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The Transcendent Function and Politics: No!

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Introduction

No school of psychotherapy is making a greater contribution to the alleviation of the suffering of the world than Jungian analysis and analytical psychology. How wonderful to be able to say such a thing, with hand on heart! Jungian analysts, supposedly the most unworldly, introverted, even mystically-inclined group of therapists on the planet, are getting passionately involved in a huge range of cultural, social and political problems. They have become part of the attempt to recover the political from the swamps into which it has sunk in many countries. This turnaround probably derives its energy from a sense that the change of direction was urgently needed, perhaps as reparation for past misjudgments, mainly in the 1930s. Anyway, the job is well started and is carried out these days by so many of us that I don't think I can produce a list of names. Many have sensed the danger of losing the revolutionary idealism of Jung's pioneering work if we stand still and rest on our laurels. Many of us know that our common interests will collapse if we only pursue our common interests, if we only invest in what advantages us.

I believe we are now in the middle of developing Jung's radical intuition, floated in the 1930s, of the need to create a culturally sensitive psychology. A culturally sensitive psychology does not level out all differences in the psyche that stem from politics, ethnicity, religion, nation, social class, gender and sexual orientation. Jung was against the universal imposition of a single system of psychology. Inevitably, so-called universal psychologies (like Freud's) are in fact context-bound, limited, personal confessions. So Jung was perhaps the first to anticipate the ethical and political disaster of a one-size-fits-all, colonial psychology. Hence he is one of the founding fathers of transcultural and intercultural psychotherapy. He was also one of the first to understand that we cannot insulate clinical practice from contemporary political history, saying that the analyst ‘feels the violence of its impact even in the quiet

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of his consulting room' (1946, pp. 177-78). And he goes on in the same passage (which is from the Preface to *Essays on Contemporary Events*) to make a suggestive and evocative reference to the analyst's having 'duties as a citizen'.

Politics in many countries is broken and in a mess; we urgently need new ideas and approaches. Jungian analysts, working alongside other psychotherapists, economists, social scientists, religious people, environmentalists and others, can contribute to a general transformation of politics and, step by stumbling step over many years, to an alleviation of the suffering of the world.

The actions of today's mainstream politicians leave many people in agony, with a sense of deep despair and disgust. The politicians themselves seem to lack integrity, imagination and new ideas. Across the globe, and in response to the challenge, a search is on to remodel politics. Jungian analysts can contribute to this search by opening up a two-way street between inner realities and the political world. So we need to balance attempts to understand the secret politics of the inner world of emotional, personal and family experiences with the secret psychology of pressing outer world matters such as leadership, the economy, environmentalism, nationalism and war.

Here are some things I think most of us interested in this work are agreed on. We sense possibilities for deeper understandings of social and political processes, and possible healing of difficult conflicts, on this occasion via the usage of Jung's seminal idea of the transcendent function. We agree that there is a psychological dimension to politics but also that it is very important not to reduce everything in the social world to psychology. We agree that we would not want to foist ideas developed for use in individual analysis and personal growth onto the body politic without testing that out thoroughly. I think we all agree that just bringing depth psychology and politics into one frame does not in itself constellate the transcendent function and, up to now, has generated as much heat as light.

Less certain is whether we agree on the necessary humility of interdisciplinary work when it comes to politics? By all means, let's have an analyst on every committee—but please God not a committee of analysts! If we are to organize more conferences on political themes, let's involve people from the political world, mainstream big names if we can get them, but also activists and political visionaries.

Do we also agree that our track record in the political arena is not that good? I am referring, of course, to Jung's anti-semitism and attitudes in the 1930s and

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also to a certain kind of casual élitism or aristocratic approach with regard to issues of gender, class and ethnicity. Moreover, the history of psychoanalysis in general with regard to homosexuality has been unedifying. And the professional politics of our field are a notorious mess. So we don't really start from a particularly credible base as political commentators.

An Action Ethos

To make it worse, I have become increasingly dismayed over two features that are typically seen when analysts engage with the political. I call these 'triangulation' and 'hyper-reflection'. In triangulation, the analyst takes herself outside of the dispute and struggles to see the arguments on both sides from a detached, Olympian standpoint. The analyst is never *in* the dispute, only in the role of a kind of mediator or arbitrator. There is a sort of attempt to personify the transcendent function going on, or maybe an identification with the position of the 'third element'. Triangulation is usually intended to show the mature wisdom of the analyst, resulting from deep inner work done on herself, when it comes to the hurly burly of the political street. In my view, what this really shows is supercilious detachment, bogus maturity, and a corralling of moral and judgemental power. Middlebrow psychology. It's like the old joke in the bars of Liverpool where I grew up: 'Let's you and him fight'. So what I often see in conferences and on internet discussions is the Jungian analyst stepping up to the plate to mediate (invited or not), to clarify (but exclusively in psychological terms), and to solve (at least on paper) some of the most violent and divisive issues of our times. I *hate* this, in part because it is undermining the much more productive yet less magical efforts to work at the interface of politics and analysis. And I hate it because, sometimes, I slip into it myself and do the triangulation from on high as well. Yet my overall point remains: we should not unquestioningly condemn adversarialism—or unquestioningly praise a politician (Obama) who says he is against it

What drives triangulation is hyper-reflection. Actually, this is more of a phobia with regard to action. All action is taken to be mindless action. Sometimes, action is regarded as masculine and reflection as feminine (which insults both sexes, in my view). But there is a general valorization of sitting still and thinking deeply, as if 'being' is deeper than actually *doing* something. It has even been claimed as the key political virtue of the psychotherapy perspective on politics. Not that thinking and reflecting deeply is a pathological thing to do—I have

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been known to indulge—but if it is always done at the expense of spontaneous and passionate action then it can certainly become very pathological.

A further problem with hyper-reflection is that the opinions it generates are often stated to be ‘realistic’. Let me address this via an anecdote. When I was working in a psychiatric hospital, the medical director always used to issue the most pessimistic prognoses. Once, I asked him why. He explained that if the patient got well, this would be regarded as due to his treatment. But if the patient did not get well, he had displayed his clinical acumen by predicting it all along.

Let me reframe the problems I am depicting in a less adversarial way. The really important and interesting thing is to try and hold that reflective space while also becoming engaged in action. There will be a tension between what

one discovers via reflection and the pragmatic exigencies of action, bearing in mind that when we act there is always an opponent acting too, often against ourselves. When we reflect, we may reflect all we like upon our opponent's existence and opinions, but no one is actually opposed to our reflections (except maybe our noisy household or demanding job).

My proposal is that we think in terms of an ‘action ethos’. This would be an explicit recognition of the following: (i) action and reflection are different and neither is better than the other; (ii) action inspired or backed up by reflection is our goal; (iii) we do not invariably condemn action that is not backed up by reflection; (iv) after the action is done, we insist on reflection about it.

The Tools for the Job

I have been attempting to bring the insights and practices of analysis (what I call ‘therapy thinking’) into the political world since the early 1980s. One thing that I have learned is that it's necessary to find and choose the right tool for the job. This should be driven by the nature of the problem under consideration as well as by one's preferences and knowledge. What it does not mean is using one huge concept, such as the paranoid-schizoid position or the cultural complex as if this could settle everything. Psychological analysis of political problematics needs to be a bit more detailed and fragmented. It needs to accept that such analysis might be wrong or fail. Saying there is a cultural complex at work or that the paranoid-schizoid position is in the field are statements that will never be wrong. I try not to go for the temptation of a

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massive single explanation, seeking instead to be a *bricoleur*, promiscuous in owing loyalty to no one specific concept or one particular school of psychology.

Here are some illustrative examples from my work:

(i) In terms of leadership, I have found (Samuels 2001) Winnicott's notion of 'good-enough' very useful—the good-enough leader for whom the binary divide success/failure is less rigid than is usually considered to be the case. Additionally, thinking derived from contemporary revisions of the father's role has been illuminating as regards leadership (see below).

(ii) In terms of the economy, I turn to Freud's account of sadism as a backdrop to the state we are in and to relational psychoanalytic ideas as the (admittedly Utopic) way ahead (Samuels 2001).

(iii) Nationhood and national character may be understood more deeply by Jung's writings in the 1930s on national psychology—the valuable (and overlooked) part of his work on cultural psychology during that period (see Samuels 1993).

(iv) When we consider foreign policy, all that has been written on empathy and the obstacles to empathy is relevant, plus up to the moment ideas like the notion of the moral third in geopolitics.

(v) Finally, when it comes to vision in politics, what could be more apt than the Trickster, who models the denial of the realities of time, space and

place just as any revolutionary or social reformer has to defy the social and cultural realities of her or his present moment.

Returning to the action ethos, the trick is to behave as if analysts actually matter! Then we will. Analysts don't matter much in all the obvious ways. In fact, people usually find analytical takes on politics to be too extreme and exaggerated, although Theodore Adorno said the only interesting thing about psychoanalysis were the exaggerations. James Hillman claimed we've had a hundred years of psychotherapy and that the world is getting worse. But, as I've shown, this claim was ahistorical and ill-informed (Samuels 1993). Totton (2000) has also shown that we've had much more than a hundred years of all the schools of psychotherapy trying to change the world—but, sadly perhaps, the world has stayed pretty much the same. The world didn't turn up for its first session with us. As these writings detail, all the pioneers of psychoanalysis (and

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humanistic psychology as well) were deeply committed to improving the world. *Pace* Hillman, it is by no means a new thing.

Aggression and Violence in Political Transformations

In his 1916 essay on the transcendent function, referring to the relations between the conscious and unconscious minds, Jung states (1946, para. 186) that ‘it is exactly as if a dialogue were taking place between two human beings with equal rights, each of whom gives the other credit for a valid argument and considers it worth while to modify the conflicting standpoints by means of thorough comparison and discussion’. This is a beautiful sentiment, but, aside from the political referent—‘rights’—what might this have to do with politics as we know it? Is Jung so bewitched by Swiss national pride over its extremely imperfect and partial politics that he can seriously claim that citizens have equal rights in anything other than a strictly formal or legal sense? Rather, don't we know, and maybe to our cost, that when it comes to politics, the warring opposites very rarely engage in political activity possessed of equal rights—or equal power, resources, information, military might and so on. That's what social class is all about, and economically deprived ethnic minorities, and military dictatorships. These all show the problem with utmost clarity. Perhaps Jung realized he had been too anodyne when he added that ‘the present day [1916] shows with appalling clarity how little able people are to let the other man's argument count’.

For politics is, quintessentially, a process in which *unequals* dispute and contest control of power resources and information. They do this primarily by means of engaging in conflict and struggle, including armed struggle. Persuasion, polemic and rhetoric serve this struggle. But the struggle does not take place on a level playing field and, as I am arguing in this short piece, most attempts to deploy the transcendent function in political analysis, as a means of reconciling or even establishing dialogue between opposites, forget that.

There is also a spoken and unspoken hope that, via the healing properties of the transcendent function, whatever changes there may be in a society or in the world will be achieved non-violently. I think this involves the most profound dissociation and denial of the valuable role historically played by armed struggle—for example, in wars of national liberation. One might think of both the American War of Independence and the Civil War in this regard.

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From the perspective of the political psyche, I think we need to seriously revalue the presence of aggression in the pursuit of social justice. My long study of South African politics suggests that without the forceful military contributions of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation, the military wing of the African National Congress and led for a while by Nelson Mandela), plus the South African Communist Party, and the mainly Black Cuban troops in Angola, the new South Africa would never have come into being: No Mandela, no Truth and Reconciliation Commission, no books on restorative justice. And, to complicate it even more, the entire liberation struggle was financed and supported by the Soviet Union.

Let me widen this, to take in less conventional and broader definitions of politics. From the point of view of gender politics, aggression and especially aggressive fantasy can be an individuation path, especially for women: an imaginal way to be thrusting, penetrative and seminal, to break out of the coils of Eros where the woman is only responsive to the needs of others in a reproduction of mothering. But are women really less aggressive than men?

From the point of view of political morality, there is a critical *telos* (goal, point, aim) for political aggression. How can you develop concern for an Other if there is no reason to do so? Aggression just has to be in the picture or there is no reason why concern for the Other should flower at all.

From the point of view of metapsychology, aggression is part of ego-consciousness—the way we become conscious by breaking wholes into parts. The very etymology of 'analysis' is aggressive—Erich Neumann said that symbols of consciousness involved the teeth and biting.

Returning to a more conventional definition of politics, we can also see an immense cultural and ethical relativism with regard to political aggression. I will give a complicated and controversial example. As one who has been deeply immersed in the politics of the Middle East, I have been struck by the way the inter-relation of Jews and aggression seems very problematic for all parties. We can note this as originating in Western and Arab responses to the birth of modern Zionism and the establishment of the pre-Second World War settler communities in Palestine, and subsequently moving on to intense soul-searching about the Holocaust. For example, the debates on alleged Jewish 'passivity' on the one hand and the valorous resistance of the Warsaw Ghetto on the other. And then to the policies of the State of Israel. Whatever one's position on Israel/Palestine, it is possible to agree, I think, that thoughtful discussion is interfered with by ethnically based assumptions and generalizations about political aggression.

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I would like now to delve more deeply into my ungrateful argument that the transcendent function is actually a rather poor explanatory tool when it comes to political conflict. Although reference is made to the ‘ceaseless’ interplay of opposites, and the idea is thereby rescued from being excessively static, there is no doubt in my mind that some sort of harmonious resolution lies behind the idea of the transcendent function. This idealism is part of its importance for individuals but may be the very problem the notion suffers from when it comes to politics.

Let's take as an example, a conflict between a racist and a non-racist, or between a racist group and a non-racist group. What does it mean in such a situation to look for and find the middle position? Are we looking for the establishment of a semi-racist group? A racist-enough group? Surely, in situations like these, it is a question of each side struggling for dominance over the other. For me, and for many reading this, we would hope that the non-racist group will prevail. But it may not. If the conflict is played out along the dialectical lines of the transcendent function, which comes first, racism or non-racism? Then, the other group becomes the antithesis. But, as I say, there just isn't any synthesis here, nor were the two groups equal to start with. No, it doesn't work.

Leadership and the Transcendent Function

Applying the transcendent function to leadership, I'd like to point out the dangers in seeing the leader and the led as ‘opposites’ because this would make the leader all conscious (I suppose) and the led all unconscious. The fascist potential in such a perspective is clear. Yet, in some of his remarks in the famous interview with Dr Weiszacker on Radio Berlin in 1938, that is what Jung is close to saying: ‘As Hitler said recently, the leader *[Führer]* must be able to be alone and have the courage to go his own way. But if he doesn't know himself, how is he to lead others?’ (Jung 1938, pp. 773-9). Here, we find the idea of the leader as a sort of individuated being who can contain all the glorious diversity of the nation.

Sound familiar? I believe that some (not all) of the chorus of praise for President Obama has this kind of danger buried in it. Can a leader who wins a democratically contested election ever create an undivided country? Of course not. But what is so wrong with a divided country, with accepting pluralistic adversarialism as I mentioned earlier? (See Samuels 1989, for an account of the

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role of aggression in pluralistic discourse.) There are battles to be won and lost and there will be opponents to engage with. This is politics, and leadership involves knowing how far to go before the opposition goes ballistic. Whilst there is assuredly a psychology of leadership, being a leader is not *a priori* about individuation or some version of the 'balance' or absence of one-sided development which may be necessary for an individual in analysis. Churchill, Mandela, and even Blair—they have all known how to fight. Of course, a leader

can work against too great a degree of destructive polarization in the country and can point out how something—say, racism—puts unmanageable stresses on the system as a whole. But there were 47% against Obama at his election so it is just pie-in-the-sky to see him as a unifying figure and even more remote an idea to see him as unifying opposites via his inter-racial background. If whites and blacks in America were or are 'opposites', they are not now nor have they ever been in an equal fight; that is my point. Rather, Obama may be for the moment the least polarizing figure in American politics as a result of his victory —but even that is in doubt.

Leaders have to lead struggles—for economic justice, for an empathic foreign policy, and so on. Sadly, we may find that they also struggle for lower taxes, reduced services, military aggression abroad, and the preservation of élite privileges. Then 'we' have to fight back. This is politics. It is depressing, I know, but I feel I have to write this to stem the tide of unruly optimism that a wave of transcendent function is sweeping across post-Obama America and that this will reach to the corners of the globe.

We certainly wish for unifying leaders, individuated leaders. This desire is a very important thing. And what some people wish for is, in some Western countries, slowly starting to happen. The internet generation (and others) are less impressed by heroic, macho leaders, recognizing the troubles they have visited on the planet. We are still more infatuated with such leaders than we realize, perhaps. But what we understand by 'father of the nation' is changing. Maybe what is understood by 'nation' doesn't change that much, but the father is a personage undergoing rapid and positive change in the West. The interplay between new fathers and new leaders is extremely interesting.

To change our perceptions of what being the father of the nation means, we need a positive account of the father that does not stupidly build him up to an unrealistic degree. An account that makes it much more difficult for our old-style political leaders to masquerade as the only kind of fathers that there could be. An account that does not dwell on the malevolent power of the father but

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on his affirming warmth. Not on his holding the mother who holds the children but on his holding of the children himself. The stay at home weekend father. The sensitive and affirming father, the playful father, the wounded and unhappy father, not the punitive, stern self-contained father. *Not the commander-in-chief father.* We need a story of the father in which emotional security is as important as physical security. That would be a useful beginning to an equally new and analogous story about political leadership whether conducted by men or by women—for female leaders are also caught up in the hero thing.

Conclusion

To conclude: at this point in the evolution of my ideas, I am more impressed by the healing political power of some simple behavioural changes in the family,

such as the rise of the more nurturing father, than I am by metapsychological abstractions such as the transcendent function, no matter how useful and deep, and tried and tested in the arenas of personal growth and individuation they may be.

Translations of Abstract

Les analystes jungiens ayant collaboré à cet article traitent de la stagnation politique et sociale, de la régression et du changement, via l'usage singulier qu'ils font du concept de fonction transcendante.

Singer note qu'il est habituellement question de fonction transcendante lorsqu' apparaît dans le matériel symbolique la figure de la réconciliation des opposés comme facteur de croissance psycho-spirituelle. L'auteur examine également la notion de fonction transcendante telle qu'elle se manifeste en des occurrences similaires dans la psyché collective. Il s'intéresse également au phénomène opposé—qui pourrait se nommer fonction descendante—tel qu'il apparaît dans la psyché collective et montre comment sa présence dans le matériel symbolique peut générer la division en groupes de personnes opposées, les incitant à des expériences destructrices plutôt que transformatrices.

Selon Meador, Jung a désigné comme fonction transcendante le processus de médiation à travers lequel images et idées inconscientes sont assimilées à la conscience. Tout comme ce processus de synthétisation peut produire des

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insights chez le sujet, de même est-il susceptible de générer des changements dans un contexte collectif sociétal.

Des croyances collectives bien ancrées tendent à se transformer lorsque les opposés entrent en collision, comme ce fut par exemple le cas au cours de l'effervescence politique et sociale des années soixante. Meador analyse la récente révolution des attitudes raciales et sexuelles comme résultant de la lutte collective, du conflit entre certaines mœurs enracinées du passé et des points de vue nouveaux.

La conclusion de Samuels est que le concept de fonction transcendante est de peu de valeur dans le champ des problèmes politiques. Son article est axé sur:

1- Les limites de l'utilisation d'idées—telles que la fonction transcendante—dérivées de l'analyse personnelle pour la compréhension des phénomènes politiques et sociaux.

2- Le problème spécifique de l'absence de modèles psycho politiques aptes à rendre compte du progrès ou de la régression sociale, la fonction transcendante s'avérant à cet égard inutilisable.

3- La question de l'agression politique, de la violence et des conflits sociaux est explorée à partir de la fonction transcendante afin d'évaluer son rôle possible dans la gestion des conflits politiques. Samuels adresse une critique sévère de ce qu'il nomme “triangulation” et “hyper-réflexion”, aux analystes qui s'engagent sur le terrain du débat et des questions politiques.

4- Le leadership est examiné du point de vue de la fonction transcendante qui, une fois encore, ne s'avère pas pertinente. Les découvertes récentes de la psychologie familiale sur le rôle du père offrent selon lui de meilleures possibilités pour servir de base à une réflexion renouvelée sur le leadership.

Die jungianischen Analytiker, die teilhatten an der Abfassung dieses Textes, berühren durch ihren je spezifischen Gebrauch des Konzeptes der Transzendenten Funktion implizit oder explizit Themen des sozialen und politischen Stillstandes, des Rückganges und des Wandels.

Singer nimmt an, daß die Transzendentale Funktion ein Begriff ist, der gewöhnlich auf Individuen angewandt wird bei denen symbolisches Material auftaucht, welches an die Vereinigung von Gegensätzen denken läßt, was wiederum zu seelisch-spirituellem Wachstum führt. Auch richtet er seinen Blick auf die Bedeutung der Transzendenten Funktion, wie sie in ähnlicher Weise in

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der Kollektivpsyche erscheinen kann. Zusätzlich lenkt er die Aufmerksamkeit auf das gegenteilige Phänomen - welches als Deszendente Funktion bezeichnet werden könnte - wie es in der Kollektivpsyche und deren Führung auftaucht, wo symbolisches Material die Spaltung einer Gruppe von Individuen in Opponenten bewirken kann, wobei eher destruktive als transformative Erfahrungen mobilisiert werden.

Meador betont, daß Jung den Vermittlungsprozeß der Assimilierung unbewußter Bilder und Ideen in das Bewußtsein als Transzendente Funktion bezeichnet hat. So wie dieser Synthetisierungsprozeß Einsicht in das Individuum bewerkstelligen kann, so kann er auch auf Änderungsprozesse in der Gesellschaft angewandt werden. Verankerte kollektive Voraussetzungen tendieren dazu ins Rutschen zu geraten, wenn Gegensätze aufeinanderstoßen, wie dies z.B. in den Unruhen der 60-er Jahre geschah. Ihr Beitrag sieht die jüngsten Revolutionen rassische und sexuelle Haltungen betreffend als Produkt eines kollektiven Ringens zwischen bestimmten tiefwurzelnden sozialen Sitten der Vergangenheit und konfligierenden neuen Sichtweisen.

Samuels kommt zu dem Schluß, daß dem Konzept der Transzendenten Funktion bezüglich politischer Probleme wenig Wert zukomme. Sein Beitrag konzentriert sich auf 1. die Begrenztheit des Gebrauchs von Ideen (solche wie die der Transzendenten Funktion), die aus Analysen von Individuen deriviert sind, bei der Förderung des Verständnisses von sozialen und politischen Phänomenen, 2. das spezifische Problem des Mangels an tragfähigen psycho-politischen Modellen für sozialen Fort- und Rückschritt - er argumentiert, daß die Transzendente Funktion diesbezüglich nicht nutzbringend sei, 3. die Frage der politischen Aggression, der Gewalttätigkeit und des Konfliktes, die vom Standpunkt der Transzendenten Funktion aus untersucht wird um so deren mögliche Rolle bei der Lösung politischer Konflikte zu analysieren. Hart kritisiert Samuels, was er ‘Triangulierung’ und ‘Hyper-Reflektion’ auf seiten derjenigen Analytiker nennt, die sich auf politische Debatten und Themen einlassen. 4. Führerschaft wird untersucht vom Standpunkt der Transzendenten Funktion aus, die, wiederum, hier nicht sachdienlich zu sein scheint. Dagegen böten neue Erkenntnisse der Familienpsychologie über die Rolle des Vaters größere Möglichkeiten als Basis für ein neues Denken über Führerschaft.

Gli analisti junghiani che hanno contribuito alla scrittura di questo lavoro implicitamente o esplicitamente fanno riferimento, attraverso il loro particolare uso del concetto di funzione trascendente, alle conseguenze della stasi, della regressione, del cambiamento sociale e politico.

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Singer considera la funzione trascendente come un termine che di solito si riferisce agli individui quando compare quel materiale simbolico che fa pensare alla riconciliazione degli opposti che porta poi a una crescita psichica e spirituale. Considera inoltre

la nozione di funzione trascendente come può apparire in modo simile nella psiche collettiva. Presta inoltre attenzione al fenomeno opposto -che si potrebbe chiamare funzione discendente—come appare nella psiche collettiva e nella sua leadership, laddove il materiale simbolico può creare la divisione di gruppi in opposti, mobilitando esperienze distruttive piuttosto che trasformative.

Meador afferma che Jung designa come funzione trascendente il processo di mediazione attraverso il quale idee e immagini inconsce vengono assimilate dalla coscienza. Proprio come tale processo di sintesi può produrre l'insight nell'individuo, così può essere applicato ai mutamenti nella società collettiva. Convinzioni collettive stabilitesi tendono a scindersi quando gli opposti si scontrano, come accadde, ad esempio, nei tumulti degli anni sessanta. Il suo contributo si focalizza sulla recente rivoluzione degli atteggiamenti razziali e sessuali come prodotto di una battaglia collettiva fra certi costumi socialmente impiantatisi nel passato che entrano in conflitto con nuovi punti di vista.

Samuels giunge alla conclusione che il concetto di funzione trascendente è di poca importanza quando si tratta di problemi politici. Il suo contributo si focalizza su: (i) i limiti dell'utilizzo di idee (come la funzione trascendente) derivate dall'analisi con individui per la comprensione di fenomeni sociali e politici. (ii) Lo specifico problema di una mancanza di modelli psico-sociali credibili per quanto riguarda progressi e regressi sociali - egli sostiene che la funzione trascendente non è a questo riguardo utile. (iii) Il problema del conflitto, della violenza e della aggressività sociale viene esaminato dal punto di vista della funzione trascendente per indagare un suo eventuale ruolo nella gestione del conflitto politico. Samuels critica aspramente ciò che egli chiama ‘triangolazione’ e ‘iper-rispecchiamento’ da parte dell'analista che prende parte ai dibattiti e ai problemi politici. (iv) La leadership viene esaminata dal punto di vista della funzione trascendente, e anche questo non sembra pertinente. Piuttosto possono avere maggiori possibilità per una nuova riflessione sulla leadership le scoperte della psicologia della famiglia sul ruolo del padre.

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Юнгианские аналитики, принимавшие участие в написании этой статьи, явно или неявно обращаются к темам социального и политического застоя, регресса и изменений, применяя для этого концепцию трансцендентной функции.

Зингер предполагает, что трансцендентная функция – это термин, обычно применяемый к индивидуумам, чей символический материал дает возможность примирить противоположности, приводя к психо-духовному росту. Он также рассматривает возможности схожего проявления трансцендентной функции в коллективной психике. В довершение он обращает внимание на противоположный феномен – на то, что может быть названо десцендентной функцией, – и на то, как она проявляется в коллективной психике и ее лидерах, в тех случаях, когда символический материал создает разделение на оппозиционные группы людей, мобилизуя деструктивный, а не трансформирующий опыт.

Мидор утверждает, что Юнг называл трансцендентной функцией посреднический процесс ассимиляции бессознательных образов и идей сознанием. Точно так же, как этот синтезирующий процесс может привести человека к озарению (инсайту), он может быть применим и к переменам в коллективе,

в обществе. Внедренные в общественное сознание коллективные допущения имеют тенденцию меняться при столкновении противоположностей, как это было, к примеру, во время беспорядков 60-х годов [XX столетия]. Внимание этого автора концентрируется больше на недавнем перевороте в расовых и сексуальных установках как продукте коллективной борьбы между определенными социально укоренившимися нравами прошлого и конфликтующими с ними новыми точками зрения.

Заключение Сэмюэлса таково: концепция трансцендентной функции не имеет большого значения в отношении политических проблем. Он больше сосредоточен на: 1) ограничениях в использовании извлеченных из индивидуального анализа идей (таких, как трансцендентная функция) в их применении к пониманию социальных и политических феноменов; 2) специфической проблеме отсутствия надежной психо-политической модели социального прогресса и регресса – он доказывает, что в этом отношении трансцендентная функция не является полезной. 3) Вопрос о политической агрессии, насилии и конфликте в обществе исследуется с точки зрения трансцендентной функции – так, чтобы можно было исследовать ее возможную роль в управлении политическими конфликтами. Сэмюэлс сурово критикует то, что он называет «триангуляцией» и «гипер-рефлексией» со стороны аналитиков, участвующих в политических дебатах и проблемах. 4) С точки зрения трансцендентной функции проводится анализ лидерства. И вновь эта функция не кажется здесь подходящей. Скорее, больше возможностей в качестве основы для осмысления лидерства имеют новые открытия семейной психологии о роли отца.

Los analistas Jungianos que tomaron parte en la elaboración de este trabajo se refieren explícitamente o implícitamente a situaciones como el estancamiento político, la regresión y el cambio social, a través de su visión personal del concepto de la función trascendente.

Singer propone que la función trascendente es un término aplicado generalmente a individuos en quienes el material simbólico parece sugerir el reconciliar de contrarios, que conduce al desarrollo psico- espiritual. El observa así mismo que la noción de la función trascendente puede surgir en forma similar en la psique colectiva. Además, él llama la atención sobre el fenómeno opuesto—el cual podría ser llamado la función descendente—tal como aparece en la psique colectiva y su liderazgo, materia en donde su simbólica puede

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crear la división en grupos de personas, en contrarios, movilizando energías destructivas antes que experiencias transformativas.

Meador indica que Jung designó a la función trascendente como el proceso mediador para la asimilación de imágenes e ideas inconscientes al consciente. Así como este proceso sintetizador puede producir concientización en el individuo, también puede ser aplicado a cambios en la sociedad colectiva. Las suposiciones colectivas impresas tienden a cambiar cuándo los contrarios chocan, tal como ocurrió, por ejemplo, en los confusos años sesenta. Su contribución se centra en la reciente revolución, en actitudes raciales y sexuales, producto de una lucha colectiva entre ciertas costumbres sociales arraigadas en el pasado y en conflictivos nuevos puntos de vista.

La conclusión de Samuels es que el concepto de la función trascendente tiene poco valor con respecto a problemas políticos. Su contribución se centra en: (I) Las limitaciones

de utilizar tales ideas (como la función trascendente). Ella derivó del análisis de individuos para apoyar la comprensión de fenómenos sociales y políticos. (II) El problema específico de una falta de modelos psico-políticos creíbles para los avances sociales y su retroceso—argumenta que la función trascendente no es útil para esta consideración. (III) En relación a la pregunta sobre agresión política, la violencia y el conflicto en la sociedad explorados desde el punto de vista de la función trascendente para investigar su posible papel en la gestión del conflicto político, Samuels critica severamente lo que él llama "triangulación" e híper-reflejo por parte de analistas que se comprometen en debates y asuntos políticos. (IV) El liderazgo examinado desde el punto de vista de la función trascendente, no parece pertinente. Más bien, nuevos descubrimientos en la psicología familiar acerca del papel del padre, tienen mayores posibilidades para sentar una base en un nuevo concepto de liderazgo.

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