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Preface

Although there seems to be a veritable boom in ethics, it is a common place that ethics is only something one can feel a personal obligation to or not. Ethics represent particular beliefs that can be argued but actually there is no ultimate point of reference that can serve as a basis of universalisation. Accompanied by a dark shadow, ethics depends on *ethical power* and on definitions about what is called a human being or not; its ideals are sometimes difficult to distinguish from the abyss they seek to avoid. Good can be evil and vice versa, and the diverse approaches certainly differ in their orientation[1]. In short: *ethics imply a self-difference*. Psychoanalysis has shown how important processes of maturation depend on early experiences, on being grateful, on being aware of one's own dark sides, on avoiding splitting and on the wish to reconcile. However, these approaches often fail to reflect on their own theoretical basis that is simply assumed to be given by nature, by a given community or by language. But in reality neither consciousness nor the unconscious can be assumed to be the ultimate basis of legitimation. This is something we have to keep in mind when studying Jung's approach to ethics. For him the term *self* is crucial. It represents a mixture of metaphysical, transcendental, and empirical heritages and denotes a singularity from which everything originates. This is a very common figure that can be found in many areas[2] since ancient times. In contrast to the preference for a primordial unity guaranteeing identity, the opposite idea of a constitutive otherness has become a key concept in continental philosophy.

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[1] Düsing, 2005; Lacan, 1996.
[2] As a consequence dualisms are again and again revealed, e.g., nature/culture, being/nothing, self/other, unconsciousness/consciousness etc. (Descola, 2011).

The theory of self-difference seeks by contrast to *both* options to show that one should not deal with the fundamentalism of an either-or, reducing one side to the other, self to difference or vice versa, but with an as-well-as: with a *self-difference* (of the self as well as of difference). Both sides are condidered to be dependent on processes of *de-constitution,* connecting with and separating from both themselves and their respective other. This post-fundamentalistic approach implies an *absolute fragility*[3] of world and beings on an ontological basis. When speaking of the self in terms of ethics this fragile basis should be kept in mind. Precisely because there is no ultimate point of reference legitimating the universalisation of a particular concept that can be assumed to be the very basis of a universality we share beyond identification with particular aspects such as species, race, culture, nationality, sex or language. The exposure to self-difference and its absolute fragile basis imply a radical and excessive moment embracing the humane and the inhumane in a process of permanent de-constitution[4]. It raises the central ethical question *Who shall die and who not*[5]. This radical moment extends even beyond the single human being, the social body, and the question *Who shall die and who not*: it touches the very idea of ethics itself and its dependency on fragile and self-different beings.

Introduction

This book presents a collection of works concerning ethics in Analytical Psychology. Its title can be read as being programmatic: *self always means self-difference*. The idea of difference[6] was one of the most important philosophical insights of the second half of the 20th century. The consequences of this insight for the Jungian concept of the self are to be examined in four chapters. Discussing the relationship between self and difference, I try to avoid the problem of *autoimmunity* or self-closure implied by the term self and a quasi-Hegelian[7] dialectical dynamic (synthesis of opposites, *transcendent function*) or by its characterisation as an all-encompassing *monad*. I also seek to show how *microethical* and *macroethical* levels are interwoven and how they depend on each other. Last not least, I want to reject the universalisations of particular beliefs by stressing the importance of an orientation towards the fragile foundation of being[8]. To this end I have introduced some new terms such as *archethype*[9], *ethical primal scene*, *participation éthique*, *de-constitution*, *convergence of the self* and others. To revise the Jungian term self in the field of ethics it is necessary to introduce a *medial* format of the psyche which is contrasted with common mental and material formats. The medial format stresses the ontological quality of imagination, which is supposed to unfold in two senses (*imaginary* and *imaginal*). Both aspects can be found on the *psychoid* basis of any ontology. Against this backdrop man is characterized as a being that has to deal with an ongoing production of identities and differences transforming life and the traditions of politics, ethics, religion, and of social and economic conditions. This is seen as a task of envisioning the horizons of the future in

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[3] *Absolute fragility* is another term for self-difference (Burda, 2010; 2011).

[4] This is the point to which all discussions concerning humanism, post-humanism etc. are indebted to.

[5] Badiou, 2003; Lévinas, 1996; Lévinas, 2003.

[6] See also *alterity*, otherness, *différance*.

[7] Giegerich, 1994.

[8] The theory of self-difference aims at a universality that is beyond identification with particular aspects like culture, nationality etc.; being subject to self-difference implies a radical and excessive moment because there is no *essence* of what is called human but a connection between the humane and the inhumane that opens a space of redefining what it might mean to be human (see Badiou/Žižek, 2005, 78).

[9] Archetype written with "th" creates a neologism combining the Greek words *ethos* and *arché* to underline the ethical demand.

connection with something *absolutely fragile*. Confronted with our fragility we are faced with the psyche and self in their ultimate ethical dimension where the contingency of life, of beings, and institutions becomes its opposite: *non-contingency* – a paradoxical cluster of necessity and freedom that regards otherness as a medium of becoming oneself.

The first chapter, *C.G. Jung: Ethics in the Shadow of the Father*[10], starts with a glance at history and discusses why Jung's and also Erich Neumann's writings on ethics must be seen as remaining in the *shadow of the father*. This means that the father – in terms of ethics *the law* – is not realised as an ethical potential. One reason for this can be found in the unconsciousness of the hysterical shadow whose trace can be detected in a history that can be traced from Jung's relationship to his father to the image of the Jew in which the rejected father emerges as the paradigm of desertion. Thus it is firstly a question of recognising that we are creatures of desire who need a law so as not to succumb to a deceptive and dangerous self-closure. We must therefore go back to where Jung and Neumann began their considerations of ethics, to the *participation mystique*, the matrix in which according to Jung all people are equal – to our "unconscious humanity". What is unconscious in this is perhaps only the circumstance that we have always been incorporated in a social context (space) and made into human beings (law). This basic ethical dimension, the *primal ethical scene*, cannot be escaped by referring to an inner *voice* as Jung suggested. If "the moral problem of the whole of humanity […] appears as a last stage 'after' the personal and collective shadow"[11] the question arises as to where the source of solidarity and the shift in focus towards the "fraternal and human" actually can be found. Neither *participation mystique* – a latent mass psychosis – nor the rejected father and its law can be the source of this solidarity. However, we can find this source if we follow the line of projection of the hysterical shadow to Nietzsche, Jung, Hitler, the hysterical Germans and finally to the Jews - a line of projection along which what is universally human is shifted to an excluded element in order once again finally to land with the father and *participation mystique*: now however under changed auspices. The task is first to understand the antonymic structure of what relates to the law, i.e. the father as *archethype*, and to examine the dark abyss of melancholy from which hysteria turns away in horror. Secondly we must understand the *participation mystique* as a *participation éthique*, as a responsible being-in-soul of a desiring being split by the ethical law who takes responsibility for the continued writing of the law and the continued shaping of the space which it has always shared with others, shares now and will always share. Thus a *positive ethical primal scene* is revealed.

The second chapter, *On the Primal Scene of Ethics*[12], unfolds this approach in a broader sense. The concept of an *ethical primal scene* brings Jung's idea of the self closer together with the philosophical question of otherness. As opposed to an absolute *asymmetry* between subject and the other/otherness a *symmetrical* position is introduced that neither neglects the other/otherness nor the subject. This is called a *positive ethical primal scene* combining the three indispensable ethical dynamics of *space*, *law* and *desire* which are seen as part of the *de-constitutive* dynamic of the self. It is argued that what can be called "good" is to be found in a positive primal scene where space, law, and desire are realised in their dependency on each being embraced by a self in all its difference. Both on the micro-ethical level and a the macroethical one constitution and deconstitution are recognised as two sides of the same coin instead of being split and projected onto their respective other. *Divergence* of the self is rejected, its *convergence* – i.e., self-difference concerns the subject as well as the other – favoured. In "our" shared self-difference we realise ourselves as a medium of becoming

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[10] *Ethics in the Shadow of the Father* was a lecture given at a congress of the German- speaking Jung Societies, Vienna 2005.

[11] Neumann, 1990a, 134.

[12] *On the Primal Scene of Ethics* was presented on the 2nd European Congress of Analytical Psychology, St. Petersburg 2012.

oneself: In terms of microethical realisation this is what *individuation* means; in terms of a macroethics it can be regarded to be the *most necessary of all possible worlds.*

Chapter 3, *Divergence and Convergence of the Self* [13], leads us to Jung's idea of a *self of mankind* and to the latest discussion on *cultural complexes* [14]. In contrast to the implicit *global* view of culture [15] and a *divergence* of the self, a *universal* view [16] and a *convergence* of self-difference are stressed, allowing for a better understanding of the relationship between individuals and collective/s and the relationships among collectives. In this connection, I address collective defence mechanisms against psychotic fears on the basis of de- and re-integrative processes manifesting themselves in the individual as well as in the collective. The challenge is to realise that every constitution of identity depends on de-integration. If this stays unconscious the deintegrative aspect is often projected onto the other. The result then is a split in the ethical space, which is dominated by a cluster of archaic defence mechanisms, generating a self in divergence. If this becomes conscious the convergence of self-difference embracing both sides can serve as a medium of understanding and as a way to avoid the universalisation of particular symbolic systems. This implies dealing with political antagonism in a responsible way.

In the fourth chapter, *Towards a Phenomediology of the Soul* [17], I begin by observing that the present trend is to either completely repress the psyche under the dominance of science or to captivate it directly by means of pictograms to an unprecedented extent. As the "unit of cognitive, emotional and affective conditions and achievements" [18] psyche is seen as a physical condition bound to brain structures and processes. However, it turns out that *disseminative* [19] and *delocutive* [20] processes play an important role, just as the urge to act out affects and intensities does. This reminds us of archaic ideas regarding the soul (Homer), on one hand, and of the later appearing integration of diverse centres of excitability in an inner and relatively autonomous and self-reflective unit called *psyché* (Plato, Aristotle), on the and outside, between subject and object, between the individual and the collective. This *phenomediological* perspective of the soul proves to be a genuine subject of research for psychotherapy as well as psychotherapy sciences [21] underlining the key role of two aspects of imagination (*imaginary* and *imaginal*) forming the *psychoid* basis of any ontology and of any ethical belief.

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[13] The content of this chapter was presented at the IAAP-Congress in Montreal 2010 in a paper entitled *Self and Intercollectivity. Alterity, Antagonuism, Archethype.*

[14] Singer/Kimbles, 2004.

[15] Differences are seen as external differences.

[16] Differences are seen as internal differences; e.g. the unconscious as an *inner alterity* which initiates and also disturbs the constitution of any identity (Santner, 2001).

[17] This was a presentation given at the International Congress on Psychology of Religion, Vienna 2009. Its title was *Between Heaven and Earth: Psyche, Religion,Media*.

[18] Roth, 2005, 37.

[19] Messages are directed to anonymous receivers.

[20] Acts of communication can be independent of intentionality and conscious expression.

[21] Burda, 2012.