

**The Philosophical Absence in  
Psychoanalytic Ontology: Becoming,  
Abandoned**

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*The undefined, unanalysed, unabsolute  
many, it is antithesis to any, in none  
comprised*

--J.V.Cunningham

Psychoanalysis has a precarious perch at the dawn of the 21st century, in no small part because of its hesitance to marry with contemporary neuroscience for fear of discovering its own illusions. The strengths of psychoanalysis, however, have thus far largely been supported by the syntheses of sciences. In light of the immediate transdisciplinary discussion, this essay intends to draw into relief an entirely different sort of "enemy" for psychoanalytic existence: its ontological fluidity, opaqueness, nebulosity. That psychoanalysis has so many adversaries, so transferentially poised, is not lost on this author. Nonetheless, the session begins.

As a task, Psychoanalysis has set before itself the practice of an art whose goal is to share in, and guide, a process of amelioration. Its existence depends upon an axiomatic worldview, however implicit, that serves as a base for the convalescence it means to exact. Even so, one might simply say the analyst's task is to help a patient adjust with the natural motions of life. Case study after case study chronicles the successful addressing of this task. Yet there is a prominent and unseen challenge. Psychoanalysis's hearth is desire and prescription, neither of which fulfills an entire human Being. This essay will focus on the way psychoanalytic ontology, in its current and most popular form, crudely approximates life's richness, and how analytic praxis is engendered in such a way as to forsake an essence of becoming, and thereby only incompletely approach the task it has set before itself.

In conjunction with leading contemporary psychoanalytic texts indicating the state of psychoanalysis as it is today, the philosophic works of Jean Luc Nancy and Martin Buber, as well as the writings of poets, will be used to bring together divergent ideas in a transdisciplinary way that is fundamentally useful for each, in attempt to

draw into relief a forsaken and fundamental aspect of Being.

**The Language of Psychoanalytic Ontology**

When concerned with clinical and theoretical applications, the use of language, denotation, signs, plans, prescriptions, is efficacious insofar as it helps therapists communicate with each other in the development of their praxis, and it also helps patients understand their conflicts. Nonetheless, the use of psychoanalytic language compels patients into a world in which they have lost an essence (even having found one) and how this can hinder their growth and suffocate the invaluable procession of becoming if left unremedied.

As general analytic language is too diverse to address in this paper completely, psychoanalytic jargon will be thought of as *such*, similar as it is to other prescriptions and semiotic endeavors. When considered in its clinical and theoretical context, the language of psychoanalysis compels a gathering of sorts, a garnering of expressions in effort to stabilize, even liberate, an identity.

This identity is not the simple abstract position of a thing as immediately what it is and only what it is; rather, it actualizes itself as a grasping of itself by the unity that I am in myself: an Ego, an irreducible kernel of self-constitution. Whoever says 'subject' presupposes this self-constituted Ego, however attenuated or remote it may be....The analysand, being a conscious speaker, must be able to accompany all his representations.

(Nancy, 9)

The liberation of this 'self-constituted Ego' is predicated on a sovereignty where something *allows* another thing to be a certain way. In psychoanalytic identity relations this is the sovereignty of an illusory unified self, ('on the couch' the spoken self reigns supreme) and there is certainly a freedom in it. Any patient of an enduring analysis will recommend the ameliorating qualities of free association and of simply being listened to, of being heard as a speaker, as an ego and self—however fragmented, however contradictory.

Indeed, the world of analytic sovereignty and freedom is predicated upon

prescriptive clarity and unification, where clients are seen as people guided by dominant unconscious thoughts which produce conflicts in their lives until the cognitive dissonance is harmonized. What is called for is a unification of personhood, a control of the fate-like unconscious into a bull on whose back we can ride, controlling the direction by bending the beast's head at our will.

In this unification and stabilization is a certain psychoanalytic ontology. It presents people as emotional subjects guided by unconscious desires, and cured by behavior that indicates an awareness, tolerance, or acceptance of as much.

The method is simply this. The subject, a patient, says as freely as possible whatever comes to his or her mind, having agreed at the start to renounce any conscious attempt to edit it, while the analyst directs his or her attention as exclusively as possible to the task of understanding the nature and origins of that patient's psychological difficulties and of communicating that understanding to the patient.  
(Brenner, 2)

What comes to the patient's mind will be revealed as conflict, desire, libido, drives. These motivations are carefully regarded and interpreted by analyst and analysand. The latter's life is to be considered and directed in relation to them. The world becomes what is felt, what is truly desired—what can be articulated. Spoken desire constitutes identity.

### **Endless Desire**

Does desire constitute identity?

Deleuze and Guattari would say we are desiring machines, whereby even the sensation of I is a byproduct of desiring production. "At the center is the desiring-machine," a noun-as-subject (for example "I am Josh, that is *me*") is "a residual subject of the machine" (Deleuze and Guattari, 21). The press of that endless desire which Deleuze and Guattari write about is exemplified nicely in an excerpt from a Mark Strand piece, in which the pleasure of progress is not felt, the goal and end are eternally elusive.

Cities of light, long summers/ Of leisure were not to be ours; for to come as we had, long after/ It mattered, to live among tombs, great as they are,/ Was to be no nearer the end, no farther from where we began.  
(Strand, 1998, 18)

In these lines something persists endlessly, a quest of sorts, a searching to whose existence the narrator is secondary, always arriving after: desire predates a subject's trajectory to follow, yet the desire is a product of the subject. It is desire producing desire for its own sake. It is what a patient might feel when confronted with his or her unconscious desires in analysis. But does that mean that these feelings *constitute* a person? Is the noun-as-subject the entirety of a human?

Consider Deleuze and Guattari's argument in line with Lacan's, whereby an individual also does not have a true, stable self, nor does he or she ever have what they want: the object of true desire is again, eternally elusive and, in this paradigm, ultimately illusory. And yet, Lacan notes, some therapists believe in a pure unified self.

One understands why, in order to prop up so obviously precarious a conception, certain individuals [have] felt the need to introduce a stable value, a standard by which to measure reality: the autonomous ego. It is the supposedly organized set of the most disparate functions that lend their support to the subject's feeling of innateness. It is regarded as autonomous because it is supposed to be sheltered from the person's internal conflicts.  
(Lacan, 220)

Lacan may be unique in his realization that our tools of representation and expression are crude approximations and that the language we use to describe desire, and desire itself, will proceed in tandem without remission.

And yet with all the talk of analysis, its tendencies toward prescription, unification, understanding, there is a function of becoming which is elided (becoming here is understood as *the* ontological state of humans). This essay suggests that as desiring machines, we *are not only* desiring

machines. We are not as simple as the things we create. By all standards, as Wolfgang Schirmacher notes, we are propelled to “open generating and never a mere copy of anything (we leave that to primitive machines).” Becoming numerous seems to be the way we recur in the world every moment we are in it! The way I know who I am now and yet am not who exactly I was even only a moment ago; the self as regenerated in “*alethia*”, Heidegger’s revealing and concealing.

### The Impediment

An impediment to the task psychoanalysis set before itself is too much denotation—desire is *prescribed, written, suggested* as that which constitutes a person. Perhaps this is a simple observation, but when considered philosophically there are tremendous implications.

In too much denotation a quiddity of becoming is lost, or even negated, ignored, confuted, suffocated; the grounds of constant denotation are that on which for becoming it is impossible to stand, for becoming is an oblivion of sorts, bodiless and yet propelled, by all realistic standards, by a body. To participate fully with this flux, a person must be prepared with an ever-ready phoenix-like engagement in the world: a readiness for the inherent death of regular rebirth, a willingness to go without once-comfortable states. As stated by Jean Luc Nancy, there may be an abandonment of being which is essential to becoming.

...The ontology that summons us will be an ontology in which abandonment remains the sole predicament of being, in which it even remains—in the scholastic sense of the word—the transcendental. If being has not ceased to speak itself in multiple ways—*pollakos legetai*—abandonment adds nothing to the proliferation of this *pollakos*. It sums up the proliferation, assembles it, but by exhausting it, carrying it to the extreme poverty of abandonment. Being speaks itself as abandoned by all categories, all transcendentals.  
(Nancy, 36)

The confluence of being’s expression is, in ways, unpronounceable. Abandonment is a giving up of one sovereignty for another. With abandoned being, the rule of prescription abdicates to the rule of existence “at the end of words” (Nancy, 43).

*Bandon (bandum, band, bannen)* is an order, a prescription, a decree, a permission, and the power that holds these freely at its disposal. To *abandon* is to remit, entrust, or turnover to such a sovereign power, and to remit, entrust, or turn over to its *ban*, to its proclaiming, to its convening, and to its sentencing.  
(Nancy, 43-44)

It might be helpful to mention that abandoned being may be thought of as an actual return to being, except when doing so there is no presence of expectation, no hope for receipt of something. “Being speaks itself as abandoned by all categories, all transcendentals.”

Thus, Nancy says, there is a necessity for *Amor Fati*: love of fate. For this reason, in *Birth To Presence*, he calls to memory the Oedipus myth, wherein fate is the cruelest sovereignty of all; and a particularly valuable conjuration it proves to be for this essay. For psychoanalysis means to, generally, take hold of fate—to ride the bull of the unconscious by its horns; it expresses, even particularly in its use of Oedipus, the wish to control fate. Psychoanalysis laments our lack of control (especially as children, or as those ruled by the infallibly persuasive unconscious). But this analytic tendency toward control is as illusory and helpless as the child incapable of realizing that its lost object never existed. The truth is much more painful and liberating. As Nancy notes, “we have no idea, no memory, no presentiment of a world that does not abandon us, a world that holds man in its bosom” (Nancy, 42). (This is not to say that such a situation does not exist, but perhaps rather that it eludes thought, or is not linguistically the same as the fantasy of a world holding us supportively.) Thus analysis may at times by its constructions leave by its wayside the essence of amelioration: abandonment. For the truth of the matter is a lack of control, but also, if drawn by necessity, a love of fate. A truth of becoming regards choice, unbounded by expectations. As Wolfgang Schirmacher notes, “the crucial move is choice, serious and playful alike — and, therefore,

## We have Abandoned Being

It must be noted that the closer this essay draws becoming *qua* abandoned being, the further its essence will remove; as soon as it is an It, it leaves. But perhaps through instants of oblivion and aporia it will emerge, necessarily fleetingly. Since that which this essay intends to illumine evades representation, or is slippery at best under representation's grasp, it is referred to in various forms throughout, for example as abandoned being, I-You relations, radical haptic experience (where the whole body is a soul-feeling, a dramatic myriad sensation as vivid as sight, potent, liminal, transient). In the ways that becoming is drawn as an It in this essay, so too is it drawn in analytic situations, both inside and out of the therapist's office—even if addressed or recognized under rare circumstances as something ineffable.

One year at the American Psychoanalytic Association's winter conferences, Francoise Davoine and Jean-Max Guailleire spoke of the way trauma can be passed through generations without explicitly being spoken of, in fact, by explicitly *not* being spoken of. Even so, the tactic Davoine and Guailleire's case study demonstrates (a healthy example of analysis outside language and the office) supplants abandoned being as soon as it is spoken. This misstep exemplifies the way psychoanalysis is particularly unsuited to satisfy complete convalescence, even under circumstances when the silence of a truth is perceived.

The story they spoke of, which is also written about in their book "History Beyond Trauma", regards one of the analyst's sons, and how novel psychoanalytic technique was used to 'cure' him.

The novelty of Davoine and Guailleire's approach is no doubt in some way influenced by their strong philosophic underpinnings. They use the philosophy of Wittgenstein, though they still depend in the end, on a form of prescription to solve a boy's problem. In their book, Davoine and Guailleire quote Wittgenstein:

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universal acceptance is out of reach." Unification is beyond reach.

An innumerable variety of cases can be thought of in which we should say that someone has pains in another person's body, or, say, in a piece of furniture, or in an empty spot.

(Davoine and Guailleire quoting Wittgenstein, 48)

In the Davoine and Guailleire case study, one of the analyst's sons picked up on the empty spot. The analytically minded parents responded to his discontent by reading the cues of his behavior, that is, by prescribing concepts to define behavior (the essence of analysis): by reading the prescription in the nonverbal language he was using; by bearing witness to that which was unspeakable and yet of which was silently spoken.

The boy's mother had a possibly cancerous lump in her body that, as of the time, the mother and father did not know was benign, and they did not want to alarm the boy and tell him about it until they knew more. Their unclearly expressed disconsolation, nonetheless, was caught by the boy.

At bedtime the older child, who, wherever he is, usually falls asleep immediately and peacefully, calls us, crying, from the adjoining room. He can't get to sleep. His anxiety is resistant to all the classical tools mobilized in such circumstances.

(Davoine and Guailleire, 73)

What the child was responding to was that space which spoke without language. There was too much stricture in the mother and father's behavior, and using classic tools of psychoanalysis the parents responded by reading the signs of the boy's behavior. The signs, in this case, were arbitrary. The true referent was much more vague. The only way to console the boy was to direct their attention to the missing referent. And thus, the cure was found. This, though, in the end is still a prescriptive process. Though there is little doubt that addressing the missing referent (with, as perhaps Lyotard would say, a new genre of discourse) is tremendously important and placated the boy, and while this case study exemplifies a unique and iconoclastic use of analysis with a philosophic understanding of language, there must still needs be a time when the boy is on his own

to turn over the pages of his experience alone. And then, if language is used again to incise his body of experience, it may help, but not necessarily, not completely (language and desire do not constitute an entire being). On the other side of experience and life as an It, there is a You. And for this, we will look at the work of Martin Buber.

### I-You, I-It

Buber works around the idea of It versus You, more precisely of two kinds of relations he characterizes as I-It and I-You.

For Buber, reification *qua* I-It relations is severely problematic. There is too much qualification and limitation. It forsakes a very true essence of things. And it is more common than he prefers. In juxtaposing I-It with the I-You he says "when I confront a human being as my You and speak the basic word I-You to him, then he is no thing among things nor does he consist of things" (Buber, 59). For Buber, when you speak *with* You and as You, there is an immediacy, a sovereignty of that which guides the present moment:

He is no longer a He or She, limited by other Hes and Shes, a dot in the world grid of space and time, nor a condition that can be experienced and described, a loose bundle of names and qualities [which are what analysis makes of patients]. Neighborless and seamless, he is You and fills the firmament. Not as if there were nothing but he; but everything else lives in *his light*.

There is an implicit ethics of responsibility here. And this type of ethics is not in the psychoanalytic world of I-It relations where life is translated into a crude and very distinct approximation. In I-It relations, being is shackled with a veil of denomination and representation.

Buber presents an example of the ways in which this translation and qualification, this ushering out of quiddity and abandoned being take place for a man in nature:

...at first only an image of the moon's action...surges through his body as a motor stimulus; and the personal image of an active moon crystallizes only very

gradually. Only then is the memory of that which was unconsciously absorbed every night kindled into the notion of an agent behind this action. Only then does it become possible for the You that originally could not be an object of experience, being simply endured, to be reified and become a He or She [rather than a You with whom I relate]. (Buber, 71)

This process of crude approximation, of signification, turning the body of stimulus into a He or She, an It (the moon), occurs with interpersonal encounters as well, and encumbers relations and can diminish or stain the connection and communication between people, because it is no longer the quiddity of humans interacting, but the already inscribed expectations which allow for limited enlivening of the interactors' true potentials and experiences, changing as the subjects change—these I-It relations are, at their worse, of cogs rather than spirits.

The spirit is truly 'at home with itself' when it can confront the world that is opened up to it, give itself to the world, and redeem it and, through the world, also itself. (Buber, 72)

To be 'at home' sometimes even the soul is forgotten, or rather, knowable parts of the self and its spirit are relegated to the realm of the soul. "The soul is the individual identity that has not acquired or conquered or produced its identity—and that will nevertheless *endure* throughout the whole process of the subject" (Nancy, 17). The spirit can be 'at home' when felt as a changing yet stable identity.

On certain occasions, the actual subject and its spirit are removed from the setting by too much jargon. Numerous in experience and makeup *in relation with the world as You*, the spirit/soul/I-You Becoming transcends language. Nonetheless, we find countless examples of a patient being ushered into convention and prescription. In fact, as Marcuse notes, this is classic psychoanalysis's task:

The successfully analyzed individual remains unhappy, with an unhappy conscious—but he is cured, 'liberated' to the degree to which he recognizes

the guilt and the love of the father, the crime and the right of the authorities, his successors, who continue to extend the father's work.  
(Marcuse, 46)

A bleak picture after all. And yet we see it time and time again. This is why the termination period of analysis is so contentious, precisely because the idea of a cure seems counterintuitive to the natural motion of life; less a liberation from, than a bowing to, convention.

The way a patient's narrative is framed in analysis is important. Let's consider a case study of Charles Brenner's. The discussion under which he brings to light this particular case study of a woman regards defense mechanisms. In it, he characterizes the woman as "dominated by her unconscious need to deny," that is, defend against, amongst other things, "sexual wishes for her father" (Brenner, 83) and jealous feelings toward women. The analyst suggests that she uses what is called Reaction Formation: a defense mechanism which puts the true object of desire (love for example) in the world as its opposite (hate, for example). The opposite of the desire is enlivened, and thus, affect is repressed and causes anxiety and conflict (that is, fulfillment yet unfulfillment).

What we can note, however, is that he later describes these instances as simply looking for affection, from her father, from her mother, from an admired colleague, from her other relatives and friends. What is needed is an opening, not a further constriction (admitting that on occasion language is the path that leads to its own end). Basically, this is a case of someone who was having a difficult time in the world and needed guidance to better understand how to interact with people and how to let herself feel emotionally unburdened. The need and utility of the analyst's thinking of her as someone defending against sexual love for her father is unnecessary and impedes the process of amelioration. Brenner himself says, "the interpretation derivatives I have just listed could not be tolerated or gratified" (Brenner, 87) by the patient. "They aroused too much displeasure." At this point, most analytically minded readers will simply recognize this as resistance to uncomfortable, but true, feelings. But what if we realize instead the press analysis imposes on the

patient of a foreign prescription. The patient's struggle is being annexed by more rigid impositions of the symbolic order. "All of these were oedipal derivatives," Brenner writes. And? we ask. What does that mean at all?

It means that certain definitions have been imposed on the patient, too much I-It, and all of her rich emotional dynamic experiences are ushered through the myopic sinkhole of analytic jargon. How, when we consider I-You relations and abandoned being, can this be good for the patient? How much of her non-prescriptive numerous self is being subsumed by other people's expectations and impositions? How can the sovereignty of experience be abandoned, for the better, to the sovereignty of prescription? How can I-It relations possibly help I-You relations?

In this case, the world and experience as *You* is annexed. Language and analytic praxis have forced the patient into a meta-existence, whereby the possible *You* relation, in all its glory, is subsumed by an *It* relation.

The human being who but now was unique and devoid of qualities, not at hand, but only present, not experienceable, only touchable, has again become a He or She, an aggregate of qualities...Every *You* in the world is doomed by its nature to become a thing or at least to enter into thinghood again and again...[But] the language of objects catches only one corner of actual life.  
(Buber, 69)

In language and its projection toward desire, a richness of so many things is elided. The tombs and monuments of representation last only so long as we care to see them, so long as we are fat on a certain happiness. But if ever starving we let a symbol of whatever we seek be cast away in favor of its flesh (the aporia of thoughtfulness, the "end of language"). Then nothing, but more than nothing—the truth beyond language and personhood—emerges, i.e., abandoned being, which as stated earlier, has in fact been abandoned doubly by analysis which tries to grasp it.

One of the many benefits of abandoned being one can articulate is radical haptic experience. During the I-You relations of

abandoned being, *without* strict autonomy (Nancy might say with none at all) we may enter, for example, haptic experience *par excellence*.

In a haptic relationship our self rushes up to the surface to interact with another surface. When this happens there is a concomitant loss of depth—we become amoebalike, lacking a center, changing as the surface to which we cling changes. We cannot help but be changed in the process of interacting.

(Laura U Marks, introduction to *Touch*)

There is an openness, a forgetting. But to say as much is not to indicate a lack of scruples. Quit the contrary, as Schirmacher notes, “‘anything goes’ is not advice you give other people but is the analysis of our own theory and practice, firmly rooted in personal convictions.” We remove ourselves to a new paradigm of sovereignty<sup>1</sup>. Even the freedom and openness of psychoanalysis's free association are a pale comparison to the richness and freedom and openness of abandoned being, of I-You relations. The misfortune of analysis is that the rewards of

<sup>1</sup> But for all this, there may be vibrations between experiences of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Laura U. Marks offers a wonderful explanation:

Just as the optical needs the haptic, the haptic must return to the optical. To maintain optical distance is to die the death of abstraction. But to lose all distance from the world is to die a material death, to become indistinguishable from the rest of the world. . . . Life is served by the ability to come close, pull away, come close again. What is erotic is being able to become an object with and for the world, and to return to being a subject in the world; to be able to trust someone or something to take you through this process; and to be trusted to do the same for others. Martin Buber writes:

In the drive for contact...the innate You comes to the fore quite soon, and it becomes ever clearer that the drive aims at reciprocity, at "tenderness."

this abandonment will forever be pushed into remoteness when language and approximation speak. For there is no remove in abandoned being.

### **I-You; The Liminal Becomes**

There are various ways in which abandoned being can be engendered. That which has been inscribed in this essay variously as becoming, abandoned being, I-You relations, radical haptic experience, naturally involves things with which psychoanalysis is concerned: change, growth, openness, forgiveness, contextual awareness, participation, intention, immediacy, presence. And yet it also involves stasis, blindness, isolation, sadness, deterritorialization, all things, we should say, which are extremely contrary to what Lacan and Marcuse note as the goals of analysis, i.e., autonomy and a functional social self.

Becoming happens as a person *becomes numerous*, filled with a dialectic of all these experiences, out of both blindness and sight. And of course analysis tends toward the *unification of a functional stable self without contradiction*. And with this notion of unified self we know at least one poet would disagree:

I have heard what the talkers were talking...the talk of the beginning and the end,  
But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then....I contradict myself;  
I am large....I contain multitudes.

What Walt Whitman ultimately understood was a certain futility of expression and its conventions, the way language is entirely limited—poetry's task is to reinvent expression, to reshape convention, to illumine what has been darkened by repetition—the way denotation tries to limn that which is without boundary:

Speech is the twin of my vision....it is unequal to measure itself.

It provokes me forever,  
It says sarcastically, Walt, you understand enough....why don't you let it out then?

Encounters with this speechlessness, this inability to open ourselves to language and feel satisfied, are liminal experiences (perhaps even uncanny encounters with absolute alterity—where ipseity is not *exactly* un-present). Contrary to the unification of self and resolution of conflicts are exactly these liminal encounters with abandoned being, with I-You relations. Precisely because they lie outside of prescription are they at odds with something that tends to prescribe. But these experiences with "the undefined, unanalyzed, unabsolute many...in none comprised" are essential to becoming, are essential to amelioration. We see this evidenced in Whitman's own ecstasy, for he stands outside himself and yet *is*. His poetry is a transference of sovereignty from himself as unified knowing subject to numerous poet, player of language games, abandoner of prescription and conventional being.

Analysts might contend that this is exactly what free-association is. And in part they would be right. However, the openness required to truly abandon being necessitates a giving-up of language. After all, self-referential language is its own tyrant.

### **Case Studies (the nails, the coffin; the dead horse, the bludgeon)**

Little Hans is one of the most famous and influential case studies. It has compelled the course of many paradigmatic shifts in analysis. Nicholas Midgley has provided a wonderful survey of the Little Hans case study and its effect on the work of Freud, Bowlby, Lacan and Klein. Each perspective focuses on the way early childhood experiences form all subsequent behavior, which is, in the end, eventually the way each analyst views the behavior of every individual, and thus, the life structure itself.

Looking at each analyst's response to the study of Hans will illuminate the general trappings of analytic theory. "For Freud the description of this boy's fantasies and

anxieties confirmed the centrality of castration and the Oedipus complex to the origin of the anxiety neuroses" (Midgley, 540). Which is to say that the boy's behavior lead Freud to believe that all humans act in a certain way; emotions rejected by social expectation are hidden, even from the individual, and when they arise the threat of reprimand causes anxiety. Therefore for Freud, humans tend on a precarious path of hedging bets and trying best to bend with social whims. The impossibility of wish fulfillment emerges.

Melanie Klein's reading of Freud's case study of Little Hans lead her to focus on internal reprimands. Hans's "anxiety can be understood," for Klein, "as relating to early sadistic fantasies and the anxieties associated with them" (Midgley, 544). The case study of Little Hans lead Klein to believe that humans can have emotions which are, again, unacceptable, but Klein was led to believe that the child's fear of reprimand was in fact an interior battle. He was afraid of his own aggressive impulses. For Klein wish fulfillment is not the concern so much as progressing without destructive impulses.

We need not spend much time with the details of Bowlby and Lacan's interpretations, but simply present the conclusion. For Bowlby, little Hans was defending feelings of abandonment. For Lacan, little Hans was riddled with object-relation concerns. What is important to note at this point is that each analyst draws conclusions about wishes, anxieties, abandonment (not in the philosophical sense), and object relations; each analyst comes implicitly to make conclusions about *life itself and the way humans behave based on emotional expression and behavior*. Each analyst's ontology seems to suggest that emotional issues concern the entirety of a person's being and constitute him or her completely.

### **Feelings, Abandonment, You**

What happens with psychoanalytic theory, as indicated by the lasting theoretical impacts of the most famous and influential of all case studies, is that feelings are seen to constitute not only a person, but Being as such. The nature of existence itself is what psychoanalysis would know. And yet its great flaw is that it uses a funnel for the world, a

funnel composed of emotions and their expression.

That feelings yield no personal life has been recognized by few so far; for they seem to be the home of what is most personal. And once one has learnt, like modern man, to become greatly preoccupied with one's own feelings, even despair over their unreality will not easily open one's eyes; after all, such despair is also a feeling and quite interesting. (Buber, 94)

Perhaps the most striking revelation philosophy offers psychoanalysis is that feelings are not a person. On occasion, the task of amelioration must be addressed by its abandonment.

If we must find ourselves, then in what but an ever-changing sense of unified multiplicity? And how can we reconcile ourselves to all of these differences? What You as I is ever the same as when we last checked?

### **Epilogue Goodbye Desire; Opening To Abandon & The Birth To Presence.**

*Find me, so that I will exist  
Find my navel, so that it will exist  
Find my nipples, so that they will exist  
Find every hair of my belly I am  
good or I am bad  
Find me  
--George Oppen*

The Oppen poem from which the epigraph is taken, called *Of Being Numerous*, is an explanation of and embodiment of the world's and a self's unfolding and meeting together as You. The poem seeks an I beyond simple denotation (beyond It): something tangible, something multitudinous. Transient I's of becoming are rife with this exact every-changing fullness.

The poem opens, in its ever-changing fullness, a possible answer—or rather, in its openness, the poem exemplifies an answer to the question at hand: What should the analysand and analyst do in light of their ontological incompleteness? Simply and

clearly: let go, at times, perhaps regularly, of the quest for unification. We must forgive ourselves our naturally prescriptive tendencies. As is suggested by Nancy, the sovereignty "at the end of words" is that to which we must come to by abandoning part of ourselves, something is lost that we love. The unity and clarity of prescription are forsaken. But this is a sacrifice worth making. As desire sifts endlessly on, we cannot let it ride itself out. So we must simply take breaths and attend the tasks at hand, forsaking the thoughtfulness that allows us to write essays, for example.

We may resent this. But the answer to this rancor is abandonment, forgiveness, and as we shall see, laughter.

There is an event of forgiving that we can exact to combat feeling rancorous about abandoning; "forgiveness is an instantaneous event....This comes back to saying that the grace of forgiveness and of selfless love is granted to us in an instant" (Jankelevitch, 4 & 37). The press of desire for ego, I-It, ownership, unification, control of fate, is a fact. It is a moment, even continuous, that is an event. We can have done with this fact and event in the same way we can forgive, and have done with an offense. "True forgiveness is a significant *event* that happens at such and such an instant of historical becoming" (Jankelevitch, 5).

Forgiveness, naturally, is a release, and an opening. "To forgive is to release the guilty one [in this case our species' prescriptive tendencies] from his punishment or from a part of his punishment, or to liberate him before the completion of his punishment, and all this for nothing and in exchange for nothing, gratuitously, from beyond the marketplace!" (Jankelevitch, 10). This entrance into a lack of reward, an exchange for nothing, is very similar to abandoned being itself. Forgiveness *opens the doors to abandon being*.

It should be noted that this forgiveness that opens the doors to abandoned becoming is not linguistic. Jankelevitch teaches us that true forgiveness does not involve intellection, or I-It relations. "Indeed, the more that forgiveness is impure and opaque, the more that it lends itself to description" (Jankelevitch, 5). There is not a particularly thoughtful I to an It which has offended or imposed discontent. If there were, then the necessary ipseity "is not only

condescending, but...solitary in its magnanimity....This tete-a-tete is a solitude, this dialogue is a soliloquy, this relation a solipsism" (Jankelevitch, 6). True forgiveness and abandoned becoming involve the opposite, a tete-a-tete of relating with, a dialogue of You. There is not a knowing I to It speaking. If any speaking occurs, it is in a Buberian I-You relation beyond prescriptions, spoken by the person's whole being.

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