normality and pathology discovered by Freud, largely accepting the psychoanalytical dynamic of "logic". But there is a difference: where Freud's metapsychology submits the whole psychic life to mechanism and determination (or determinism) – including consciousness – Ricoeur conceives the Ego, or Cogito, as capable of freedom and spontaneity. He does not accept Freud's theory of a complete psychical determinism,[1] which is the pillar of psychoanalysis, as an analytical and therapeutic technique, and as a theoretical perspective of the human being. How, then, does one harmonise these contradictory anthropological conceptions? Ricoeur resolves this by considering psychoanalysis as a technique, rather than a general perspective of the human being. To him, this technique is required (only) when a "*machinal pathologique*" is in operation, which is something

[1] See, for example, Freud 1962b, 253–254: "Many people, as is well known, contest the assumption of complete psychical determinism by appealing to a special feeling of conviction that there is a free will. […] According to our analyses it is not necessary to dispute the right to the feeling of conviction of having a free will. If the distinction between conscious and unconscious motivation is taken into account, our feeling of conviction informs us that conscious motivation does not extend to all our motor decisions. *De minimis non curat lex.* But what is thus left free by the one side receives its motivation from the other side, from the unconscious; and in this way determination in the psychical sphere is still carried out without any gap".

pathological. The point for him is that one may speak of a mechanism or rigorous determinism around pathological phenomena. However, if it is correct to consider Ricoeur's interpretation in this way, then we must assume that his acceptance of the principle of continuity between normality and pathology is limited and partial. It is true that, in his book, a certain degree of uncertainty around this question can easily be found. For example, he recognises that:

> Indisputably the *psychoanalytic method* is impracticable unless we adopt this "naturalistic" point of view which is the working hypothesis of analysis. This is a point we cannot overstress. It does not constitute a part of the doctrine but of the analytic method itself, in the same way that biology is only possible if we treat the body as an object. Thus we confront facts which become apparent only if we adopt a particular viewpoint and method (Ricœur 1966, 381).

In some ways, Ricoeur reproduces here the distinction in Freudian psychoanalysis between method and doctrine, which he learned from Dalbiez. The consequence of applying to clinical experience what has been mentioned here is that certain psychic phenomena appear as pathologies only in assuming the psychoanalytical point of view. However, Ricoeur admits the possibility of a kind of "mechanical" (pathological) experience of Cogito, requiring the intervention of an analytical technique. Perhaps it is possible to achieve better harmonisation between Ricoeur's hermeneutics and Freudian theory, generalising a vision of psychic dynamics in which spontaneity (freedom) may be transformed into a mechanism. The "*machinal pathologique*" as a renunciation of or as a removal of spontaneity would reveal a mode, a potential mechanical aspect of the Cogito, which Freud theorised as an automatism, a causalism, or a "rigorous determinism". Thus, psychoanalytical treatment would operate by seeking the return of this lost spontaneity, freeing the spirit from this pathological over-presence and over-influence of nature (i.e. mechanical action/reactions, like additions). In fact,

> Someone *other* (this other can be myself, in some special circumstances, difficult to bring about) has to interpret and know in order for me to be able to become reconciled with myself. Someone other has to treat me as an *object,* as a field of causal explanation, and to consider my consciousness itself as a symptom, as the sign-effect of unconscious forces, in order for myself to become the master of *myself* once more (Ricœur 1966, 384).

In the section entitled "Critique of Freudian 'Physics' of the Unconscious" Ricoeur sums up the problematic in a phenomenological key by considering it as "ultimately based on the possibility of extending the idea of causality to the acts of a subject" (Ricœur 1966, 397). For him, "this extension is the fruit of an objectification of unfree motivation which suspends its *subjectivity*" (*Ibidem*). In other words, for Ricoeur, causality inside subjectivity is just non-free motivation, rather than biological causalism or determinism.

> *Causality is the objective equivalent of an absolutely unfree motivation.* It is this unfree motivation which belongs to the same sphere as freedom – not the determinism in which it is "objectified". To put in other words: the unconscious and unconscious mechanisms are not immediately "objects", "things", but affective automatisms make them as much as possible like physical entities whose determinism they *simulate* (*Ibidem*).

Through this argumentative strategy, Ricoeur assumes that mental life functions as a mechanical thing, as Freudian psychoanalysis postulates and demonstrates through research and treatment of psychopathologies; and, at the same time, he is able to preserve the idea of freedom as the core of the inner sphere. Consequently, embracing this perspective, even the understanding of psychoanalysis functioning as a technique changes: it does not work as a hard technique on the physical and biological reality of the brain, but as a soft technique, which "attacks" the "*machinal pathologique*" by means of interpretation, working at the level of involuntary motivations.

In this way, Ricoeur reconciles the reality of the unconscious with his phenomenological doctrine of intentionality as largely constituting mental life, even at an unconscious level. Thus, Ricoeur re-appropriates Husserl's interpretation of the unconscious. Their rendition from the perspective of perception and "non-reflective" consciousness[2] posits that what is unconscious is related to perception, thinking, judgement, and memory by a relation of proximity, which influences them, but not as a pre-formed act of perception or conscience, or an already-orientated intention. What is unconscious is just *matière impressionnelle* (impressional matter). Intentionality is what distinguishes conscious from unconscious, and, at the same time, what expresses their relation and dynamism. In short, the unconscious is nothing but the pre-intentional; the unconscious does not think. The "meanings" expressed in dreams are not expressions of an unconscious will; they are not "expressed", as they are the result of the patient-analyst's work of interpretation. Thanks to phenomenology, Ricoeur can now change his previously emphasised point of view on unconscious thoughts (and this is another oscillation of his system), writing as follows:

> It is not necessary to locate thoughts in the unconscious in order to understand this phase of psychoanalytic cure. We do need to say that for the sick person the difficulties and dreams which inhabit him receive meaning for the first time from him. By adopting the analyst's convictions in an intimate way the patient forms the thought which frees it. We could say, if we wish, that he recognizes something in himself which has been banned *but it* is not yet a fully formed thought which would lack only consciousness. It was no thought at all: it is in becoming a thought *that it* ceases to be a weight on his conscience. Only now do the difficulties and dreams have the dignity of thought, and that thought marks the reconciliation of man with himself. This promotion to thought is what in the last instance has curative value (Ricœur 1966, 390).

The new oscillation expressed in this passage certainly ascribes a more theoretical uniformity to Ricoeur's re-interpretation of the unconscious. However, his text retains a certain imbalance, which could be the result of a persisting uncertainty or of an unsustainable model. In fact, although he emphasises that the unconscious cannot exist as a separate, autonomous entity with its own "will", he also suggests that the unconscious matter might be dissociated from a certain form of expression/representation. For, "this matter can be called unconscious when it is *dissociated*

[2] "What perception does not in any sense include is an explicit judgment of reflection, such as 'It is I who perceives, I am perceiving'. But apart from such explicit reflection, perception by its nature includes a diffuse presence to the self which is not yet a conscious grasp" (Ricœur 1966, 387).

from the 'form' which gives it life and its true meaning" (Ricœur 1966, 392). Thus, the unconscious is something that "dissociates" something from something else. The unconscious is made *ex post* through the abstract decomposition of the act of consciousness, or through the description of a "matter" of thought somehow underlying the thinking itself, i.e. its intentional "form". Through Husserl, the unconscious is revised and "corrected". Although the concepts of unconscious thinking and unconscious thought are brought back to Husserl's notions of non-reflective consciousness and the pre-intentional dimension, at the same time, the notion of the unconscious is absorbed through the idea of affective *hyle* (again, a Husserlian concept).

Ricoeur recognises the fragility of his interpretation, admitting: "The critique of the Freudian 'physics' is as difficult and precarious as the critique of Freudian 'realism' of the unconscious. We have been led to say that the unconscious is made up of infra-perceptions, infra-images, and infra-desires. Now we can say that its mechanisms and dynamism function *like* a physical nature" (Ricœur 1966, 400). But, to him, this precarious understanding and explanation is the consequence of a constitutive dichotomy between what is known, understood, and treated in psychoanalysis as the "unconscious", and what is experienced personally, at the level of subjective intuition and feeling. There is no subjective equivalent of an objective fact or knowledge. The "diagnostic correlation" must be the only way, as it works in harmonising the subjective body and the objective body, i.e. the body as an experienced (unique) body and the body as a physical object of study and knowledge.

Chapter 6
The Hermeneutics of Psychoanalysis of *Freud and Philosophy* (1965)

6.1 The Graft of Hermeneutics to Phenomenology as an Alternative to Structuralism

The 1960s in France were certainly the years of the structuralist turn, rather than the hermeneutic. Ricoeur was among the few French philosophers to immediately accept Gadamer's revolutionary lesson of *Wahrheit und Methode*, published in Germany in 1960, which was partially translated into French only in the mid-1970s. In 1958, Levi-Strauss published his *Anthropologie structurale* in France, and, in 1962, *La Pensée Sauvage*. With these works, the structuralist point of view, which began in linguistics with Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916), largely and rapidly diffused into anthropology and other disciplines. Although Louis Althusser, another French protagonist of those years, applied structuralism to Marxism, it was the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan who tried to reinterpret Freud's doctrine and therapeutic methods by conceiving of the unconscious as having a fundamentally linguistic structure. Thus, in France, this movement swiftly became a new cultural paradigm and a methodological trend in the sciences.

Structuralism opposed all forms of substantialism, attacking the three main philosophical traditions and their different stems: idealism, historicism and humanism. Particularly strong and condemnatory was the criticism against the modern idea of the self as an epistemic centre, as an apodictic and autonomous foundation of certainty, value and freedom, which further inspired various contemporary philosophies (existentialism, spiritualism, phenomenology, personalism etc.). It opposes the thesis of the precedence of structure over subjectivity. Never again, "*Cogito, ergo sum*", Lacan explains. Not only does the unconscious follow and express rules analogous to the syntactical structures, which govern conscious linguistic subjectivity; but this unconscious structure also governs the "logic" of conscious feeling and thinking. Consequently, I think "where" I am not, *ergo*, I am "where" I am not.

V. Busacchi, *Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics*,
Contributions to Hermeneutics 3, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39010-9_6

In this context, Ricoeur persists in following his reflective and phenomenological line, which is deeply rooted in Descartes' substantial conception of human identity. In the 1950s he accepted the challenges presented by the discovery of the unconscious and the metapsychological, natural interpretation of human beings, but now, in this era, he refuses the structural drift, reinterpreting Freud's psychoanalysis using hermeneutics, which is a discipline somehow connected to the dimension of language. Even if misunderstood by many (including Lacan), Ricoeur would demonstrate the possibility of interpolating the linguistic perspective on the unconscious, without losing the autonomy and reality of the self. Through hermeneutics he changes his project to a phenomenology of the will, developing an interest in the symbolic system as an indirect way of knowing, expressing and representing human life. He does not completely shift away from phenomenology and psychoanalysis; on the contrary, he develops a methodology of a phenomenological hermeneutics (i.e. a descriptive interpretation) by which he approaches psychoanalysis from a new, more extensive, speculative point of view. Indeed, the heart of his *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud* (1965) is not the philosophy of symbols in itself, but the interest in understanding this new comprehension of the human introduced by Freud's discoveries, and, further, the determination to accept and challenge this new naturalistic and destructive perspective on the human. To this we can add the structuralist elimination of the subject from his position.

Essentially, Ricoeur's response to psychoanalysis and structuralism is that the subject still persists as the dynamic centre of all human functions: psychological, spiritual, and moral. This is because, on the one hand, the discovery of the unconscious and the partial substantiality of the self demands recognition; on the other hand, by "conquering" the unconscious and traversing the universe of symbols, one finds an indirect way to full realisation and knowledge of oneself. This relationship between the desire to be and symbolism blocks the short-cut to self-intuition by itself. The appropriation of my desire to exist is impossible directly by way of consciousness. What remains is the long road of the interpretation of the signs, as the following passage indirectly explains with regard to reflection: "*Reflection is the appropriation of our effort to exist and of our desire to be, through the works which bear witness to that effort and desire*" (Ricœur 1970, 46; author's italics). Therefore, the semantic plane is intertwined with the reflective plane, and the linguistic discourse is integrated into hermeneutics. As opposed to Heidegger, who took the *voie courte* of the ontology of comprehension to re-access self-comprehension, Ricoeur chooses the *voie longue* of the analysis of language and the interpretation of signs and symbols. To him, "the ultimate root of our problem lies in this primitive connection between the act of existing and the signs we deploy in our works; reflection must become interpretation because I cannot grasp the act of existing except in signs scattered in the world" (*Ibidem*).

The development of a new comprehension of existence must be based on a semantic analysis of the concept of interpretation as used in hermeneutic disciplines. This semantic level, on which the symbolic contents and products are studied, must be connected to the level of reflection to provide an understanding of the plurality or symbolism of expression as a moment of self-comprehension. From

here, it is possible to regressively and progressively achieve a problematic of existence through the conflict of rival hermeneutics, which are invariably linked and rooted to the inner dynamism of regression and progression; of nature and spirit; and of history (memory) and future (realisation). Essentially, as an archaeology of the subject, psychoanalysis presents a regressive perspective, indicating the reality of a subject whose sense is deferred into the *arché*. By contrast, Hegel's phenomenology of the spirit proposes a dialectical movement in which each figure finds his meaning and realisation teleologically (into the *telos*), not in the previous figure but in the next one.

Ricoeur's discovery of the conflict of interpretations fits perfectly with his philosophy on the subject, as expressed after *The Voluntary and the Involuntary*. Somehow, the idea of a permanent, perpetual, interior conflict and dialectic between nature and freedom is hereby confirmed.

The dialectical confrontation with structuralism finds its root here, at the level of an investigation around a philosophical anthropology and a hermeneutics, which, in working on the interpretation of signs and symbols, emphasises the centrality of language and linguistic structures. His research into the problem of language directly involves psychoanalysis and phenomenology. In fact, as Jervolino explains, "psychoanalysis and structuralism share a common conception of the sign that calls into question any intention or claim to believe the reflection of the subject on himself and the position of the subject by himself as an original, fundamental, and foundational act" (Jervolino 1993, 25; author's translation).

Within the horizon of this survey on language, Husserl's phenomenology is also involved. In fact, the entire consideration and use of structuralism is developed in comparison with Husserl's phenomenology. Therefore, it is a tensional dialectic, because the semiotic structuralist model, reproducing the unconscious as a "Kantian" structure, interprets its reality and functioning as the "work" of a system organised under the laws of language, without any subject or Cogito, which must present in phenomenology. Even beyond the confrontation regarding psychoanalysis, the tension or conflict between structuralism and phenomenology persists, owing to their differing approaches to meaning: whereas the first analyses meaning around linguistic structures, the second considers intentionality as the key to grasping and understanding meaning. Consistent with his methodology, Ricoeur does not embrace a conflictual position. He tries to find a sort of middle ground recognising the limits of phenomenology and the strategic function of structuralism in overcoming it. The passage through the objective and systemic points of view of structural semiotics becomes necessary for self-understanding, which is now submitted to the regime of long mediations. All of these elements and aspects are subsumed and resumed in *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, which is more than a hermeneutical work "on interpretation".

Ricoeur articulates this work in three parts or "books": *Problematique*, *Analytique* and *Dialectique*. In the first, his concern is to identify and discuss the reasons and topics for a philosophical enquiry into psychoanalysis. He affirms that he wants to place his investigation in the broader field of contemporary philosophical issues, namely those concerning language and the problems of self-understanding and

self-knowledge. In fact, by interpreting psychoanalysis as a methodical interpretation organised around the semantics of desire, in addition to a hermeneutics of demystification, Ricoeur transforms Freud into a "master of suspicion", connecting his psychoanalysis to the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche. In this way, the philosophical meaning of psychoanalysis is expanded and deepened: it is now understood to be a new interpretation of culture, and a new vision of the modern human, which is false in itself and in its own representation.

Freud connects the "vicissitudes of the instincts" to the "vicissitudes of meaning". The first are attainable only through the second, only as a part of the "vicissitudes of meaning". Therefore, all psychic phenomena are pushed back into the realm of meaning, and vice versa; they are redirected back to the original psychic matrix. Ricoeur recalls that "therein lies the deep reason for all the analogies between dreams and wit, dreams and myth, dreams and works of art, dreams and religious 'illusion', etc. All these "psychical productions" belong to the area of meaning and come under a unified question: how do desires achieve speech? (Ricœur 1970, 6). This question reveals a problematic of language that turns the idea of the "semantics of desire" from psychoanalysis to philosophy, bringing Freud to Wittgenstein on the one side, and to Heidegger and Bultmann on the other (Ricœur 1970, 3). The linguistic problem becomes a general problem about a unified discourse in understanding the human, its reality and condition. In fact,

> Today we are in search of a comprehensive philosophy of language to account for the multiple functions of the human act of signifying and for their interrelationships. How can language be put to such diverse uses as mathematics and myth, physics and art? It is no accident that we ask ourselves this question today. We have at our disposal a symbolic logic, an exegetical science, an anthropology, and a psychoanalysis and, perhaps for the first time, we are able to encompass in a single question the problem of the unification of human discourse (Ricœur 1970, 3–4).

Precisely herein lies one of the major questions of our time: "today the unity of human language poses a problem" (Ricœur 1970, 4). It is a quandary in which the problems of language and human understanding are intertwined. However, Ricoeur does not simplistically reduce the second problem to the first. More important than a concern with language or discourse, in fact, is the question of the human being. Following Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, we now know that the modern, Cartesian notion of the Cogito as a fully conscious entity is false. Thence, we have learned the hermeneutical exercise of suspicion: a process of interpretation "as reduction of the illusions and lies of consciousness" (Ricœur 1970, 32).[1] In many ways, these major philosophical lines deepen differently in book II, *Analytic*, and in book III, *Dialectic*; however, the question of language largely influences the *analytical* volume, which

[1] Further, Ricoeur explains that "these three masters of suspicion are not to be misunderstood, however, as three masters of scepticism. They are, assuredly, three great "destroyers". […] All three clear the horizon for a more authentic word, for a new reign of Truth, not only by means of a "destructive" critique, but by the invention of an art of interpreting" (Ricœur 1970, 33). In any case, if Marx follows an "absurd theory of the reflex consciousness", Nietzsche "is drawn toward biologism and a perspectivism incapable of expressing itself without contradiction", and Freud "is restricted to psychiatry and decked out with a simplistic pansexualism" (Ricœur 1970, 32–33).

is a *Reading of Freud*, whereas hermeneutics as a philosophy is the main thrust of the *dialectical* one, which is *A Philosophical Interpretation of Freud.* In the second book, Ricoeur describes as an epistemological and methodological problem the two very different languages at work in psychoanalysis (in its theory and practice): energetics and hermeneutics. In the third book, he develops the epistemological, anthropological, and cultural consequences of the discovery of a permanent, dialectical conflict between hermeneutics (in the search for truth, in the realisation of life, in the symbolic and spiritual expressions of beliefs and values).

The study of Freudianism allows Ricoeur to demystify hermeneutics, discovering the conflict of interpretations (from interpreting symbols and other human or spiritual expression). In this way, the essential and most important hermeneutical elements are thematised: that is, "language", "symbol" and "interpretation". So then, is psychoanalysis in a special position to question and investigate these elements in a unique manner? What is certain is that the ways in which these elements function, connect and intertwine in psychoanalysis are absolutely particular; the philosophical lessons derived from psychoanalytical practice, and their ensuing speculative implications and consequences, are unique.

As early as *The Interpretation of Dreams* psychoanalysis has been linguistically placed in a determined position: "it is the area of symbols or double meanings and the area in which the various manners of interpretation confront one another" (Ricœur 1970, 8). Here Ricoeur does not thematise the "conflict of hermeneutics", because the problem is essentially analysed from the linguistic perspective with all its implications, but, in interpreting psychic desires expressed in dreams, desires ambiguously expressed or dissimulated through symbols of culture, and symbols manifesting the sacred, a deep, transcendent meaning, like that found in *The Symbolic of Evil*, is revealed. Thus, in some way, the second book leads to the third, somehow following and developing the previous practical/religiously orientated interest in symbols. In the end, even *Freud and Philosophy* shows the deepest development between a speculative hermeneutics, the phenomenology of religion and a quasi-poetics.

Another important passage from the first book, the *Problematic*, concerns the clarification of what interpretation is in psychoanalysis. Following a middle way, Ricoeur references the hermeneutics of a textual model, emphasising the fact that, in many ways, Freud returned to the notion of a text "freed from the notion of scripture or writing" (Ricœur 1970, 25). "Freud often makes use of it, particularly when he compares the work of analysis in translating from one language to another; the dream account is an unintelligible text for which the analyst substitutes a more intelligible text. To understand is to make this substitution. The title *Traumdeutung,* which we have briefly considered, alludes to this analogy between analysis and exegesis" (*Ibidem*). For Ricoeur, who transforms Freud's metaphoric use of "text" into a generalised theoretical/practical paradigm, Freudian interpretation becomes something "concerned not only with a scripture or writing but with any set of signs that may be taken as a text to decipher, hence a dream or neurotic symptom, in addition to a ritual, myth, work of art, or a belief" (Ricœur 1970, 26). Ricoeur's extensive and generalised use of Freud's metaphor of a "text" has a negative impact on

the recognition of a double linguistic register in psychoanalysis, because the consideration of all psychic expression in mental life, and in human cultural and spiritual production, as text for interpretation is equivalent to speaking of a one-dimensional register or discourse, which is a hermeneutics. The aim of psychoanalysis and mental life, then, would be to reduce the sphere of meanings and their interpretations to the point where there are no instincts, natural mechanisms, mind–body problems, causal–reasons dilemmas, conflicts etc. The second book precisely highlights this theoretical, epistemological, and methodological problem, whereas the third reconsiders the question from the perspective of a hermeneutic conflict, one that is regarded as the essential, dialectical dynamism between regression and progression in the heart of man. At the same time, it represents a general paradigm for different tendencies in hermeneutics. The conflict is precisely between a hermeneutics of demystification and a restorative hermeneutics. It is obvious that Ricoeur places himself on the side of a restoration of meaning. To him, even the hermeneutics of demystification is part of its function and process: a real challenge for reason, reflection, value, spirit and faith. Thus, in the same sense, the challenge of Freud and psychoanalysis must be considered and accepted by him. Therefore, what is really interesting in this research is the new understanding of the human being, which Ricoeur develops through his phenomenological hermeneutics and by contributing his personal interpretation, which goes beyond Freud, beyond psychoanalysis.

6.2 *Freud and Philosophy*: Critique of the *Analytic*

In the introduction of the analytical volume, Ricoeur clarifies how *Freud and Philosophy* must be read. If, on the one hand, "the reader may treat the "Analytic of Book II as a separate and self-sufficient work" (Ricœur 1970, XIII), on the other, the ""Analytic" is not a self-enclosed reading on a single level; from the beginning it is oriented toward a more dialectical view, according to the movement from the more abstract to the more concrete that sustains the series of readings" (Ricœur 1970, 61). Therefore, there is a dialectical relationship between the Analytic and the Dialectic books, marking an inner progressive movement that transforms the analytical results of Ricoeur's reading of Freud into a speculative interpretation. Thus, the Analytic is qualified to be the field within which Ricoeur's interpretation of Freud's psychoanalysis may be evaluated theoretically and technically.

This Analytic is elaborated in three chapters or cycles. The first is a kind of epistemological study. It displays a critical analysis of Freud's metapsychological works (written between 1914 and 1917), trying to clarify the question "what is interpretation in psychoanalysis?" In the second cycle, Ricoeur focuses on Freud's interpretation of culture, which is "regarded as a merely analogical transposition of the economic explanation of dreams and the neuroses" (Ricœur 1970, 62). Most important in this chapter is the attention paid by Ricoeur to Freud's second topic, considered as having a more open orientation to the intersubjective dimension than the other. In the third cycle, Ricoeur's attention is on the late Freud, and his

quasi-mythological re-theorisation of psychic life through the Eros–Thanatos dialectic. In it, one of the most significant achievements is the abandoning or overcoming of the unstable epistemic relationship between energetics and hermeneutics, but this comes at the high price of the abasement of psychoanalysis to "a sort of mythological philosophy" (Ricœur 1970, 63).

From the opening of the first chapter, Ricoeur presents the specific characteristic of Freud's discourse. Following in a certain manner the same line of Dalbiez and Hyppolite (*Philosophie et psychanalyse*, 1959), he comments: "Freud's writings present themselves as a mixed or even ambiguous discourse, which at times states conflicts of force subject to an energetics, at times relations of meaning subject to a hermeneutics" (Ricœur 1970, 65). If, for his predecessors, this ambiguity was a cause of epistemic "weakness" in Freudianism, to him the ambiguity is apparent, because "this mixed discourse" is precisely "the *raison d'être* of psychoanalysis" (*Ibidem*). However, Ricoeur's work itself underlines this epistemological problematic of psychoanalysis, renewing in many ways the long debate over the foundation of psychoanalysis. In fact, despite his initial declaration, what is at stake in *Freud and Philosophy* is a determinate philosophical metamorphosis of psychoanalysis with great epistemological consequences: above all, it amounts to a progressive epistemic and speculative reduction of psychoanalysis into a depth hermeneutics. Assoun is right when writing that "reading this so well argued and documented work of Paul Ricoeur, it almost seems that hermeneutics has bent over the cradle of Freudianism with the purposes of purging it from its origin that, even if evoked as relevant, ends up looking unacceptable" (Assoun 1981, 29; author's translation).

Either directly or indirectly, Ricoeur's distinction between energetics and hermeneutics in Freud's theory as comprising a mixed discourse refers back to Hyppolite's distinction between *matérialisme de l'énergie* ("energetics" in Ricoeur) and *analyse intentionnelle* ("hermeneutics" in Ricoeur; Hyppolite 1971, 409). This problematic connection resumes the central theoretical problem of Freudianism; thus, directly or indirectly, it contains the core of the series of speculative questions connected to it. "The whole problem of the Freudian epistemology" – says Ricoeur – "may be centralized in a single question: How can the economic explanation be *involved* in an interpretation dealing with meanings; and conversely, how can interpretation be an *aspect* of the economic explanation?" (Ricœur 1970, 66).

Behind this dialectic of energetics and hermeneutics the endless controversy between the natural sciences and the historical or human sciences is clearly reproduced, along with their differences and reciprocal contradictions in expecting to be recognised as absolute sciences. Beyond the epistemological problematic, Freud's mixing of the two discourses expresses the necessary, tensional relationship between their register in a field in which the distinction between natural (i.e. the *brain*) and historical or spiritual (i.e. the *mind* and *historical identity*) is not clear, radical, or avoidable (except for reductionists). Ricoeur's energetics/hermeneutics dualism resumes one typical form of the antithetic explanation/interpretation epistemology observable in sciences such as psychology and sociology, which are unbalanced between the natural and human sciences. Original in his work is the fact that studying Freud's dualistic discourse, among other studies around text, action and history,

he finds a way to create a new epistemological model able to articulate explanation, comprehension and the work of interpretation. If this is not explicitly affirmed in *Freud and Philosophy*, at least there is the first step in building the theorisation, recognising Freud's duality as a characteristic of psychoanalysis instead of as a contradiction. In fact, according to Ricoeur, under energetics, the theoretical universe of psychoanalysis (through the use of a large number of metaphors and vocabularies of "energy") is essentially collected, rather than under hermeneutics, where the practical/therapeutic universe is essentially resumed (through the use of expressions related to language and meaning).

It is true that in *Freud and Philosophy* Ricoeur's criticism against Freud's dualism is ambivalent and sometimes very strong. Following his scheme, a language of force would express the quantitative, physical, energetic and biological dimensions of human life, whereas a language of meaning would express the psychological dimension, as in a comprehensive psychology, and a generalised and undefined exercise of interpretation. Therefore, Ricoeur reads Freud's psychology as entirely collocated under the domain of hermeneutics, which seems to be incorrect after reconsidering Freud's writings.

According to Freud, language and force, mind and brain, meaning and energy are inseparable. To him, the explanatory universe is not antithetical to the comprehensive universe. This unbalanced discourse is a consequence of his multiple attempts to solve the significant challenges of providing a scientific basis for his new psychology. At that time, the methodological weakness of psychology was a well-known fact, but even neuro-physiology was demonstrating its inability to give a rigorous and sure correlation between mental fact and cerebral occurrences. Thus, between these two weak alternatives, Freud (after the juvenile attempt of the *Entwurf*) would become even more convinced of the validity and utility of psychological language. He chose psychology because of its flexibility and proximity to the object of psychoanalysis, as testified in *Studien über Hysterie*.[2] Nevertheless, as Sulloway's *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* tells it, quoting Holt, Freud holds on to the hope that one day his ideas will be founded on a more scientific basis (Sulloway 1979). Throughout his life, Freud maintained the conviction that psychoanalysis was a science like physics or chemistry (for example, Freud 1955c), and that psychologistic language was a provisional solution. In

[2] See Breuer, Freud 2000, 160: "I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science. I must console myself with the reflection that the nature of the subject is evidently responsible for this, rather than any preference of my own. The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the work of imaginative writers enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight into the course of that affection. Case histories of this kind are intended to be judged like psychiatric ones; they have, however, one advantage over the latter, namely an intimate connection between the story of the patient's sufferings and the symptoms of his illness – a connection for which we still search in vain in the biographies of other psychoses".

Beyond the Pleasure Principle he remarks, "The deficiencies in our description would probably vanish if we were already in a position to replace the psychological terms by physiological or chemical ones" (Freud 1955b, 60).

In opposing the language of psychology to neurophysiology and other scientific disciplines, Ricoeur ignores Freud's position and his attempt to wrest psychology from its relegation to the human sciences, i.e. those disciplines lacking in rigor on the basis of the "strong sciences". Obviously, Freud's project is not comparable with Wundt's bid to place psychology among the experimental sciences, following his thesis of a radical mechanicism and causalism at the base of mental life. Nevertheless, Freud also substitutes free will and the qualitative distinction between (mental) reasons and (cerebral) causes using the concept of determinism or "rigorous determinism", as a bridging element between mental and cerebral. Although Wundt works with rigor following his technique of "experimental introspection", Freud extends his research to the unconscious, following the technique of "free association" based on the idea that nothing is really "free" owing to a "rigorous determinism", which connects the conscious and the unconscious, cause and reason, as one. With this theoretical conception, it is clear that, for Freud, the methodological "challenge" is to establish a controlled interpretation, one rigorously established and conducted. Clearly, Ricoeur sees and considers this problem, but does so under the tensional relationship between the two already fixed epistemologies. He thereby redoubles and multiplies the problem (interpretation as comprehension; interpretation in explanation; explanation, interpretation and understanding; etc.).

Beyond this, it is interesting to reconsider Ricoeur's original reconstructive approach to Freudian psychoanalysis, because under his double-view perspective Freud's progressive and problematic theory is followed in its epistemological metamorphosis. Ricoeur finds some traces of hermeneutics in the unpublished young Freud's *Project of a Psychology* (*Entwurf einer Psychologie*), even as he considers it a part of "what could be called a non-hermeneutic state of the system" (Ricœur 1970, 69). Actually, the *Project* references the question of interpretation. In fact, "the intention of this project is to furnish us with a psychology that shall be a natural science; its aim, that is, is to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determined states of specifiable material particles and so to make them plain and void of contradictions" (Freud 1966b, 355); At the same time, in the *Project* he wants "to *understand* the structure and development of neurons as well as their functions".

At the end of the 19th century the idea of a naturalistic psychology was popular in science, thanks to positivism. Freud's *Entwurf* and, generally speaking, his scientific/ideological perspective on psychoanalysis followed this line. Surprisingly enough, in the *Project*, Freud does not consider psychopathology as an intricate, unintelligible and non-directly measurable domain for scientific knowledge. On the contrary, the "quantitative line of approach is derived directly from pathological clinical observations, especially from those concerned with "excessively intense ideas" (These occur in hysteria and obsessional neurosis, where, as we shall see, the quantitative characteristic emerges more plainly than in the normal)" (Freud 1966b, 356).

For Ricoeur, the *Project* "stands as the greatest effort Freud ever made to force a mass of psychical facts within the framework of a quantitative theory, and as demonstration by way of the absurd that the content exceeds the frame" (Ricœur 1970, 73). To him, it represents more than a "mechanical system"; for, "it is already a topography, linked by underground connections to the work of deciphering symptoms" (Ricœur 1970, 84), in which interpretation plays a certain role. At the beginning of this chapter, Ricoeur specifies that the *Project* of 1895, "is not meant to be a topography in the sense of the "Papers on Metapsychology"" (Ricœur 1970, 70), but rather, a representation of the "psychical apparatus". Nevertheless, this reference to the work of interpretation in a "mechanical system", which "is not merely a mechanical system" (Ricœur 1970, 84), reveals the idea of an already problematically mixed double discourse. For Freud, the *Project* does not show an approach comparable with Wundt's empiricism, even if comprehensible under a positivist perspective. Behind this "mixture" Ricoeur perceives a new field of study or a new sensitivity to the domain of the senses arising, which is irreducible to the physical and mechanical logic of the *Project*. Herein lies the ultimate reason for its failure and for Freud's abandonment of it.

This status of quasi-topography is not a fully clarified idea. Consequently, Freud's reference to interpretation in the *Project* may be an expression of a totally different "logic" and conceptual use of the term. The *Project* does not lack in its interpretation of the symptoms of neurosis (in the "work of deciphering symptoms") and does not prove that it operates in a similar manner to a hermeneutics applied to a topographical model, in which the model is "correlative to an interpretation of meaning through meaning" (Ricœur 1970, 70).

This first chapter of the *Analytic* seems to reveal a certain lack of solidity, offering the possibility of reinforcing Assoun's criticism of Ricoeur's dual discursive approach to Freud's psychoanalysis.

According to Assoun, Ricoeur obtains the "prejudicial effect of a flaky Freudian theme in two aspects" (Assoun 1981, 28; author's translation). This "flaking" is accentuated by the overuse of hermeneutics, as the *Project* demonstrates. For Freud, the *Project* constitutes an attempt to subsume a new understanding of psychopathology under the empirical/conceptual net of a quantitative psychology. As Sulloway explains, "in its most immediate historical context, this document may be seen as Freud's own version of the 'Theoretical' chapter that Josef Breuer had been assigned to write that same year for *Studies on Hysteria*" (Sulloway 1979, 114).

According to Ellenberger, "Freud's *Project* may be understood as a logical development of the theories of his predecessors, particularly of his masters Brücke, Meynert, and Exner" (Ellenberger 1970, 480). Therefore, he was not realising anything new when proposing a quantitative psychology based on neuro-physiology. The originality was that, for a certain period, he tried to conceptualise this *Project* as the theoretical base for his discoveries in psychopathology, particularly around hysteria. He attempted to articulate a quantitative psychology within a comprehensive psychology, but the operation was a failure. He abandoned the project, but not the idea. For his entire life, he truly worked as a "biologist of the mind". Even in the *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud's use of the vocabulary of comprehensive psychology

was explicitly conceived as provisional and less scientific. In the *Discussion* session, he writes:

> I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science. I must console myself with the reflection that the nature of the subject is evidently responsible for this, rather than any preference of my own. The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight into the course of that affection (Breuer and Freud 2000, 160–161).

It is, however, undeniable that such an insertion determined, as if by backlash, the consequence of an epistemic divide, certainly deeply connected to the ambiguity of his experiences and discoveries about the phenomenon of hysteria. In fact, as early as during his training with the French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot at the Salpêtrière (1885), he began to develop a different approach, not just in changing from a neurological approach to a psychopathological one, but in calling into question the neuro-physiology thesis. In his early work *Some Points for a Comparative Study of Organic and Hysterical Motor Paralyses* (1893) he writes: "I… assert that the lesion in hysterical paralyses must be completely independent of the anatomy of the nervous system, since *in its paralyses and other manifestations hysteria behaves as though anatomy did not exist or as though it had no knowledge of it*" (Freud 1966a, 169; Freud's italics). Thus, the aetiology of hysteria in itself is involved in this flexion between the neuro-biological and psychopathological approaches, and between energetics and hermeneutics as a double epistemic basis. In some way, hysteria becomes the central element of this flexion, which is expressed by Freud as a non-contradictory dualism through interpreting hysterical symbolism as a synthetic focal point between *psyche* and *soma*. In another early essay – "On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena", in 1893, he explains:

> Thus one patient suffered from piercing pains between her eyebrows. The reason was that once when she was a child her grandmother had given her an enquiring, "piercing" look. The same patient suffered for a time from violent pains in her right heel, for which there was no explanation. These pains, it turned out, were connected with an idea that occurred to the patient when she made her first appearance in society. She was overcome with fear that she might not "find herself on a right footing". Symbolizations of this kind were employed by many patients for a whole number of so-called neuralgias and pains. It is as though there were an intention to express the mental state by means of a physical one; and linguistic usage affords a bridge by which this can be effected (Freud 1962a, 33–34).

Often, according to Freud, there is this strict connection of a symbolic nature, a strict *symbolische Beziehung* between a hysterical symptom and its cause. In such cases, theory in addition to therapy must work under the articulation of a *comprehensive* approach. This does not mean that a new kind of semantics where the symptom is the signifier and trauma is the signified must be seen to work in the background. This structuralist perspective is rejected by Ricoeur, who, while not following Freud, does nevertheless offer a better interpretation. Through this hermeneutical

approach he considers the distinction between linguistic and somatic symbolism as two different expressions of the (same) psychic life. Therefore, a symptom can be symbolic because it is expressed representationally or linguistically. Traumatic sufferings are not somatic, but rather they "find" a way to be somatically expressed in the representation. This is an example of a kind of symbol that forms a border between mind and body, but it is expressed somatically because the *psychical* sphere of influence is vast. Somehow, Freud's perspective on symbolism, as sketched out in his *Project*, does not contradict this interpretation. In this sense, Ricoeur is right in observing a certain "hermeneutical component" in this early Freudian work. Nevertheless, he errs in extending and generalising this perspective as if the *Project* were the first moment of a long process of the increasing hermeneutisation of psychoanalysis. In Ricoeur's understanding, between the *Project* of 1895 and the seventh chapter of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, there is a clear link of continuity.[3] However, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* the relationship of strength between energetics and hermeneutics is reversed: "The systematic explanation is placed at the end of a process of work whose own rules have been elaborated; the express aim of the explanation is to present a schematic transcription of what goes on in the dream-work that is accessible only in and through the work of interpretation. The explanation, therefore, is explicitly subordinated to interpretation; it is not by accident that his book is called *Die Traumdeutung, The Interpretation of Dreams*" (Ricœur 1970, 88). Between the two models a substantial difference is established; if in writing the *Project* Freud worked with an anatomical model in his mind, then in the *Traumdeutung* "the psychical apparatus […] functions without any anatomical reference" (Ricœur 1970, 87); that is why in this book he basically "no longer speaks of cathected neurons but of cathected ideas" (*Ibidem*).

From here, a second significant change in epistemological reflection follows: Freud oscillates "between a *real* representation, as was the machine of the 'Project', and a *figurative* representation, as will be the later schemata of the topography" (Ricœur 1970, 88).

This ambiguous oscillation between energetics and hermeneutics would find a paradigmatic place in the dream process of symbolisation, in which the distortion of meaning is explained through the vicissitudes of instinct, and therefore resorts to an economic *explanation*. However, this is a case of "ambiguity", because the meaning and value of the "oscillation" depends on its approach and use. Therefore, if for Ricoeur, who is certain of the problematic epistemological dialectic of Freudianism, certain uses are unclear and incompatible, for a Freudian they seem to be just an expression of a theoretical perspective in approaching obscure and unknown matter. In fact, in chapter 7 of *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud writes:

> If we look more closely, we may observe that the psychological considerations examined in the foregoing chapter require us to assume, not the existence of two systems near the motor end of the psychic apparatus, but two kinds of processes or courses taken by excitation. But

[3] "The difficult chapter 7 of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (*Traumdeutung*) is unquestionably the heir to the 'Project' of 1895; left unpublished by Freud himself, the 'Project' found an outlet in *The Interpretation of Dreams*" (Ricœur 1970, 87).

> this does not disturb us; for we must always be ready to drop our auxiliary ideas, when we think we are in a position to replace them by something which comes closer to the unknown reality. Let us now try to correct certain views which may have taken a misconceived form as long as we regarded the two systems, in the crudest and most obvious sense, as two localities within the psychic apparatus – views which have left a precipitate in the terms "repression" and "penetration". Thus, when we say that an unconscious thought strives for translation into the preconscious in order subsequently to penetrate through to consciousness, we do not mean that a second idea has to be formed, in a new locality, like a paraphrase, as it were, whilst the original persists by its side; and similarly, when we speak of penetration into consciousness, we wish carefully to detach from this notion any idea of a change of locality. When we say that a preconscious idea is repressed and subsequently absorbed by the unconscious, we might be tempted by these images, borrowed from the idea of a struggle for a particular territory, to assume that an arrangement is really broken up in the one psychic locality and replaced by a new one in the other locality. For these comparisons we will substitute a description which would seem to correspond more closely to the real state of affairs; we will say that an energic cathexis is shifted to or withdrawn from a certain arrangement, so that the psychic formation falls under the domination of a given instance or is withdrawn from it. Here again we replace a topographical mode of representation by a dynamic one; it is not the psychic formation that appears to us as the mobile element, but its innervation (Freud 1997, 442–443).

In this long paragraph, a different explanation is given, not of an ambiguous theoretical/conceptual structure, but of a work in progress. Moreover, certain "hermeneutical" concepts are presented as "metaphorical", which more "closely" corresponds "to the real state of affairs". In light of this argumentative position, Ricoeur's interpretation that there are "unconscious thoughts" is reduced in its hermeneutical value, because the duality "charge of ideas"/"charge of neurons" does not primarily express an epistemic split, but a conceptual difference, which does not indicate an ontological fracture. According to Freud we must read the "charge of idea" as a metaphor for a "charge of neuron"; for him, in fact, an unconscious thought is nothing but "an energic cathexis". Indeed, in applying Freud's perspective literally, Ricoeur's dilemmas around the hermeneutics/energetics duality are partially reduced to a question of rhetorical/explanatory use. Having said that, the epistemological problem of Freudianism, with its large series of methodological and theoretical difficulties and aporias is not denied, but, rather, it is affirmed that a generalised interpretation of psychoanalysis in a hermeneutical key is possible *only* by emphasising and somehow overturning certain linguistic and metaphorical uses of Freud.

This tendency seems to be present in Ricoeur's *Freud and Philosophy*, above all, reconsidering concepts such as "unconscious thought", "text", "interpretation" and "symbol". In this way, he re-reads Freud's idea that "dreams have meaning": "One can always substitute for the dream account another account, with a semantics and a syntax, and that these two accounts are comparable to one another as two texts' (Ricœur 1970, 89). Ricoeur generally recognises the biological dimension as a specific and different reality compared with psychic and conscious life, but here he constructs an "hermeneutical bridge" between the unconscious and conscious, between instinct and meaning, through the incisive and attractive metaphor of translation from text to text. The result is a hybrid in which a biological dimension, i.e.

the mechanism of dream-work, is not responsible for a "transposition" or "distortion" of unconscious contents, pulses, or desires, but of a "transposition" or a "distortion" of unconscious thoughts expressed through dream-thoughts. Therefore, the work of interpretation works precisely by performing a translational operation, from the text of a distorted language (the text of dreams) to the original language (the unconscious text).[4] All qualitative and dimensional differences are thereby lost. Nevertheless, Freud is precise in clarifying in his *Verlesungen* (1915–1917) that dream-work translation is a particular operation, "a very unusual sort of transcription"; for, it does not consist in "a translation word for word, or sign to sign, not a selection according to a set rule" (Freud 2013, 177–178). It is limited to the alteration or dissimulation of the purpose to "satisfy" a removed desire. Therefore, we are faced with a simple analogy; just as analogical and metaphorical are representational ideas and propositions, so too the following:

> The dream-content appears to us as a translation of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression, whose symbols and laws of composition we must learn by comparing the origin with the translation. The dream-thoughts we can understand without further trouble the moment we have ascertained them. The dream-content is, as it were, presented in hieroglyphics, whose symbols must be translated, one by one, into the language of the dream-thoughts. It would of course be incorrect to attempt to read these symbols in accordance with their values as pictures, instead of in accordance with their meaning as symbols. For instance, I have before me a picture-puzzle (rebus) (Freud 1997, 169–170).

Clearly, the idea of "translation" at work in the psychoanalytical interpretation of dreams is an analogy, which is illustrated in this section by Freud using a rebus to solve or decipher a hieroglyphic. However, following Ricoeur's hermeneutical perspective, the interpretation of this use of Freud undergoes a change. To him, "by hermeneutics we shall always understand the theory of the rules that preside over an exegesis – that is, over the interpretation of a particular text, or of a group of signs that may be viewed as a text" (Ricœur 1970, 8). Ricoeur applies this view literally to Freud, in writing that:

> This notion of text – thus freed from the notion of scripture or writing – is of considerable interest. Freud often makes use of it, particularly when he compares the work of analysis to translating from one language to another; the dream account is an unintelligible text for which the analyst substitutes a more intelligible text. To understand is to make this substitution (Ricœur 1970, 25).

Ricoeur clearly strives to keep psychoanalysis in a constant tension between energetics and hermeneutics, sometimes explicitly highlighting their interconnection and interdependence. On the one hand, we read that "interpretation cannot be developed without calling into play concepts of an entirely different order, energy concepts" (Ricœur 1970, 90). On the other hand, we are now following a particular

[4] "Is it possible to maintain interpretation on this unambiguous level where relations would be those of meaning to meaning? Interpretation cannot be developed without calling into play concepts of an entirely different order, energy concepts. It is impossible to achieve the first task of interpretation […] without considering the "mechanisms" that constitute the dream-work and bring about the "transposition" or "distortion" (*Entstellung*) of the dream-thoughts into the manifest content" (Ricœur 1970, 90).

understanding of the interpretation of dreams, from which a dream has a meaning, which can be interpreted, in addition to being placed by itself in a sort of middle ground between force and sense ("[…] dreams, inasmuch as they are the expression of wishes, lie at the intersection of meaning and force" [Ricœur 1970, 91]). In fact, if the dream is bent towards hermeneutics by its narrative constitution or inclination, similarly it is pushed back to energetics by its original connection and dependence on desire (*Ibidem*). This is an interesting observation, when considering concepts such as "somatic symbolism" or "mnemic symbols" (*Studies on Hysteria*): for it "sounds" very similar to Freud's understanding of the workings of the conscious and unconscious dialectic. However, this is just an interpretative perspective on the functioning and "position" of dreams. Freud does not explicitly refer to a narrative constitution of dreams; rather, he speaks "narratively", illustrating and interpreting the meaning of the dreams. He uses narration as a passage or moment in his process of interpreting. Ricoeur seems to overuse the rule of narration in the psychoanalysis of dreams, in addition to overusing evaluations concerning the interpretation of symbols in psychoanalysis. It is not only not true that "Freud opposes his own interpretation to a symbolic interpretation" (Ricœur 1970, 96); the rule of symbolism and the interpretation of symbols are limited and determined. Freud's psychoanalysis is not at all reducible to a symbolic hermeneutics, and even less so to a narrative hermeneutics (even if this seductive idea seems to assume a certain construction, staying focused on the interpretation of dreams, and then extending and generalising it to the entire therapeutic process and technique). The "space" of symbols and symbolism in Freud's psychoanalysis is connected and limited to the "space" or functions of *symbolisation*, among which there are defence *mechanisms* discovered by Freud, whereby an unconscious content is symptomatically expressed (more or less intensively) through a deferred image, a concept, or idea. "Interpretation" is the only concept that can be generalised in psychoanalysis, because it is largely used by Freud himself. If, as Ricoeur recalls, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* it is essentially described as a process of decoding the latent contents of dreams, starting from their manifest content (interpretation as *Deutung*). In other subsequent works Freud connects and identifies psychoanalytical therapy as an interpretative process that is not reducible to a process of explanation, elucidation, or clarification. It is, in fact, a transforming or emancipating process, a therapeutic tensional dialectic of reconstruction (interpretation as *Konstruieren*). If in the first sense, the idea of interpretation in psychoanalysis is restricted when considering the general paradigm of a hermeneutical psychoanalysis, in this latter meaning, the concept of psychoanalytical interpretation is over-determined when reduced simply to a hermeneutical process.

According to Ricoeur, with *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud "was unsuccessful in harmonising the theory inherited from the *Project* with the conceptual structure elaborated by the actual work of interpretation" (Ricœur 1970, 115). This conceptual and theoretical contradiction emerges as a problem in the metapsychological writings ("Papers on Metapsychology"). In them, the language of meaning as the content expressed in the work of interpretation, and the language of force, which is implied as the language of the "first topography", reach a point of balance.

Ricoeur's analysis focuses on Freud's theory of instinct (*Trieb*) as the central theme of the "Papers", because, above all, it represents the key to this equilibrium. More precisely, force and sense coincide where instinct becomes manifest in giving to itself a mental representation. This happened by the *Repräsentanz*, a sort of "point" where instinct, which is energy, is represented as something psychic. The concept used by Freud is *Vorstellungsrepräsentanz*, a kind of conceptual artefact, translated into French as *présentation représentative*, and into English as "ideational representative".

Ricoeur explains that the "Papers" "show how the unconscious can be re-integrated into the realm of meaning by a new interrelation – "within" the unconscious itself – between instinct (*Trieb*) and idea (*Vorstellung*): an instinct can be represented (*repräsentiert*) in the unconscious only by an idea (*Vorstellung*)" (Ricœur 1970, 115–116). Therefore, the representational function is the way through which instinct has access to the unconscious. In a way, Ricoeur tries to extend this representational function around the entire unconscious dimension to bridge the gap between the biological and psychological dimensions or between the dimensions of force and meaning. In this way, the gap shrinks, because the unconscious is somehow reinstalled into the sphere of meaning (Yi 2000, 117)[5]. This is of particular interest in his hermeneutical philosophy, and is not easily congruent with the recognition of the double reality connected to the registers of force and meaning. Ricoeur's solution to diminishing this theoretical tension is found in the hermeneutisation of the unconscious, through its re-interpretation as (essentially) a representational reality, and through the introduction of a new hermeneutical concept extraneous to psychoanalysis and without connection to its concepts and theories (such as the "semantics of desire" [*sémantique du désir*] and the "language of desire" [*langage du désir*]).

Even his interpretation of the *Vorstellungsrepräsentanz* as a coinciding of force and meaning is controversial, because it is not exactly a "Freudian" idea. Freud does not explain this connection in terms of a conjunction or a cause-and-effect relationship. He simply speaks of a dynamic or dynamism (perhaps even of a transformational kind), such as when an instinct is linked to a representation and transformed into something new and different. In fact, he speaks of *Triebschicksal*, a "vicissitude of instincts", which seems to be the concept of a transformational movement from a biological dimension (dimension of instinct) to a psychical dimension (representational dimension).

In contrast, Ricoeur alters this theory by pushing on hermeneutics and by emphasising the continuity between the conscious and the unconscious (as two sides of the same psychic life, of the same sphere of meaning). As the following passage demonstrates, he even re-interprets his concept of *Repräsentanz*, previously understood

[5] According to Ricoeur, "psychoanalysis is possible as a return to consciousness because, in a certain way, the unconscious is homogeneous with consciousness; it is its relative other, and not the absolute other" (Ricœur 1970, 430). According to Mi-Kyung Yi, this incorrect interpretation of the unconscious as "relative other" is upheld by Ricoeur accordingly with his idea that "*l'inconscient appartient, après tout, à la circonscription du sens*" (Yi 2000, 134).

as a point of coincidence between force and meaning, and now presented as a function of the common structure (*communauté de structure*) of conscious and unconscious:

> Freud's originality consists in shifting the point of coincidence of meaning and force back to the unconscious itself. He presupposes this coincidence as making possible all the "transformations" and "translations" of the unconscious into the conscious. In spite of the barrier that separates the systems, they must be assumed to have a common structure whereby the conscious and the unconscious are equally psychical. That common structure is precisely the function of *Repräsentanz* (Ricœur 1970, 135).

Certainly, the connection between force and meaning is recognised even by Freud when he talks about the psychical expression of instinct, but Ricoeur forces this on its hermeneutical side, interpreting "psychical expression" as the key to the process of transposition (*Umsetzung*) and translation (*Übersetzung*) from the unconscious to the conscious. Also, with the concept of "common [psychic] structure", even unconscious mechanisms are reduced to a function of this translation. The barrier of that mechanism, which separates different [qualitative] systems for Freud, psychically separates two spheres of the same order of meaning in Ricoeur's understanding, wherein the only difference is that they are representational and expressive forms. The step of melting the unconscious off to a kind of *alter*-consciousness is about to be realised. However, Ricoeur tries to discipline his hermeneutics, setting limitations by recognising the irreducible dimension and the reality of instincts, of the energetics at work within unconscious mechanisms and other unconscious aspects. This is the fundamental reason for his denial and repudiation of Lacan's structural interpretation of the unconscious as *linguistically* structured. In the third dialectical book, he speaks of a "quasi language of the unconscious". As Ricoeur explains:

> We can retain, then, with the reservations just made, the statement that the unconscious is structured like a language; but the word "like" must receive no less emphasis than the word "language". In short, the statement must not be divorced from Benveniste's remark that the Freudian mechanisms are both infra- and supralinguistic. The mechanisms of the unconscious are not so much particular linguistic phenomena as they are paralinguistic distortions of ordinary language (Ricœur 1970, 404).

6.3 *Freud and Philosophy*: Critique of the *Dialectic*

The third book *Dialectic*, like *Analytic*, starts with an epistemological chapter, which is the most important one for this research. If the aim of the second book was to define and test the nature of Freud's psychoanalytical discourse, the aim of this third book is to use this understanding for philosophical ends. What is happening in this epistemological clarification is the determination of the theoretical and philosophical limits of psychoanalytical interpretation as a method; and, in the long term, the search for a new hermeneutic perspective on human beings that is able to

subsume and solve the reductionist challenge launched by Freud's psychoanalytical theorisation. The two objectives are *ab origine* intertwined. As Ricoeur explains:

> If the limits of analytic explanation are given in the structure of its theory and not in some decree proscribing its extension to this or that sphere of human experience, then the search for the philosophical locus of psychoanalysis is subordinate to the understanding of its theoretical structure. The comparison we will make with scientific psychology on the one hand and phenomenology on the other is aimed at determining, by a method of difference, the place of analytic experience in the total field of human experience (Ricœur 1970, 342).

Ricoeur's perspective on the human being is already clear in the book *Problematic*, and becomes more pronounced following the theoretical challenge posed by his analysis of the energetics/hermeneutics double epistemology of Freud's psychoanalysis, which is biologistic reductionism vs spiritualistic reaffirmation. However, he explicitly re-conducts only to Freud his discovery of a conflict of interpretations. In the *Traumdeutung* he finds a hermeneutics opposed (in its direction and functioning) to his hermeneutics, as already applied in interpreting the symbolism of evil. If the first could be considered an "archaeological" hermeneutics (even Freud considers "the interpretation of dreams" as "completely analogous to the decipherment of an ancient pictographic script such as Egyptian hieroglyphs"), the second has been exercised as a "teleological" hermeneutics. This is thematised in *Dialectics* by comparing Freud's psychoanalysis with Hegel's phenomenology in a way that reveals a new side of the inner life of the human being.[6] This conflict is in fact at work within the human heart, as a perpetual challenge between regressive and progressive tendencies in experiencing personal life and personal realisation. Ricoeur moves further with this interpretation by re-reading Hegelian teleology through his teleological hermeneutics of symbols, as will subsequently be reconsidered. He writes:

> Man is the sole being at the mercy of childhood; he is a creature constantly dragged backward by his childhood. Even if we soften the excessively historical character of this interpretation based on the past, we are still faced with a symbolic anteriority. If we interpret the unconscious as the realm of pregiven key signifiers, this anteriority of the key signifiers as compared with all the temporally interpreted events presents us with a more symbolic notion of anteriority, but it still stands as a counterpole to the inverse realm of spirit. In general terms, spirit is the realm of the terminal; the unconscious, the realm of the primordial (Ricœur 1970, 468).

In this discourse, the epistemological passage provides a first-person point of view in the hierarchical, progressive order refereeing the "war" within hermeneutics both to integrate hermeneutical processes into a reflexive philosophy, and to achieve a superior synthesis and comprehension of human beings.

The epistemological chapter ("Epistemology: Between Psychology and Phenomenology") articulates the analysis in two phases, reflecting the main double line of the epistemic debate on psychoanalysis as it was developed at that time: in one way, its evaluation as a part of a general scientific psychology, which was a

[6] "This Hegelian dialectic […] constitutes a progressive synthetic movement, which contrasts with the analytic character of psychoanalysis and the 'regressive' (in the technical sense of the word) character of its economic interpretation" (Ricœur 1970, 463–464).

perspective predominant in the Anglo-Saxon world; and in another, its evaluation under a phenomenological point of view, which was the predominant continental perspective. In this chapter, Ricoeur tries to formulate an epistemic solution midway between psychological and phenomenological perspectives, recalling his diagnosis of Freud's double register of energetics and hermeneutics, as described in the first part of his *Analytic*. Thus, Ricoeur passes from an initial critical position on Freud's epistemology to a second critical proposal in considering the positive possibility of treating psychoanalysis as a scientific subject of a "third" kind, equipped with a double epistemic structure. In the next chapter, the subsequent development in Ricoeur's philosophy is discussed, following his philosophical papers on psychoanalysis from the 1970s and 1980s. At that time, he would develop a new general epistemological model, called the "hermeneutical arc", by connecting the particular double-structure of psychoanalysis with other double-structured disciplines (for example, history) and theories (for example, the theories of text and action). Within *Freud and Philosophy*, finding an epistemic solution midway between the scientific and phenomenological paradigms represents an important achievement for the book in itself, and in relation to the long debate on the status of psychoanalysis. However, Ricoeur's work is clearly lacking a balanced epistemic point of view between hermeneutics and energetics, being more hermeneutically angled.

His first confrontation with the psychological perspectives of psychoanalysis, realising that by analysing the critiques of the logicians, the internal attempts at reformulation, and the "operational" reformulations, there is a firm starting point. According to Ricoeur, "psychoanalysis is not a science of observation; it is an interpretation, more comparable to history than to psychology" (Ricœur 1970, 345). The logicians (Ricoeur remembers "the most devastating critique, presented by Ernest Nagel at a symposium held in New York in 1958"; *Ibidem*) are right in revealing how psychoanalysis does not satisfy any condition of empirical verification. Its propositions are more vague and metaphorical than rigorous and definite; therefore, it is impossible to establish a relation of correspondence between points of theory and specific facts, or to constitute a satisfying logic of proof. Instead of profiling the hybrid epistemic entity of psychoanalysis, Ricoeur insists on emphasising that Freud's discipline is closer to the historical sciences, because essentially it is a *comprehensive* science. Therefore, to him, the hybrid nature of psychoanalysis must be more connected to the "analytic interpretation" – which "always seem an anomaly in the human sciences" (Ricœur 1970, 347) – than to its epistemic constitution. Definitely, for Ricoeur, psychoanalysis "arrives at its concepts of energy solely by way of interpretation" (*Ibidem*), which means that it is essentially a hermeneutics. As Ricoeur explicitly states, if "psychology is an observational science dealing with the facts of behaviour; psychoanalysis is an exegetical science dealing with the relationships of meaning between substitute objects and the primordial (and lost) instinctual objects" (Ricœur 1970, 359). However, he is forced to re-balance this interpretation owing to the (admittedly) irreducible energetic and biological dimension of the unconscious. Therefore,

> The statements of psychoanalysis are located neither within the causal discourse of the natural sciences nor within the motive discourse of phenomenology. Since it deals with a psychical reality, psychoanalysis speaks not of causes but of motives; but because the topographic field does not coincide with any conscious process of awareness, its explanations resemble causal explanations, without, however, being identically the same, for then psychoanalysis would reify all its notions and mystify interpretation itself. It is possible to speak of stated or reported motivation, provided that this motivation is "displaced" into a field analogous to that of physical reality. That is what the Freudian topography does (Ricœur 1970, 360).

According to this revised perspective, it would not be possible to admit an interpretation of psychoanalysis as a full depth hermeneutics, but by emphasising that psychoanalysis is "more comparable to history than to psychology", and more understandable as an "exegetical science", Ricoeur continues an essentially hermeneutical line. This line is substantially confirmed by counterpoising to Lacan's linguistic thesis the idea of a quasi-linguistically structured unconscious. At long last, Ricoeur is speaking of psychoanalysis as a quasi-full depth hermeneutics.

In illustrating his position, Ricoeur affirms that Antony Flew's epistemic perspective is the closest to his. In Flew's "Psycho-analytic Explanation" (1949), he points out "a contradiction between Freudian practice and Freudian theory: the former appeals to motives […], intentions […], meanings […], whereas Freudian theory treats those same phenomena as "psychical antecedents""; (Ricœur 1970, 360–361) initially, Flew had sustained the thesis that "psychoanalytic explanations […] in the first instance are "motive" and not "causal" explanations" (361n; Ricoeur's quote).

In this interpretation, Ricoeur finds another element with which to reinforce his comparison of psychoanalysis to history by developing the discourse of psychoanalytical explanations in relation to what happens in the concrete experience of analysis as a speech and therapy practice. If it is accepted that the analytical situation is irreducible to a description of observable data, then the question of the validity or validation of psychoanalytical observations requires reconsideration in a different way from the neopositivist perspective. "Strictly speaking, there are no 'facts' in psychoanalysis, for the analyst does not observe, he interprets" (Ricœur 1970, 365). The theoreticians must consider this aspect, because "the concepts of analysis are to be judged according to their status as conditions of the possibility of analytic experience, insofar as the latter operates in the field of speech" (Ricœur 1970, 375). Consequently, we are compelled to admit that "analytic theory is not to be compared with the theory of genes or gases, but with a theory of historical motivation" (*Ibidem*), where verification is not focused on the results, but rather on the conditions of possibility of a given experience and its knowledge.

At this point in Ricoeur's research, his hermeneutical tendency finds a new favourable element driving through phenomenology. At the beginning of the paragraph in *The Phenomenological Approach to the Psychoanalytic Field,* he writes: "The preceding discussion inclines us to look to Husserlian phenomenology for the epistemological support a logic of the observational sciences was unable to give us" (Ricœur 1970, 375–376). Thence, this passage through phenomenology starts to pull the epistemic register of force apart, because the sciences of observation have

shown that they are unable to offer an adequate epistemic basis for psychoanalysis.

"No reflective philosophy" – Ricoeur explains – "has come as close to the Freudian unconscious as the phenomenology of Husserl and certain of his followers, especially Merleau-Ponty and De Waelhens" (Ricœur 1970, 376). Even phenomenology reveals some weaknesses or limitations in offering the full epistemic justification that is needed in psychoanalysis, but it is a limit and a weakness of a different kind because it is not founded in misunderstanding. "It is not a question of a mistake or a misunderstanding, but rather of a true approximation, one that comes very close to the Freudian unconscious but misses it in the end, affording only an approximate understanding of it" (*Ibidem*).

A first phenomenological element of proximity is found in its methodology of "reduction". "The reduction, indeed, has some relation to the dispossession of immediate consciousness as origin and place of meaning" (*Ibidem*). This dispossession of meaning in relation to consciousness is something quite similar to what happens in psychoanalysis.

A second element of proximity is given by the central concept of "intentionality". It "concerns our meditation on the unconscious inasmuch as consciousness is first of all an intending of the other, and not self-presence or self-possession" (Ricœur 1970, 378). The phenomenological conscience is a conscience-of-the-other before being an auto-conscience, because intentionality has in itself a structure addressed to the "external", to the other. Explaining this primacy of intentionality in the reflective or auto-reflective nature of consciousness, Husserl introduces the idea of *passive genesis* as opposed to *active genesis*. In Ricoeur's opinion, with this idea of passive genesis Husserl "points toward the Freudian unconscious" (Ricœur 1970, 380). According to Ricoeur, phenomenology outlines an idea of Cogito by these concepts in which the "active genesis" (i.e. one's development) presupposes the preliminary passive dynamism.

A third element of proximity is given by the phenomenology of language, in particular by the dialectic of presence and absence. Ricoeur reports that "the dialectic of presence and absence, which language sets in motion, is now seen to be operative in all forms of the implicit and the co-intended, in all human experience and at all levels. Thus, language makes it possible to generalise the perceptual model of the unconscious" (Ricœur 1970, 385).

Finally, the intersubjective aspect constitutes a fourth element, and is a common theme in psychoanalysis and phenomenology. In particular, they share a similar theorisation around the intersubjective structure of desire.

In spite of these significant elements of commonality, according to Ricoeur, "psychoanalysis is not phenomenology and yet phenomenology is not psychoanalysis" (Ricœur 1970, 390) because, although "slight the separation, it is not nil, and phenomenology does not bridge the gap" (*Ibidem*). Phenomenology does offer a full understanding of psychoanalysis, but only by approximation for each of the four elements of proximity just mentioned.

In fact, we must first address this. For if phenomenology as a reflective discipline starts with an act of *epochê*, and "the methodological displacement it sets into

operation is the displacement of reflection with respect to immediate consciousness" (*Ibidem*), then, conversely, psychoanalysis is a technique that starts to reveal the slavery of consciousness by accessing the unconscious sphere through a sort of "archaeological excavation", which is unique as a technique.

Second, if by focusing on intentionality through a phenomenological approach the sphere of implicit may largely be investigated and known, there remains, however, the limitation consisting of the barrier of repression, which is not accessible by a phenomenology of the implicit. In a certain way, "the unconscious of phenomenology is the preconscious of psychoanalysis […], an unconscious that is descriptive and not yet topographic" (Ricœur 1970, 392).

Third, even the application of language to unconscious reality has its limits, as Ricoeur's critique of Lacan's structuralist perspective reveals. A similar discourse must be considered by evaluating the theoretical possibilities of its re-reading in the key of the phenomenology of language. Why? Because a complete "translation" of the unconscious in terms of language is equivalent to denying the energetic and biological dimensions, which are fundamentally connected to its psychical mechanisms. Interestingly enough, in illustrating this point, Ricoeur develops a very similar argument to Habermas' point of view, but with a particular emphasis on the mechanisms of distortion. He writes: "The mechanisms of the unconscious are not so much particular linguistic phenomena as they are paralinguistic distortions of ordinary language" (Ricœur 1970, 404). They may be considered as *infra-* and *supra*-linguistic phenomena, which is the equivalent of recognising the existence of a specific sphere for psychoanalysis that is beyond language.

Fourth, there is an element of difference, even regarding intersubjectivity, because what is called *transference* in psychoanalysis is a kind of interrelation, for which there is no correlation in phenomenology. According to Ricoeur, "it is precisely here that psychoanalysis is most radically distinct from anything phenomenology can understand and produce with its sole resources of reflection" (Ricœur 1970, 406). In fact, in psychoanalysis, intersubjectivity is treated as a technique, because essentially this discipline is a therapeutic technique, whereas phenomenology is merely a discipline of reflection.

At the end Ricoeur's interpretative rearrangement, therefore, a consideration of the relationship between phenomenology and psychoanalysis coincides with a coherent reaffirmation of the irreducibility of the biological sphere of the unconscious. However, from this great parallel with phenomenology, he essentially reinforces even his diminished perspective of that sphere in pursuing his project of a hermeneutisation of Freud's psychoanalysis. He further develops this in the following chapters, intertwining the themes of a hermeneutics of symbols and a hermeneutics of self. This last element, in particular, plays a special role, recalling Ricoeur's notion of a war between hermeneutics, of two different theories and perspectives of the same discipline, or two separate movements in the process of human development. He writes:

> The two hermeneutics, one turned toward the revival of archaic meanings belonging to the infancy of mankind, the other toward the emergence of figures that anticipate our spiritual adventure, develop, in opposite directions, the beginnings of meaning contained in

> language – a language richly endowed with the enigmas that men have invented and received in order to express their fears and hopes. Thus we should say that symbols carry two vectors. On the one hand, symbols repeat our childhood in all the senses, chronological and nonchronological, of that childhood (Ricœur 1970, 496).

In a different manner, this passage re-proposes the idea that a dialectical relation between regressive and progressive forces and tendencies is at work at different levels, up to the anthropological dimension. "In order to have an *archê* a subject must have a *telos*" (Ricœur 1970, 459), explains Ricoeur. In chapter 3of "Dialectic" ("Dialectic: Archeology and Teleology"), the confrontation with Hegel's phenomenology aims to reveal this non-thematised teleology to achieve a new level of understanding of subjectivity (in addition to re-balancing the philosophical weight of a teleological or restorative hermeneutics, which essentially is a hermeneutics of symbols, compared with an archaeological hermeneutics, which essentially is psychoanalysis as a demystifying depth hermeneutics).[7] If, from one side, it is true that psychoanalysis in itself has a teleological aspect (in fact the relationship between its theory and praxis can be conceived as a sort of dialectic of archaeology and teleology), from the other side, a more polarised and generalised perspective on psychoanalysis, as contraposed to Hegel's phenomenology, offers an extraordinary theoretical key to a renewed idea of a subjectivity in which the *archê/telos* dialectic is re-read as the *unconscious/spirit* dialectic.

With this series of final considerations, we are leaving the epistemological setting intended *sensu stricto*, and going as far as a philosophy of the human being by way of the hermeneutics of symbols. This hermeneutics of symbols is developed in *Freud and Philosophy*, where we learn about the double dialectical structure of symbols.[8] In this way, a conception of personal identity as a hermeneutical process is indirectly envisioned. This was Ricoeur's main philosophical engagement during the 1980s, when he intertwined this theory of personal identity as a hermeneutical process with a narrative conception of human identity, a synthesis that would be realised in *Oneself as Another* (1990) under a general theory of the *capable human being.* It was subsequently reconsidered because of the massive (partially hidden) presence of psychoanalysis in it; however, primarily, we must consider Ricoeur's philosophy of psychoanalysis after *Freud and Philosophy*. Some of his "secondary" papers on psychoanalysis from the 1970s and 1980s are very interesting and important.

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[7] "Seen from the outside, psychoanalysis appeared to us to be a reductive, demystifying hermeneutics. As such, it was opposed to a hermeneutics that we described as restorative, as a recollection of the sacred" (Ricœur 1970, 460).

[8] "On the one hand, symbols repeat our childhood in all the senses, chronological and nonchronological, of that childhood. On the other hand, they explore our adult life: 'O my prophetic soul', says Hamlet. But these two functions are not external to one another; they constitute the overdetermination of authentic symbols. By probing our infancy and making it live again in the oneiric mode, symbols represent the projection of our human possibilities onto the area of imagination. These authentic symbols are truly regressive-progressive; remembrance gives rise to anticipation; archaism gives rise to prophecy" (Ricœur 1970, 496–497).

Chapter 7
The Philosophy of Psychoanalysis After *Freud and Philosophy*

7.1 From a Philosophy of Psychoanalysis to a Critical Hermeneutics

After *Freud and Philosophy* Ricoeur published *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays on Hermeneutics* (1969), a series of papers on the hermeneutics of psychoanalysis and the hermeneutics of structuralism, in which the idea of a dialectic or a conflict between rival hermeneutics is further articulated as a philosophy. The major themes developed in the 1970s and 1980s in applying this hermeneutical view to psychoanalysis, and consequently using psychoanalysis for philosophical ends, may be summarised as four thematic lines.

The first is (still) centred on an epistemology of psychoanalysis through which Ricoeur develops his theory of the "hermeneutic arc" as a general epistemology for the human and social sciences.

In the second, Ricoeur constructs a new hermeneutical paradigm proceeding from a hermeneutics of symbols and text to a narrative hermeneutics, to which psychoanalysis contributes through its example of a treatment exercised upon (narrative) histories of life.

Third, Ricoeur progresses towards a new hermeneutical elaboration, a hermeneutics of the self, in which a psychoanalysis narratively re-interpreted fully supplies all narrative aspects of the "capable human being" conception.

A fourth line intertwines with the hermeneutics of the self, expanded into a general (outlined) theory of recognition. Thus, Freud is a persistent presence in Ricoeur's research, even in his major works of the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and beyond.

If *La sémantique de l'action* (1977) offers an important theoretical basis in demonstrating the validity, for the social sciences, of an epistemological model integrating explanation and understanding under a general procedure of interpretation (as the example of psychoanalysis' epistemology clarifies), the third volume of *Time and Narrative* (1985) with its *Conclusions* contributes to the first application of a general narrative theory of human identity by the primal definition of *identité*

V. Busacchi, *Habermas and Ricoeur's Depth Hermeneutics*,
Contributions to Hermeneutics 3, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39010-9_7

narrative, which is profiled as referring explicitly to the practical experience of psychoanalysis. If *Oneself as Another* (1990) re-actualised the psychoanalytical and philosophical theme of "lived" otherness in connection with a fully developed conception of "narrative identity", then *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2000) considers the lesson of psychoanalysis in different ways, above all in relation to certain mechanisms of memory and forgetting, thereby establishing a connection between certain historiographical problems and these mechanisms (as explored in Freud's "Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten", 1914, and "Trauer und Melancholie", 1915). Finally, a philosophy of recognition is outlined in his final book, *The Course of Recognition* (2004), in which an indirect reference to psychoanalysis is not only traceable in the central, re-actualised conception of a "capable human being", but even in the central conception of a "dialectic of recognition", due to the primordially close connection between a "dialectic of recognition" and a "conflict between hermeneutics", in addition to the particular structure of the psychoanalytical setting itself. In one of his most important papers on psychoanalysis from the 1970s and 1980s, "Image and language in psychoanalysis" (1978), Ricoeur explicitly writes:

> The analytic situation offers desire what Freud […] calls "a playground in which it [the patient's compulsion to repeat] is allowed to expand in almost complete freedom". Now why does the analytic situation have this virtue of reorienting repetition toward remembrance? Because it offers desire an imaginary face-to-face relation in the process of transference. Not only does desire speak, it speaks to someone else, to the other person. This second starting point in analytic practice […] reveals that from its beginning human desire is, to use Hegel's expression, the desire of another's desire and finally for recognition (Ricœur 2012a, 96).

This paper, which has only recently been published in French (2008), contributed for the most part to the "narrative" line, whereas the second major paper of that period, "The Question of Proof in Freud's Psychoanalytic Writings" (1977), has mostly helped in clarifying Ricoeur's position of analysing and evaluating the epistemological constitution of psychoanalysis. It has been used as the main reference in Grünbaum's "Introduction" to *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis* (1984), in which he criticises Ricoeur's hermeneutical perspective on psychoanalysis, erroneously mixing his epistemological point of view and philosophical interests (which are strongly *hermeneutical*), to the extent that he loses Ricoeur's specific perspective on Freud. The result is a miscognition of the potential usability of Ricoeur's interpretation for the construction of a new methodological and epistemological model for the human and social sciences. It is a "consequence" connected in large part to Grünbaum's specific point of view on epistemology, which is essentially polarised on the hard sciences model. For him, Freud's psychoanalysis must be verified in its scientific validity following the *true* scientific perspective given to it by Freud, which is a scientific discipline like biology and chemistry. Reducing Ricoeur and Habermas' work of interpretation to Habermas' statement that Freud would crash into a "scientistic self-misunderstanding", Grünbaum argues that this is a "demonstrably ill-founded charge", levelled by "champions of the so-called 'hermeneutic' version of psychoanalytic theory and therapy. […] But besides resting on a mythic exegesis of Freud's writings, the theses of these hermeneuticians are based

on profound misunderstandings of the very content and methods of the natural sciences" (Grünbaum 1984, 1). To him, who, in contrast to Popper, embraces the point of view of eliminative induction, psychoanalysis is not a pseudo-science but rather an ordinary science with a theoretical corpus that can logically be subjected to empirical control. If, on the one hand, several aspects of its aetiological causal hypotheses of neuroses and the therapeutic method are epistemologically defective (but aspects other than those Popper indicated from his non-falsifiability perspective), on the other hand, even if is true that a validation of the aetiological hypothesis cannot be achieved by referring to clinical data (because of contamination by suggestion), it may be confirmed in deferred empirical control by non-clinical experimental methods. Following his critique, Ricoeur stipulates at the outset that "the ultimate truth claim [of psychoanalytic theory] resides in the case histories", such that "all truth claims of psychoanalysis are ultimately summed up in the narrative structure of psychoanalytic facts" (Grünbaum 1984, 43). But what is a "fact" in psychoanalysis? As Grünbaum (quoting *Freud and Philosophy*) puts it: "Ricoeur insists that "psychoanalysis does not satisfy the standards of the sciences of observation", and the 'facts' it deals with are not verifiable by multiple, independent observers… there are no 'facts' nor an observation of 'facts' in psychoanalysis but rather the interpretation of a narrated history" (Grünbaum 1984, 44–45). According to Grünbaum, this idea is later reaffirmed by Ricoeur in "The Question of Proof in Freud's Psychoanalytic Writings", but in a contradictory manner, as it is expressed along with its exact counter-thesis:

> Ricoeur tells us most recently that "facts in psychoanalysis are in no way facts of observable behaviour" […]. But, in the very same chapter he goes on to gainsay this dictum as follows: "What is remarkable about psychoanalytic explanation is that it brings into view motives which are causes…In many ways his [Freud's] explanation refers to "causally relevant" factors…All that is important to him is to explain…what in behaviour are "the incongruities" in relation to the expected course of a human *explanation* by means of causes…To say, for example, that a feeling is unconscious…is to say that it is to be inserted as a causally relevant factor to explain the incongruities of an act of behaviour…From this…it follows… that the hermeneutics of self-understanding take the detour of causal explanation (Grünbaum 1984, 47).

Grünbaum's epistemological strictness, which is clearly evident here, prevents him from understanding that there is not a contradiction in Ricoeur's argument, but rather that it is the natural consequence of his previous premise of a psychoanalysis with the double epistemic register of energetics *and* hermeneutics. In the 1980s, Ricoeur re-forges this diagnosis in view of a new, generalised epistemic model for the social sciences, still studying Freud's psychoanalysis as an instructive example of a science where *understanding* (from "hermeneutics") and *explanation* (from "energetics") are dynamically at work both at a methodological or procedural level and at an epistemological one. Grünbaum does not see this: he never thematised this thesis of a specific epistemic approach for sciences such as psychoanalysis and, generally speaking, the human and social sciences; and, further, he deforms Ricoeur's thesis and argumentations by his unilateral epistemic approach. He even shows insensitivity to that level of criticism in psychoanalysis, which is not pro-

voked from weaknesses within Freud's theoretical solutions, but from the complexities revealed by human psychic life in itself, particularly when one discovers how behind the dialectical distinctions between *brain* and *mind* there is a complex universe allowing for more than one discipline and approach. Ricoeur's attention to this double dimension within the self is deeply connected to his philosophical attempt at a new epistemological model that can coordinate the dimension of biological causalism (from the "brain") and the dimension of psychological reasons (from the "mind"). By discovering the unconscious, psychoanalysis has complicated the "scenery", demonstrating the complexity and interconnectivity of the "dialectic" between causes and reasons in the self. Therefore, it is very interesting and absolutely conceivable that the *explanation* in psychoanalysis can bring "into view motives which are causes…". However, this suggests that, because of the specific nature of his discovery, Freud must assume a hybrid approach, a procedural in addition to an epistemological hybrid approach. Grünbaum persists in following his own line, misunderstanding the root of Ricoeur's injunction that both scientific criteria must be satisfied: to discover the true causes able to explain and "solve" a patient's case history, while satisfying the criterion of narrative, where the understanding is fulfilled both for scientific and therapeutic reasons.[1] Grünbaum interprets this multi-epistemic approach as a contradictory dualism, writing again:

> …he elaborates […] on "what makes a narration an explanation in the psychoanalytic sense of the term" as follows: "It is the possibility of inserting several stages of causal explanation into the process of self-understanding in narrative terms. And it is this explanatory detour that entails recourse to non-narrative means of proof". Significantly, he adds that the three levels over which these means of proof are spread include "the level of law-like propositions applied [*mirabile dictu!*] to typical segments of behaviour (symptoms, for example)" […]. Yet, earlier in the same chapter Ricoeur had adduced "even [neurotic] symptoms" in support of his claim that "facts in psychoanalysis are in no way facts of observable behaviour" […]. For there he had declared that "even symptoms, although they are partially observable, enter into the field of analysis only in relation to other factors verbalized in the "report". The conscientious reader will be forgiven, I trust, for wondering whether Ricoeur himself has decided just what he wants to maintain (Grünbaum 1984, 48).

Perhaps, it is the (potentially) close-minded reader who must be forgiven for his misunderstanding that Ricoeur's work follows a theory and an epistemic "logic" of another kind. Even his approach as a method is different. He does not only pursue an analysis of the epistemic bases of Freud's psychoanalysis, making reference to a determinate (and closed) idea of science and of what may be considered "scientific". At the same time he recognises the intrinsic problematic of Freudianism, and the rich potential of his theory and epistemology to look to a new epistemological

[1] Ricoeur clarifies that "before anything can be said about the role of the third term, theory, in relation to the other two terms, the relation between the investigatory procedure and the method of treatment is itself not easy to grasp. If this relation may appear to be non-problematical for a practice that is little concerned with theoretical speculation, it does raise considerable difficulties for epistemological reflection. Broadly speaking, we may say that the investigatory procedure tends to give preference to relation of *meaning* between mental productions, while the method of treatment tends to give preference to relations of *force* between systems. The function of the theory will be precisely to integrate these two aspects of psychical reality" (Ricœur 2012b, 23).

model. In *From Text to Action* (1986) Ricoeur affirms: "On the epistemological level, I shall say that there are not two methods, the explanatory method and the comprehensive method. Strictly speaking, explanation alone is methodical. Understanding is instead the nonmethodical moment that, in the sciences of interpretation, combines with the methodical moment of explanation. This moment precedes, accompanies, concludes, and thus *envelops* explanation. Explanation, in turn, *develops*, understanding analytically. This dialectical tie between explanation and understanding results in a very complex and paradoxical relation between the human sciences and the natural sciences" (Ricœur 1991, 142). Obviously, in taking this multi-level approach he could be accused of not being analytically and critically rigorous, because of the intertwined interests. His hermeneutical bent tends to influence and underscore Ricoeur's interpretation of the epistemic problem of Freudian psychoanalysis; but the speculative consequences of this hermeneutical re-reading are philosophically productive in both the fields of the philosophical anthropology and the philosophy of science. In the end, Ricoeur's theory of the hermeneutic arc is the productive result of this double approach, epistemological and speculative. Grünbaum is unable to consider this. Focused as he is on the epistemological problem of Freud's psychoanalysis, he carefully develops an absolutely analytical and rational inspection, but analytical and rational in addition to epistemologically unilateral, strongly centred on a specific epistemological view, which a philosophy of science must do. With this book he demonstrated that "he was able to use the ideas he extracted from physics perfectly well when he turned his attention to psychoanalysis [Philip Kitcher]" (Callebaut 1993, 75). Grünbaum was apparently following Freud's project of psychoanalysis as a biological techno-science of the mind, which helped to correct his procedural "weaknesses"; but, in fact, his full turn from physics to psychoanalysis was in itself a reduction of the problems of psychoanalysis to physics, a reduction of the mind to the brain; in short, a physicalisation of psychic life. This is different even from Habermas, and exactly what Ricoeur tries to prevent in demonstrating how the methodological and theoretical problematic of Freud was not caused by the weakness of his epistemology or by "scientistic self-misunderstanding", but rather by the particular complexities of the mind–brain relationship and the human being as a whole.

In fact, by reviewing Ricoeur's mature theoretical work as an approach, it is possible to obtain a new model of hermeneutics, a critical hermeneutics methodologically and epistemologically structured by following the *arc herméneutique* "logic". Thus, if Ricoeur's reinterpretations of Freudian psychoanalysis offer one of the first epistemic conceptions of their kind, between these conceptions and the general praxis of Ricoeur's philosophy there is a kind of relationship that in many aspects offers the model of a philosophy exercised as a human and social science – indeed, as a critical hermeneutics for the human and social sciences. Certainly, it is in his *Le discours de l'action* (1977) that for the first time Ricoeur turns his criticism of psychoanalysis into a key for a new epistemological approach. This is particularly evident when he criticises Richard Taylor's *Action and Purpose* regarding the question of the modern concept of "cause" and its connection with agency. In underlining

how psychoanalysis demonstrates the incongruity of the cause/motive dichotomy, he writes:

> Il n'est plus possible de dire de façon plausible que l'explication par des causes est tout à fait indépendante de l'explication par des intentions et des motifs. Il faut ici élaborer un concept intermédiaire de désir (wanting) comme étant à la fois un motif et une cause: un motif dans la mesure où le désire est relié au champ de motivation par son caractère de désirabilité; une cause dans la mesure où le désire est séparé de sa relation au champ de motivation dans lequel les motifs peuvent être comparés et évalués en relation les uns aux autres.La discussion sur la notion d'agent rejoint ici la discussion […] sur la notion de motivation; celle-ci a fait apparaître que les concepts dispositionnels sont irréductibles aussi bien à la causalité humienne qu'à la notion de "raison de…"Cette discussion a des implications importantes pour la psychanalyse; dans ce champ très particulier d'expérience et d'explication, la dichotomie entre motif et cause s'avère inapplicable (Ricœur 1977, 92).

It is evident that the essential meaning and the theoretical consequences of the understanding of the energetics/hermeneutics dialectic and problematic have changed. Following its own theoretical and procedural hypothesis and conclusions, psychoanalysis now offers an example of an explicatory and interpretative science, and, at the same time, the proof of the falsehood and uselessness of a motive/cause dichotomy in explaining and understanding human action.

In the mid-1980s, Ricoeur clarifies the links between traditional schools in his research and methodologies: it is a *reflexive* philosophy angled toward the perspective of Husserl's *phenomenology* as its *hermeneutical* variant (see Ricœur 1991). But during the same decade Ricoeur was enriching and articulating his approach to the "hermeneutic arc" theory by developing certain aspects of his research to such an extent that it was already inaccurate to define his methodology as an interpretative description on a reflexive basis, instead of a critical hermeneutics exercised as an interdisciplinary philosophical practice actively orientated towards emancipation. This idea of a critical hermeneutics originally goes back to Gadamer's and Habermas' quarrel of the 1970s (a hermeneutics of tradition vs. a critique of ideology), in which Ricoeur participates with the paper "Herméneutique et critique des idéologies" (1973, and subsequently collected in *From Text to Action*), which attempts to define a middle position between a hermeneutics of tradition and a critique of ideology. This is precisely a "critical hermeneutics"; the term is explicitly used in the paper to define his position somewhere between those of Gadamer and Habermas. Practised as an interdisciplinary hermeneutical phenomenology, it maintains a definitive connection with the epistemology of the hermeneutic arc, because of its *interpretative* function intended as a practice exercised between *explanation* and *understanding* (to resume this relationship, Ricoeur uses the motto "explain more to understand better"). The same paper shows that the connection between this critical hermeneutics and Freud's psychoanalysis is not simply one of its interdisciplinary applications, but also its (perceived) reinforcement of the project of a critical hermeneutics as an interdisciplinary philosophy with a multi-level epistemology and methodology.

This conception may be extended to the entire work of Ricoeur, which, despite representing a thematically fragmented area of research, reproduces a series of

recursive elements very close to the critical hermeneutics "philosophy". They include the commitment to develop research within the "community of philosophers" through dialogue; the methodological procedure to operate as if "all the books are open simultaneously [to the reader/researcher]" (Ricœur 2006, XVII); the interdisciplinary interest; the exercise and application of philosophy as a theoretical practice, like a science; the employment of philosophy in non-philosophical, pre-philosophical and extra-philosophical domains; an open, dialectical approach to all philosophical traditions, Continentals and Anglo-Saxons alike; the philosophical *engagement* with social and political life; the development of a multi-level approach in terms of degree of analysis, methodological approach, and discursive levels.

7.2 From "The Question of Proof" and "Image and Language in Psychoanalysis" to *Oneself as Another*

Although Freud tries in his didactic works to prove that "psychoanalysis is genuinely related to what is intelligible, what claims to be true" (Ricœur 2012b, 11), for Ricoeur psychoanalysis "has never fully succeeded in stating how its assertions are justified, how its interpretations are authenticated, how its theory is verified" (*Ibidem*). But the cause is partially related to the incorrect starting point of theoreticians studying what is a fact in psychoanalysis, and "what type of relations" exists "between analytic theory and experience [as a method of investigation and as a treatment]" (Ricœur 2012b, 12). Ricoeur concentrates in the first two paragraphs on investigating this, immediately underlining that, in psychoanalysis, what is "observable" for logical empiricists must be looked at in a clinical setting, where the analytical relationship is formed. Thus, the first step is the clarification of the method for the selection of facts in a clinical setting; and, according to Ricoeur, there are four criteria for this.

The first is constituted by a linguistic restriction, that is, the restriction of facts to language by the psychoanalytical character of the talking cure. The analytical situation, which is a context of "non-involvement with reality", forces desire to express itself within words instead of actions. Hence, "facts in psychoanalysis are in no way facts of observable behavior. They are 'reports' " (Ricœur 2012b, 13). Even those symptoms that might seem observable are in fact detectable in the analysis through their connections with verbalised elements. Thus, in this first criterion all psychoanalytical facts are already restricted to the sphere of motivation and meaning.

This perspective is reinforced by the second criterion, which focuses on transference, a central phenomenon of psychoanalytical technique and therapy. It reveals the key to the "mediation of the other" as being structurally "addressed to…" (Ricœur 2012b, 16) within human desire. "Thus it is the analytic experience itself that forces the theory to include intersubjectivity within the very constitution of libido and to conceive of it less as a need than as an other-directed wish" (*Ibidem*). This is a central idea in Ricoeur's strategy to readdress psychoanalysis

hermeneutically, not only because behind this idea of a "semantics of desire" there is a clear intention to diminish the epistemic and theoretical influence of the biologistic approach, but also because through this semantisation of desire and transference he "translates" the analyst–patient relationship into something akin to narrative. This hermeneutic field is not secondary; it constitutes another main aspect of Ricoeur's philosophy of psychoanalysis, as will be subsequently discussed.

The third criterion is defined in relation to the psychoanalytical concept of *psychische Realität*, or "psychical reality". Again, through this criterion, it is confirmed that a psychoanalytical fact is not observable in the same sense as a physical fact, and that psychoanalysis essentially works more around the sphere of meaning than of biology. Psychoanalysis does not consider or treat "material reality", but rather *psychical reality.*

Finally, the fourth criterion underlines how the analytical situation realises a kind of selection, owing to the subject's experience, which organises a clinical case as a case *history*. "Case histories" as "histories constitute the primary texts of psychoanalysis" (Ricœur 2012b, 20). This means that the analytical experience is essentially of a narrative nature.

Considering this, Ricoeur sifts through the types of relations that exist between psychoanalytical theory and experience. The problematic starting point here is how to demonstrate that "operative procedures that allow the transition between the level of theoretical entities and that of facts have the same structure and the same meaning in psychoanalysis as in the observational sciences" (Ricœur 2012b, 22). In the observational sciences, there are "rules of interpretation or translation" that clarify the indirect verification of those theoretical terms connected to observed facts. Does psychoanalysis function in the same way? For Ricoeur it does not, because of the specific psychoanalytical relationship between the investigative procedure and the method of treatment, which mediates between theory and facts. Illustrating this, Ricoeur re-introduces the epistemological theme of a double register for psychoanalysis: "We may say" – Ricoeur explains – "that the investigatory procedure tends to give preference to relations of *meaning* between mental productions, while the method of treatment tends to give preference to relations of *force* between systems. The function of the theory will be precisely to integrate these two aspects of psychical reality" (Ricœur 2012b, 23). The old articulation of energetics and hermeneutics is reaffirmed here, but in a different way, and, under a more explicitly linguistic and narrative reduction of psychoanalysis. However, the "retreat" of energetics from investigation to treatment does not eliminate its presence and influence. As Ricoeur recognises, it is the

> …notion of resistance that prevents us from identifying the investigatory procedure with a simple interpretation, with a purely intellectual understanding of the meaning of symptoms. Interpretation, understood as translation or deciphering, in short as the substitution of an intelligible meaning for an absurd one, is only the intellectual segment of the analytic procedure (Ricœur 2012b, 27).

The overcoming and dissolution of resistances does not happen "by interpretation" alone, but rather through a real (psychological) "struggle" against given

"forces". The same is true for transference. The epistemological inquiry here reaches the conclusion that "the pair formed by the investigatory procedure and the method of treatment takes exactly the same place as the operative procedures in the observational sciences that connect the level of theoretical entities to that of observable data" (Ricœur 2012b, 28); and that "this pair constitutes the specific mediation between theory and "facts" in psychoanalysis" (*Ibidem*). Ricoeur explains this mediation as follows:

> By coordinating interpretation and the handling of resistances, analytic praxis calls for a theory in which the psyche will be represented both as a text to be interpreted *and* as a system of forces to be manipulated. In other words, it is the complex character of actual practice that requires the theory to overcome the apparent contradiction between the metaphor of the text to be interpreted and that of the forces to be regulated; in short, practice forces us to think meaning and force together in a comprehensive theory. It is through the practical coordination of interpretation and the handling of resistances that the theory is given the task of forming a model capable of articulating the facts acknowledged as relevant in the analytic experience. It is in this way that the relation between the investigatory procedure and the method of treatment constitutes the necessary mediation between theory and "facts" (*Ibidem*).

At this point, the question is whether psychoanalysis has a theory capable of satisfying these desiderata. Ricoeur recapitulates his conclusions from *Freud and Philosophy*: "Freud's metapsychology does not succeed in codifying and integrating into a coherent model meaning and force, textual interpretation and the handling of resistances" (Ricœur 2012b, 29). The thesis of a discipline having a double epistemological structure is reaffirmed, even with a reference *en passant* to Jürgen Habermas' *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (Ricœur 2012b, 29–30). (Indeed, the core of the paper's re-reading of Freud is essentially "hermeneutical"). This line of argument, which deeply connects this paper with the second one, "Image and Language in Psychoanalysis", is maintained to the end, even in the last paragraph of "Truth and Verification". Here Ricoeur explains that to "inquire about proof in psychoanalysis is to ask two separate questions: (a) What truth claim is made by the statements of psychoanalysis? And (b) what sort of verification or falsification are these statements capable of?" (Ricœur 2012b, 36). The first question has to do with the degree of truth in psychoanalysis and with its nature. Lacking in a precise qualitative division "of the types of truth in relation to the type of facts", psychoanalysis has been evaluated on the basis of the same model of verification as the empirical sciences. "The conclusion has then been either that psychoanalysis does not in any way satisfy these criteria or that it satisfies them only if they are weakened. But the question is […] how to specify the truth claim as a function of the kind of 'facts' in the psychoanalytic domain" (Ricœur 2012b, 36–37). To deepen this aspect, Ricoeur reconsiders his previously fixed criteria of psychoanalytic facts, articulating his analysis around "truth" in psychoanalysis. Thus, he concludes that:

1. Psychoanalytical truth has nothing to do with "being-true", because being based "on desire coming to discourse", analytical experience works in "saying-true" (Ricœur 2012a, 37).

2. Because of the centrality of transference in therapy, "the truth claim of psychoanalysis can legitimately be placed within the field of intersubjective communication" (*Ibidem*).
3. In accordance with the third criterion and referring to what is a "psychical reality", it emerges that "what is psychoanalytically relevant is what a subject makes of his fantasies" (Ricœur 2012b, 38).
4. Corresponding to the narrative criterion in psychoanalysis, there is a conception of truth that refers to the narrative construction and intelligibility of a story, as it is told and develops within the analytical relationship.

Ultimately, the pretension to truth in psychoanalysis is unique. As Ricoeur writes: "The narrative interest or involvement at issue here has no parallel in an observation science where we speak of 'cases' but not of 'case histories'" (Ricœur 2012a, 40). The pretension of truth, then, must be resumed through the narrative structure of psychoanalysis. This conclusion is concerned with the solution to the other question about the kinds of verification of which the psychoanalytical statements are capable. Ricoeur's thesis is clear: "If the ultimate truth claim resides in the case histories, the means of proof reside in the articulation of the entire network: theory, hermeneutics, therapeutics, and narration" (Ricœur 2012b, 43). However, it is true even according to Ricoeur that the modalities of proof are not in the narrative structure, but rather in non-narrative psychoanalytical statements. Definitely, "it is the possibility of inserting several stages of causal explanation into the process of self-understanding formulated in narrative terms" (*Ibidem*) that makes a narration an explanation.

It is evident that, even to the end, Ricoeur maintains his thesis of psychoanalysis with use of a double epistemological register. However, as emerges in this paper, it is only from an epistemological perspective that this duality becomes evident, because, from the theoretical point of view, we find the model of psychoanalysis to be a hermeneutical discipline and practice. This re-theorisation is full of speculative entailments. Even if it is not evident in "Image and Language in Psychoanalysis", this paper also represents another step towards this new speculative horizon. Not being explicitly focused on an epistemology of psychoanalysis, it can more freely investigate the nature of psychoanalytical discourse, developing and illustrating the thesis "that the universe of discourse appropriate to the analytic experience is not that of language, but that of the image" (Ricœur 2012a, 94). This indirectly confirms Ricoeur's hermeneutisation of psychoanalysis through his speculative research, which increasingly focuses on the analytical experience and its narrative aspects. This turn from language to image is not an abandonment. Ricoeur is just articulating his hermeneutical theorisation through an important narrative aspect: the representational function through which the image (with its semiotic aspects) finds its possibility of expression, as a dynamic way of expressing psychic life. Here, again the analytical situation is characterised as a "speech relation". The psychoanalytical treatment is the talking cure, which principally is a process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation (as Marshall Edelson claims); this "implies that the analysand considers his experience in terms of texts and contexts; in short, that he enters into a semiotic reading of his experience and that he raises his experience to the rank

of an acceptable and intelligible narrative" (Ricœur 2012a, 97). Continuing along these theoretical lines, Ricoeur affirms:

> If Freud can write case histories, it is because every analytic experience takes place within a mode of discourse that we can call narrative discourse. The analysand recounts his dreams and the episodes of his past. He recounts what he does not understand, until he understands what he recounts. In this way, the whole of analytic experience is traversed by that discursive modality that requires us to say that analysis is a narrative analysis or an analytic narration (Ricœur 2012a, 98).

The entire analytical experience is now reduced to the perspective of narrative hermeneutics, offering a real model for a generalised anthropological theory of *narrative identity*. Actually, this is the true major speculative achievement of the passage through Freud's psychoanalysis.

> Therefore to speak of oneself in psychoanalysis is to move from an unintelligible to an intelligible narrative. The analysand, after all, enters analysis not simply because he is suffering, but because he is troubled by symptoms, behaviors, and thoughts that do not make sense to him, which he cannot coordinate within a continuous and acceptable narrative. The whole of analysis will be only a reconstruction of contexts within which these symptoms take on meaning. By giving them, by means of the labor of talking about them, a reference framework wherein they can be appropriated, they are integrated into a history that can be recounted (Ricœur 2012a, 97).

A series of secondary but important papers on the philosophy of psychoanalysis from the 1980s largely demonstrates the depth of the link between Ricoeur's hermeneutics of psychoanalysis and his speculative research on personal identity (see, "The Self in Psychoanalysis and in Phenomenological Philosophy", 1986 [Ricœur 2012c]; "Life: A Story in Search of a Narrator", 1986 [Ricœur 2012d]; "Narrative: Its Place in Psychoanalysis", 1988 [Ricœur 2012e]). If this theory of narrative identity had been fully developed in Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another*, it is in the general conclusions of his *Time and Narrative* III that the concept of narrative identity is sketched with an explicit reference to Freud's psychoanalysis. These general conclusions coincide with a paradigmatic change in Ricoeur's hermeneutics, from a hermeneutics of text to a narrative hermeneutics (and later, to a hermeneutics of the self). The concept of narrative identity is defined in discussing the first aporia of temporality (Ricœur 1988, 244 ff), where it clearly emerges that without the help of narration the problem of personal identity is destined to be confined to an antinomy without solution: to accept the idea of a subject identical to oneself despite the differences of states, or to accept, following Hume and Nietzsche, that the idea of an "identical subject" is a "substantialist illusion, whose elimination merely brings to light a pure manifold of cognition, emotions, and volitions" (Ricœur 1988, 246). The aporia disappears, replacing the idea of an identity "understood in the sense of being the same (*idem*)", with "identity understood in the sense of oneself as self-same [*soi-même*] (*ipse*)" (*Ibidem*). In the following passage, Ricoeur makes reference to Freud's psychoanalysis as one "hermeneutics of suspicion" amongst others:

> This connection between self-constancy and narrative identity confirms one of my oldest convictions, namely, that the self of self-knowledge is not the egoistical and narcissistic ego

> whose hypocrisy and naiveté the hermeneutics of suspicion have denounced, along with its aspects of an ideological superstructure and infantile and neurotic archaism. The self of self-knowledge is the fruit of an examined life, to recall Socrates' phrase in the *Apology.* And an examined life is, in large part, one purged, one clarified by the cathartic effects of the narratives, be they historical or fictional, conveyed by our culture. So self-constancy refers to a self instructed by the works of a culture that it has applied to itself (Ricœur 1988, 247).

The dialectical articulation between *idem*-identity and *ipse*-identity is reconsidered in *Oneself as Another* in terms of its conception of the "capable human being". Later, the same theorisation is re-confirmed in *The Course of Recognition* (2004).

7.3 The Narrative Identity and the Dialectics of Recognition

Oneself as Another, which constitutes the synthesis, the *summa* of Ricoeur's vast speculative research, has the theme of the self as its focal point. Therefore, philosophical anthropology could rightly be considered the main problematic within Ricoeur's oeuvre. If he discovers through psychoanalysis that not only does the psychoanalytical fact in itself have a narrative constitution, but so does the dynamism of personal identity as a process; inversely, it is through his hermeneutics of self that this discovery is transformed in the theoretical hub into a new philosophy of human identity. Along the lines of *Time and Narrative*'s general conclusions, the analysis of self-identity is conducted in *Oneself as Another* starting from the modern point of view on personal identity. From the two sides of identity, substantial and insubstantial, two different (dialectically) coordinate modalities of the permanence of time emerge, which are expressed by "the perseverance of character" and constancy through "a word that has been given" (Ricœur 1992a, 123). Ricoeur considers narrative identity as the key to mediating between these different spheres of human identity. In fact, it oscillates between them, the "two limits: a lower limit, where permanence in time expresses the confusion of *idem* and *ipse*; and an upper limit, where the *ipse* poses the question of its identity without the aid and support of the *idem*" (Ricœur 1992a, 124). The rule of narrative mediation is conceived and understood as being of tremendous importance, not only in the formation of an idea of the self, but rather in the very constitution of subjectivity in itself. Besides, through narration, subjectivity receives an *historical*, dialectic structure. In fact, only narration makes it possible to re-represent and connect human action in a temporal chain, with a beginning, an intertwined plot, and an end.

As Ricoeur explains, "Self-understanding is an interpretation; interpretation of the self, in turn, finds in the narrative, among other signs and symbols, a privileged form of mediation; the latter borrows from history as well as from fiction, making a life story a fictional history or, if one prefers, a historical fiction, interweaving the historiographic style of biographies with the novelistic style of imaginary autobiographies" (Ricœur 1992a, 114). However, his conception of a capable human being is the second main constitutional element of intersubjectivity. It marks another

aspect connecting his philosophical anthropology to his previous hermeneutics of psychoanalysis, above all by the re-actualisation of the Freud–Hegel dialectic between an archaeological and a teleological hermeneutics. Personal identity and human emancipation is now re-interpreted as a varied process or dialectic of recognition. Somehow, the dialectic between Hegelianism and Freudianism comprises the main pillar of *The Course of Recognition* where, as previously mentioned, the philosophy of the capable human being is retained or even expanded. Thematised in the section "A Phenomenology of the Capable Human Being" (Ricœur 2005, 89–109), it is again presented by the examination of its four main aspects: *to be able to say*; *I can* (which "has to do with action itself in the limited sense of the term that designates the capacity of the acting subject to make events happen in the physical and social environment"; Ricœur 2005, 96); *being able to narrate and to narrate oneself* (where the problematic of personal identity is re-presented; Ricœur 2005, 99) and, *imputability.* If the first three characterisations represent answers to the questions, "Who speaks? Who acts? Who tells?" respectively, then the last corresponds to the question "Who is capable of imputation?" (Ricœur 2005, 104). But all of them are related to the deeper human reality of human capacities and potential.

What clearly emerges in *Oneself as Another* is the deep connection between, on one side, the (ontological) dynamism of potentiality and actuality as discussed in its tenth study (reflecting on the Aristotelian *energeia* and *dunamis*); and, from the other, the dialectic of recognition as a process of personal emancipation (with the inner dialectic of repression and progression) and, at the same time, an inter-relational process of mutual recognition. The latter is the subject of *The Course of Recognition*, where Ricoeur develops an articulated study of:

1. Recognition as identification
2. Recognising oneself
3. Mutual recognition
4. Recognition as gratitude

But his purpose is to draw a philosophy of recognition with the conception of the capable human being at its centre. Once again, one of the genuine roots of this understanding of recognition in the human emancipatory process can be found in Ricoeur's philosophy of psychoanalysis. "Image and Language in Psychoanalysis" offers perhaps the best example and most explicit datum. In it, Ricoeur writes:

> The analytic situation offers desire what Freud, in one of his technical texts, calls "a playground in which it [the patient's compulsion to repeat] is allowed to expand in almost complete freedom". Now why does the analytic situation have this virtue of reorienting repetition toward remembrance? Because it offers desire an imaginary face-to-face relation in the process of transference. Not only does desire speak, it speaks to someone else, to the other person. This second starting point in analytic practice, too, does not lack theoretical implications. It reveals that from its beginning human desire is, to use Hegel's expression, the desire of another's desire and finally for recognition (Ricœur 2012a, 96).

Certainly, the psychoanalytical process of recognition has a particular character in being connected to the therapeutic process, and to the "logic" of a certain structured relationship, namely the analyst–patient relationship. However, Ricoeur

connects them to the general perspective of Hegelianism, which may be used (as Ricoeur does) to interpret any relationship as a kind of "dialectic of recognition". Therefore, psychoanalysis offers important elements for understanding the process of human emancipation, as is expressed in the evolution of personal (identity) history, and in the many methods of the human dialectics of recognition.

Chapter 8
Conclusion: A Productive Distortion

This research has analysed the most important passages and theoretical contents of Habermas and Ricoeur's hermeneutical re-reading of Freud's psychoanalysis. The interpretation from a hermeneutical perspective is part of a precise moment of the epistemological debate around the scientific status of psychoanalysis, and more generally of the human and socio-historical sciences. However, if at the beginning the interpretation of psychoanalysis in terms of a depth hermeneutics assumes meaning and value within the context of this debate (for the epistemological research and for the formation of new therapeutic models), it progressively comes to fruition in a theoretical and speculative construction of its own. It becomes a construction completely detached from clinical/therapeutic praxis and intelligible only within the philosophical context and its interdisciplinary application.

The theoretical developments of Habermas and Ricoeur are emblematic, because they constructively affect two different moments of this transformative dialectic of psychoanalysis and philosophy. At the beginning, both produce arguments and theoretical proofs in favour of a methodological and epistemological placement of psychoanalysis among the human sciences (considered hermeneutically based). According to Habermas, Freud falls into a "scientistic self-misunderstanding", whereas according to Ricoeur, Freud's psychoanalysis is a Janus-faced discipline. Therefore, in different ways, both Habermas and Ricoeur have not only betrayed Freud's original scientific project, but have fundamentally contradicted and distorted the psychoanalytical foundations, as presented in Freud's written work and practical experience. In fact, both refer to the Freudian corpus (and only to it) in an attempt to unilaterally translate psychoanalysis into a depth hermeneutics. My study has sought to highlight the weaknesses of this operation. Very few aspects of Freud's approach, theory, and experience as a scientist are available for a re-definition of psychoanalytical therapy as a hermeneutics. Considering this, Grünbaum is right. However, the productive aspect is that, thanks to this distortion, an entirely new generation of psychoanalytical theorists and practitioners have tried to form a revolutionary theoretical and therapeutic model of psychoanalysis. From this perspective, the validity and importance of Habermas' and Ricoeur's work has been demonstrated. Ricoeur was

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correct in asserting that Freud's practical experience "said" more in terms of hermeneutics than metapsychology: analytical experience seems to reveal the predominant importance of the relationships, communicative content, and narrative history of a life compared with the role played by the brain and biological mechanisms.

In different ways, Habermas' and Ricoeur's philosophical perspectives reach a productive point of convergence, even throughout the more mature phase of the dialectic of psychoanalysis and philosophy. They re-read Freud passing from a level of interpretation and re-modelling to a level of a speculative construction and philosophical use of psychoanalysis.

Habermas elevates psychoanalysis to an epistemological and methodological laboratory for the hermeneutic historical/social sciences, and even more so for a model of critical philosophy. Similarly, Ricoeur re-examines psychoanalysis as a disciplinary model for the human sciences because of its capacity to flexibly reproduce the methodological and epistemological articulation that is necessary for an historical or sociological discipline constantly "straining" between *verstehen* and *erklären*. Furthermore, he develops a new conception of human subjectivity, subsuming Freud's lesson within the context of a new philosophy of the human being. Thus, the deep distortion of Freud's psychoanalysis discerned by Habermas and Ricoeur is doubly productive. This is what persistently maintains their actual operation: an effort that, surprisingly enough, has not yet received its due attention and theoretical scrutiny. In spite of this, Habermas as an interpreter of Freud is considered part of a story already overcome; and Ricoeur is still considered an actual interpreter of psychoanalysis "only" because of his 1965 work, *Freud and Philosophy*. With regard to Ricoeur, there is no full and comprehensive understanding of the role played by psychoanalysis in the general construction of his thought and in relation to his philosophy of the human being. The consequence is almost paradoxical: in his oeuvre, there are as many different publications on psychoanalysis and philosophy as there are few works that are really able to clarify the speculative and theoretical potential behind the dialectic of hermeneutics and psychoanalysis.

At least two themes remain unclarified and unexplored in their potentiality: first, the construction of a procedural model for the human and social sciences, and for a philosophy considered to be a scientific practice; and second, a philosophy of the human being that is able to subsume and express the biological and natural dimension of human identity in addition to its historico-narrative and social identity.

For both aspects, Ricoeur's perspective turns out to subsume Habermas' position. Effectively, Ricoeur becomes the privileged spokesman in illustrating the speculative metamorphosis of psychoanalysis and the extent and importance of its contributions to philosophy.

8.1 Around the Construction of a Procedural Model

Concerning the first aspect, the best way to interpret Ricoeur's work is by re-reading it as being wholly expressive of a specific critical philosophy, or better, a critical hermeneutics. At a glance, this aspect of the critical function may seem to be a

passage of secondary importance for his hermeneutics. In fact, Ricoeur's hermeneutics progresses from the interpretation of symbols to the analysis of proposition, metaphor and text; thence to narrative hermeneutics; on to a phenomenological hermeneutics of self; and finally to the hermeneutics of recognition. However, such a critical hermeneutics may be generalised. Following the intrinsic possibilities of Ricoeur's speculation, this is a legitimate perspective for re-considering his entire philosophical oeuvre from the point of view of a specific methodological procedure. This methodology seems able to work as a general model for theoretical research and, therefore, for the human and social sciences.

As early as the 1960s, Ricoeur recognised and faced the problem of the diversification of knowledge as a consequence of the disciplinary diversification and specialisation of the sciences. Despite the richness of knowledge, which perhaps for the first time, makes it possible to encompass in a single question the problem of the unification of human discourse, there is as yet no single elaboration of a unified synthesis. However, considering the challenges connected to the reunification of human knowledge, Ricoeur promotes the idea through his work that philosophy could play the role of a mediatory discipline. With its theoretical richness and depth, philosophy reveals a flexibility and capacity to operate transversely, traits that other disciplines do not have. In fact, Ricoeur demonstrates an understanding of the particular potential of critical hermeneutics as a methodology and epistemology for the human and social sciences.

Although Ricoeur did not take part in the debate collected in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik* (1971), he followed it with interest. In his "Herméneutique et critique des idéologies" he scrutinises the different positions and arguments to find a position of synthesis and mediation. This middle-way-angled theory is precisely what Ricoeur calls a "critical hermeneutics", which is a theory that he intends may play a role of mediation between the work of interpretation (Gadamer) and the work of criticism (Habermas). Without the Gadamer–Habermas debate of the 1970s, it would be very difficult to understand Ricoeur's change of heart in criticising Freud's psychoanalysis, previously condemned as an imbalanced science and now elevated to an extraordinary model of a new epistemology for the human and social sciences. The hermeneutics of Freud's psychoanalysis, and of other disciplines and theories, pushes Ricoeur to develop the idea of a methodological and epistemological model transversally disposed between *explanation* and *understanding*. This model has been precisely implemented in his critical hermeneutics, which forms a philosophical whole in addition to an analytical/interpretative procedure. It is a model that is somehow compatible with the subsequent development of Habermas' critical perspective, as presented in his *Knowledge and Human Interests*. During the 1961 debate, he is already counterpoising a critical epistemology, characterised as a *dialectic* and founded on the concept of "human interest", to a positivist epistemology, defined as an *analytic*. In his view, only positive interests for emancipation can help a philosophy formed as a critical theory and critical social science to operate properly (as "sciences" do) and productively (as "critique" does). In following the interest to emancipation, a philosophy may be exercised as an auto-reflective critique of the sciences, where a critical social science may be exercised as a critique of social

distortions in communication and action, that is, a kind of social psychoanalysis. Freud's psychoanalysis serves as the model for this, because it is prone to being treated as a kind of critical philosophy in itself. Inserting himself into this debate, Ricoeur initially does not recognise such a narrow connection between psychoanalysis and critical sociology. He speaks inversely of a parallel between the two disciplines. However, beyond this he recognises that a similar procedure, wedged between explanation and understanding, must work within a critical sociology. In realising this enterprise, both Ricoeur and Habermas independently "share" a similar strategic re-reading of Freud's psychoanalysis as a "depth hermeneutics". Habermas connects the psycho-physiological distortion of communication to the ideological and social distortion of communication; whereas Ricoeur reconsiders Freud's psychoanalysis as a hermeneutical discipline, because to understand the *cause* of a certain symptom it is necessary to explain its *reason*. To explain the cause of human action, the first step is to understand its meaning. A critical hermeneutics works precisely in this way, articulating *explanation* and *understanding* under the general and comprehensive work of interpretation. This so-called "theory of the hermeneutic arc" forms the central structure of Ricoeur's critical hermeneutics, where the example of a critical hermeneutics is detectable within Ricoeur's philosophy when considered in terms of a general model of analysis and interpretation; the diagnosis and exercise of criticism; or the construction of speculations and theorisations.

Ricoeur has at length insisted on characterising his work as non-systematic. But thinkers such as Stephen H. Clark are right in claiming that Ricoeur develops a "comprehensive philosophy", and that he is "a genuinely interdisciplinary thinker […] always addressing himself attentively to the question in hand with a courteous rigour" (Clark 1990, 1), and that "his is a rationality genuinely inclusive, kinetic, in constant internal evolution" (Clark 1990, 4). In fact, a generalised perspective can be applied to Ricoeur's philosophy, precisely using critical hermeneutics as a general methodological paradigm, founded on an epistemology of the hermeneutic arc. In analysing Ricoeur's work as a whole, some critical considerations and procedural aspects of this methodology should be highlighted in particular. They include:

1. The idea that the growing complexity and diversification of scientific knowledge has determined a multiple, non-unified discourse on the human being.
2. The notion that the sciences, and any scientific philosophy, must recognise that we are living in a post-Hegelian phase, where no synthesis or orderliness is possible.
3. The conception that philosophy is *transversal* as a discipline, as a domain of research, and as a critical exercise.
4. The assertion that philosophy may work more flexibly than other disciplines within an interdisciplinary context.
5. The fact that a critical hermeneutics operates by constantly passing from a non-philosophical or pre-philosophical level to a philosophical level.
6. From a theoretical level to a [variously] practical level, and vice versa.

7. The procedure of a critical hermeneutics (potentially of a critical sociology) to analyse, explain and comprehend different degrees of description and interpretation, and different methodological and discursive registers.

8.2 A Comprehensive Philosophy of the Human Being

Regarding the second thematic line, the question of personal identity, in which the philosophical role played by psychoanalysis as depth hermeneutics is revealed to be central, Ricoeur's work again shows itself to be more representative, despite Habermas' perspective and contribution.

As demonstrated in the current work and in another book, *Ricoeur vs Freud. Métamorphose d'une nouvelle comprehension de l'homme* (2011), it is particularly in the last two chapters and conclusion that Ricoeur's new philosophy of the human being appears to be deeply influenced by psychoanalysis (as a hermeneutics). Finally, the last synthesis of his philosophy of the "capable human being", summarised in *The Course of Recognition*, demonstrates how close Ricoeur's philosophy comes to Habermas' vision of the human being as it is subtended in *Knowledge and Human Interests* (and perhaps even in his subsequent works).

The dialectic between Hegelianism and Freudianism is, in the author's opinion, the thematic inner pillar of *The Course of Recognition*. Its core is in the second chapter of the second study entitled "Une phénoménologie de l'homme capable". This work resumes the hermeneutical phenomenology of the self as expounded in *Oneself as Another*. Here, the word "parcours" (course/courses) is used to refer to the philosophy of the human being. Alongside Ricoeur's research, the use of this metaphorical reference to human life as "a course" or "a journey" is profound. In *The Course of Recognition* the following passage is to be found:

> The road to recognition is long, for the "acting and suffering" human being, that leads to the recognition that he or she is in truth a person "capable" of different accomplishments. What is more, this self-recognition requires, at each step, the help of others, in the absence of that mutual, fully reciprocal recognition that will make each of those involved a "recognized being" […]. The self-recognition at issue in the current chapter will remain not only incomplete, as in truth mutual recognition will, but also more mutilated, owing to the persistent dissymmetry of the relation to others on the model of helping, but also as a real hindrance (Ricœur 2005, 69).

The concept of "recognition" is shown to have a similar recurrence, if we attentively examine Ricoeur's work (Busacchi 2015a, b, c). "Recognition" is the key concept with which the philosophy of the capable human being is reconfigured and definitively established. Only at the beginning of his speculative enterprise does it appear as detached and independent from Freud's lesson. It is mentioned for the first time in the 1955 book *Histoire et vérité*, a collection of articles and essays, specifically in the essay "Le 'socius' et le prochain", and can be taken to mean: to recognise the neighbour, to recognise oneself in the neighbour, to recognise oneself through the neighbour. All of these concepts clearly have a moral and religious

angle. However, it is with the discovery of the conflict of interpretation in the 1960s that the thematic of recognition fully enters into Ricoeur's philosophical discourse. It enters precisely through the paradigmatic dialectic of Hegelianism and Freudianism, which is clearly evident when re-reading *Freud and Philosophy* from an anthropological point of view. From this dialectic of phenomenology and psychoanalysis, Ricoeur extracts the idea of subjectivity as a dialectical/hermeneutical process inclined between the unconscious and the spirit, between nature and freedom, and between destiny and history. An identical understanding of the dialectic of recognition as hinging between a phenomenological and a psychoanalytical perspective is presented and discussed in the book *The Conflict of Interpretations* (1969). But this aspect has already been explored in *Freud and Philosophy* in the seminal chapter "Dialectique: archéologie et téléologie". Hegel's phenomenology profiles an explicit teleology of a progressive evolution of the human spirit from the corporeal level of desire and life to the complete elevation and emancipation from it (which is the aim of spiritual life). Desire is the meeting point where Hegel's and Freud's perspectives find a common synthetic overlap. To summarise, it may be said that the phenomenology of desire finds its accomplishment in a dialectic of recognition. If in Hegel's philosophy the model of this is the master-slave dialectic, in Freud's psychoanalysis this same model and dialectic can be found in the analyst–patient therapeutic relationship; in fact, the latter is a dialectic "of" and "for" recognition, an idea that is clearly expressed in *Freud and Philosophy* (Ricœur 1970, 474).

In Ricoeur's understanding, the psychoanalytical procedure is a therapeutic process that works by intervening in the relational dialectic of recognition, re-modelling it through a re-interpretative and re-configurative encounter within the dialectical setting of a relationship, and through the constant work of narration and re-narration. Certainly, it is not accidental that Ricoeur defined the ability to tell and re-tell as a *constitutive* aspect of the capable human being. From the perspective of *Oneself as Another*, the narrative constitution of personal identity emerges as a factor of critical importance and novelty in Ricoeur's philosophy of the human being. But its subsequent evolution in *The Course of Recognition* reveals "recognition" to truly be the central element of this philosophy. Definitely, for Ricoeur, personal identity is formed by a hermeneutical process, which is interpretative and narrative at the same time, and which has the dialectic of recognition as the ultimate aim of personal, human and social emancipation. Personal identity represents exactly this emancipatory process, which is bound to the inner dialectic of *nolonté* and *volonté*, between the regressive forces and progressive forces, and to the interrelation and social dialectic of communication and recognition.

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