



Unknowing in psychotherapy

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- In spite of its tremendous impact on mankind, paradoxically enough, it has not yet been possible to place and classify psychoanalysis within any of the existing fields of knowledge. – Ginsberg, 1969
- One of the reasons that psychoanalysis as a science struggles with difficult epistemological problems is that its subject matter – the unconscious – is constituted in terms of negativity. What other science investigates something which is defined by the prefix un-?! The only resembling discipline, in this sense, may be the so-called “negative theology”, which claims that an understanding of God can only be reached by stating what God is not. – Karlsson 2000

- Sells – Apophatic theory – ‘affirms the ultimate ineffability of the transcendent’
- Sells – Apophatic discourse – ‘writings in which unnameability is not only asserted but performed’

Pseudo-Dionysius

- *anagou, anagoge* – uplifting
- *aphairesis* – abstraction
- *apophasis* – negation, denial
- *hoion* – as it were
- *hyper* – above, beyond, super
- *exaireou* – to be removed from, transcend
- *epekeina* – transcend, beyond

- *exaiphnes* – sudden, suddenly
- *ekstasis* – ecstasy
- *apeiria, apeiron* – infinite, infinity, unlimited, unbounded
- *agnousia, agnoustos, agnoustous, hyperagnoustos* – lack of knowledge, unknowing (“complete unknowing is knowledge”)
- *henousis* – unity, union
- *theousis, theosis, theôsis* – deification, divinization, becoming godlike

- So what?
- Family resemblance – We know that Freudian, Jungian, Lacanian, etc. analysis *is* analysis because of the apophatic element in each theory and practice - even if they are articulated and performed differently. Ecumenical potential.
- What is psychoanalysis - Psychoanalysis is not a type of knowledge, but a type of ignorance. It is precisely the disciplined, learned ignorance of the analyst that makes life possible for the patient.
- Training – A study of the many forms of ignorance should be a component of psychoanalytic training.

- Crisis of psychoanalysis – What is the future?
Neuropsychanalysis and regulation (skills) as defenses against unknowing and uncertainty.
Analysts are experts in uncertainty – not experts in securing certainty. Danger to psychoanalysis is not claiming too little but claiming too much. Not experts but witnesses.

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Jung

- The self, in its efforts at self-realization, reaches out beyond the ego-personality on all sides; because of its all-encompassing nature it is brighter and darker than the ego, and accordingly confronts it with problems which it would like to avoid... For this reason *the experience of the self is always a defeat for the ego.*

- The art of letting things happen, action through non-action, letting go of oneself as taught by Meister Eckhart, became for me the key that opens the door to the way. We must be able to let things happen in the psyche.