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"Psyche is extended": from Kant to Freud

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ABSTRACT

This paper is inspired by one of Freud's last notes, which is famous for its astonishing conclusion: "Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it," which describes the perception of space as a product of the extension of the psychic apparatus, and compares it with Kant's *a priori* categories. The Author reconstructs the historical background of this idea as part of a long discussion between Freud and his pupil Marie Bonaparte in the second half of 1938, and shows how the relationship between body and psychic functions in Freud's thought was influenced by his intellectual debt to Kant. Through an outline of the influence of Kantian philosophy on the emerging Naturphilosophie in *fin de siècle* Vienna, the Author aims to show the profound influence of Kantian philosophy on the development of Freud's thought. By committing to a modern and non-dualistic conception of the relationship between body and mind, Freud conceives an indissoluble bond between the mind and, not only the brain, but the whole body and its spatial extension. The Author concludes by identifying a close link between the aphorism of 1938 and Kantian pre-Critique thought, and, more generally, highlighting the influence of the Königsberg philosopher on the relationship between mind and body and on the perception of time and space in Freudian thought.

KEYWORDS

Mind-body relationship; space; time; philosophy; Freud; Kant; Bonaparte.

> Je suis corps et je pense, je n'en sais pas davantage. [I am a body and I think, that's all I know of the matter]
>
> Voltaire, Lettres philosophiques
>
> That matter thinks is a fact. It is a fact because we ourselves think; and we do not know, we are not aware of being, we are not capable of knowing, of perceiving, anything but matter. It is a fact because we see that the modifications of thought depend entirely upon sensations, upon our physical state, and that our mind fully corresponds to the changes and variations in our body.
>
> Giacomo Leopardi, *Zibaldone,* 18 September 1827.

Introduction

In recent decades there has been a renewed debate about the mind–body problem, which has seen the formation of two opposing fronts, two epistemological schools of thought

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which are only apparently antithetical. The first, to which we could apply the old term *reductionist*, ever more strengthened by the new tools from neuroimaging, describes the mind as the pure outcome of cerebral phenomena and proclaims the non-existence of mental processes properly so called, since they are nothing more than the product or epiphenomenon of neurological or cerebral processes which we will increasingly be able to explain by the new discoveries of the neurosciences. The other is a rigidly *mentalist* approach which supposes that psychological processes are autonomous and independent of physiological ones and that, if interaction exists, it is above all because the former impinge on the latter. A part of clinical psychology, certain psychoanalytic approaches, and the vast field of psychosomatics tend in this direction. If these two schools of thought seem polar opposites to an almost ideological degree, they nevertheless have one point in common: both exclude the body as a whole. For the reductionists, the term "body" is assimilated into the term "brain," so much so that they prefer to think in terms of *mind–brain* rather than *mind–body*. For the mentalists, however, the body ends up being almost a by-product of the mind, the object that is damaged by stress, by neurosis, or by self-harming psychic states.

By taking a series of steps back into the history of psychoanalysis and philosophy, I want to re-propose the indispensable distinctiveness of the basic antinomy constituted by the mind–body relationship, by "body" meaning that complex totality of functions, not only neurobiological, but also physiological, biological, chemical, hormonal, etc., which contribute to the subjective experience of sensations, emotions, feelings, and even that of thinking thoughts, and which cannot be reduced to the specific cerebral activations observable by MRI or PET. In support of this view, it would suffice to consider the complex relationship which exists between the hormonal and nervous systems, the recent discoveries about the connections between the central nervous system and the immune system, the relationship between epilepsy and depression, the extraordinary phenomenon of the placebo effect, and so on. In any case, the relationship between brain and body does not seem definable in terms of cause and effect: the nature of this link remains to be demonstrated. Fechner (1860) spoke of *psychophysical parallelism*, and Freud (1891) called the psychic a *dependent concomitant* of the corresponding physiological phenomena. In other words, the psychic system cannot be assimilated into the nervous system, but neither can the two be separated as if they were independent of each other; we should instead think of the mind as the function and expression of the body *in its completeness*: that is, we should suppose that, at different times and in differing proportions, there is "mind" in the brain and in the medulla oblongata, in the hormonal and immune systems, in the digestive and the respiratory apparatus, in the feet as much as in the tip of the nose. This hypothesis has been advanced by the neurologist Antonio Damasio, according to whom both the brain and the rest of the body must exist in order for there to be mental activity: "our most refined thoughts and best actions, our greatest joys and deepest sorrows, use the body as a yardstick." The body is not only a yardstick, a necessary support, but "provides 'a basic topic for brain representations'" (1994, pp. xvi–xvii). For Damasio, mental activity is the result of the body–mind association and of its interaction with the environment, and consists of an unlimited series of representations: these representations have their root in the body.

How does psychoanalysis, and Freud's thought in particular, fit into this subject? Despite an extremely "psychologizing" reading of psychoanalytic thought which

tends—perhaps a little less in recent decades (Ferrari 2004; Lombardi 2017)—to attribute to the psyche an absolute autonomy from the body, Freud's thinking instead moves along that crack that separates and unites body and mind, giving life to concepts like *drive* and *unconscious*, understood precisely as psychic representatives of the somatic sphere. The body's role in psychoanalytic theories is a broad topic, and I would direct the reader elsewhere for a more detailed treatment of it (Favaretti Camposampiero, Di Benedetto, and Cauzer 1998; Cavagna and Fornaro 2001; Carignani 2012). Here I only want to touch on a point raised by Freud towards the end of his life, one which concerns the specific meaning of a "psyche extended in the body," and in order to do this we must briefly reconstruct the historical context.

Freud in London: The history of a note

We are in early 1938 in Vienna: Freud, now old and unwell, is deceiving himself, like many other Jews, that Austria will resist Hitler's attempt to annex it to Germany. This does not happen, and on 11 March the Germans enter Vienna. In the same week, alarmed by the news, Ernest Jones leaves London to meet Freud and try yet again to convince him to leave Vienna and accept the invitation to move to England. After further resistance, Freud agrees to emigrate. Jones works hard to get him out of Austria, even managing to involve the American President Roosevelt in the belated enterprise. Freud's friend and pupil, Princess Marie Bonaparte, is brought in to enable his entry into French territory and to help him salvage some of his money. On 4 June, Freud leaves Vienna for good with his wife and daughter, spends the night of the 5th at Marie Bonaparte's house in Paris, setting off again overnight, and on the 6th reaches Victoria Station in London. He moves into 39 Elsworthy Road where he works on *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, a sort of introduction to psychoanalysis for an already well-informed audience, which was never completed and was published posthumously in 1940. According to Jones, Freud had started work on it in Vienna as early as May, but the manuscript closes with the date 22 July, which would mean that he had started to write it when he was already in London. Exactly a month later, on 22 August, Freud writes a brief note on a sheet of paper which contains other jottings on both sides, made on different days over the course of that summer. The page is found after his death, which occurs on 23 September 1939, and is posthumously published—in part[1]—in 1941 under the title *Findings, Ideas, Problems*. Here is the text, dated 22 August 1938:

> Space may be the projection of the extension of the psychical apparatus. No other derivation is probable. Instead of Kant's *a priori* determinants of our psychical apparatus. Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it. [*Psyche ist ausgedehnt, weiß nichts davon*] (Freud 1941f, p. 300)

The cryptic and assertive character of these lines strikes the reader immediately. It is a note made to conclude a thought, a quick reflection noted down on a piece of paper, certainly not intended for publication. A thought thrown down with the freedom of someone who does not have to take anybody else into consideration, the freedom that is needed to write an apodeictic phrase like *Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it*. How can we explain

[1]Two of Freud's notes were omitted from publication. On Freud's notes, see Grubrich-Simitis (1993).

this note which the philosopher Nancy (1992, p. 21) called "Freud's most fascinating and perhaps most decisive statement"? A note which has received contradictory readings: from being an expression of the Freudian metaphorical apparatus (Petrella 1980) to a "non-metaphorical exposition" (Scalzone 2004); a claim so obscure and disconcerting that it makes the psyche into an expression of matter, a *res extensa*, at a stroke annihilating—as has been widely highlighted—the old Cartesian distinction, reducing the two *res* (*cogitans* and *extensa*) to pure description of the same reality (Scalzone 2006, p. 64). In what context did this note come to light, and what are the possible sources of this reflection left to us by Freud on an isolated sheet of paper? To answer these questions, we need to reconstruct the historical setting in which the note appeared. It has been often quoted[2] but little analysed, and its obscure and enigmatic character has been emphasized, treating it as a sort of aporia in an elliptical form, an inaccessible oxymoron which can only be fitted with difficulty into Freud's thought. Fully 30 years ago Simenauer wrote about this note:

> This aphorism-like thought has intrigued psychoanalysts for almost 45 years and has not, to my knowledge, been met with a single argument in the whole literature, as if everyone was flabbergasted by the enormity of being confronted by a total antithesis to all philosophical thinking, expert and popular. The basic Platonic differentiation between mind and body, Descartes' investigations on substance and its spatiality versus thought, the "Theorems", Spinoza's as well as the "vérités de fait" of Leibniz were the common heritage of Western philosophical foundations, obligatory to all their branches. (1983, p. 360)

It is easy to share Simenauer's astonishment: the disruptive force of an assertion like this from Freud leaves us open-mouthed, and seems—though only apparently—to place him at a great distance from the philosophers mentioned. But what is most striking is the lack of a reference to the only philosopher Freud cited: Immanuel Kant. By contrast, Green also cites Freud's note but compares it with *De anima* by Aristotle (2002, p. 241) and when, a few lines later, he addresses Freud's relationship with Kant, he begins thus: "*A priori*, no philosophical work is further removed from psychoanalysis than Kant's […] What is more, today, it is from Kantism that the adversaries of psychoanalysis draw their arguments, defending a formalism in the colour of contemporary cognitivism" (p. 282–283) although, like many other analysts,[3] he later finds in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* a possible meeting point between the Enlightenment philosopher and Freud. It is odd that, even today, we have to acknowledge a certain difficulty in aligning Freud with Kant,[4] despite the former's explicit references to the latter and (as we shall more clearly below) Kant's influence on Freud's development, and despite the affinity proposed long ago by Bion between *The Critique of Pure Reason* and the Freud of *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning*. This difficulty has stopped some simple

[2]See also Matte Blanco 1975, p. 11; Askay and Farquhar 2006, p. 376. Chessick records it simply to note that "it is not fair to criticize this quotation since it is only a brief note and was never developed by Freud. Although unsupported by arguments, it serves to illustrate that Kant's approach was on Freud's mind to the end." (1980; p. 582).

[3]See Funari 2007, pp. 28–33. It is curious to note, as Smith (1999, p. 12) points out, that while Freud possessed a copy of Kant's *Anthropology*, he seems never to have read it. In fact, the only quotation Freud makes from the *Anthropology* is in the *Interpretation of Dreams* and at second hand, since it is taken from Radestock's 1879 reading of the book, as he points out in the text.

[4]The theory that Freud was fundamentally anti-Kantian is widely supported. Rieff, for example, writes: "Despite a casual admission that his own work had continued and completed Kant's epistemology, Freud is radically anti-Kantian: he has no theory of *forms* of the mind" (1959, p. 51). Wolman stresses that Freud "was opposed to the idealistic German philosophy of Kant" (1968, p. 95). Kaufmann too calls it "poetic", "anti-academic", "Goethean and deeply anti-Kantian" (1980, p. 79).

questions being posed, simpler than Simenauer's: why does Freud show this unexpected interest in the Kantian categories? What is the origin of such a rash idea, that makes space into a reality produced by the spatiality of the mind? —that is, of its materiality, of its extension? And should this idea be seen as antithetical or complementary to the thinking of Kant?

The English tradition and current interpretation of the note do not take into account an ambiguity in the German text, which is unanimously glossed in the same way. The German text says, "*Anstatt Kants a priori Bedingungen unseres psychischen Apparats*" and is translated into English as "Instead of Kant's *a priori* determinants of our psychical apparatus." However, this interpretation is made possible by the lack of punctuation in the original which remains obscure when translated in this way. Furthermore, anyone with the slightest knowledge of Kant's thought knows he was not in the least interested in the "*a priori* determinants of our psychical apparatus," and as I shall show later on, Freud's in-depth knowledge of Kant's thought would not allow him to make such a sweeping claim. In German, "instead" is *anstatt*, which sounds like "in place of", a substitution, but here it reads like an addition. Freud seems to intend the claim that while, from the transcendental viewpoint (that is, in a Kantian sense, not the knowledge of objects but the way in which knowledge functions) space is an *a priori* intuition—that is, it precedes and presupposes every possibility of experience—from the empirical and scientific viewpoint, it is the specific nature of the psyche—that is, its being extended in the body—which provides the condition for the perception of space. So, with the simple introduction of a comma, the phrase should be translated like this: "Instead of Kant's *a priori*, the conditions of our psychical apparatus."[5] We can replace, or better still explain, the Kantian *a priori by means of the functioning of our psychic apparatus*.

So, while we can share the opinion of Laplanche and Pontalis, who see in the aphorism, and especially in the extended character of the psychic apparatus, a "basic fact" of Freud's thought, we cannot equally adhere to their hypothesis that it constitutes an attempt "to reverse the Kantian perspective" (1974, p. 453). On the contrary, Freud is attempting to provide the Kantian epistemology with some empirical support, if it is the case, as Bona-Meyer wrote about the *a priori* conditions of knowledge, that Kant only taught us that they are not the product of experience and are not innate ideas: "But then what else are they, and by what means do we obtain them? Kant never answered this." (1870, p. 49) [Translator's version]. As a 19th century scientist, however, Freud was looking for the empirical bases of transcendental knowledge. Previously, in the 1920s, he had proposed that the concept of time, another *a priori* of transcendental philosophy, could be the result of an obscure perception of the discontinuous functioning of the Perception–Consciousness apparatus, a sort of self-perception without awareness (Freud 1920, p. 28 and 1924, p. 231). This is an old idea of Freud's: from the beginning he had speculated that the perception of space and time was the result of projecting the functioning of the psychic apparatus into the external world. In a letter to Fliess on 12 December 1897 he had written, "The dim inner perception of one's own psychic apparatus stimulates

[5]A quick—and inevitably sketchy—check of the way this phrase has been translated in the principal languages shows that it has always been rendered in the same way in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. I managed to find only one Spanish version, by López Ballesteros ("En lugar del a priori kantiano, las condiciones de nuestro aparato psíquico") and one from Luxemburg in French by T. Simonelli, ("Au lieu de l'*a priori* de Kant, les conditions de notre appareil psychique"), which translate the phrase in the same way that I am suggesting.

thought illusions, which of course are projected onto the outside and, characteristically, into the future and the beyond" (1954, p. 323).

In short, from the beginning to the end, we find Freud attempting in various passages of his work to provide the reasons for the transcendental conditions of our knowledge: how are we able to have an *a priori* form for space and time? Freud answers: by projecting the specific characteristics of the functioning of our psychic apparatus which is, as far as it can be known by psychoanalytic investigation, *extended* and *discontinuous*.

The French philosopher Derrida dwells on exactly this dialogue with Kant, initially emphasizing the contrast with Kant:

> Yet Kant is the one to whom Freud turned, against whom he turned, in the aphorism bequeathed by the moribund man who proclaimed on his deathbed, *Psyche ist ausgedehnt* … Freud first formed a hypothesis, in four lines; he called up a possibility, a merely probable one. But no matter how dense and elliptical the logic of this mere probability, its aim is not to put the soul outside, to expel the soul into a space or onto an extension that would be first and irreducibly given to us – familiarly there, on the outside, exterior. On the contrary, the spatiality of space, its *exteriority* would only be an outside projection of an *internal* and *properly speaking psychical* extension. In short, the outside would only be a projection! It is in this sense, in this direction (from internal extension toward external extension, toward the spatiality of space – the only exteriority worthy of the name), as enigmatic as this remain, that the Freudian (that is, purely *psychological*) derivation is irreversibly oriented. (2000, p. 43)

Derrida has fully grasped the importance of this note, especially the aporia contained in the idea of an extended psyche as the source of any spatial representation and hence the creator of a space in which it acts and, continuing in this direction, cannot therefore fail to grasp the substantial affinity between Freud's note and Kantian thought:

> What if, far from going against Kant, Freud only wished to interpret and refine the Kantian model by substituting for it, while remaining within the same logic, a kind of improved formalization? […] This last reading (entailing a more adequate or more consequential substitution, but remaining within the *same* perspective) would imply that transcendental psychologizing, or more precisely transcendental psychoanalysis,[6] or better yet transcendental psychoanalytic aesthetics, might account for spatiality starting from a psychical apparatus that would indeed have to be extended in order to comprise, among the two pure forms of sensible intuition, an *a priori* form of external sense. (2000, p. 44)

And Derrida also finds some possible connections between the concept of space in Kant and in Freud, but then, faithful to his deconstructionist theory, he does not take his philosophical investigation any further, staying instead on the terrain of a metaphorical evocation.

Moroncini recently devoted a whole article to Freud's aphorism, taking the texts by Nancy and Derrida as his starting point, but emphasizing how, in this posthumous note, Freud sets himself against a psychologizing reading of the psyche (Moroncini 2006, p. 579). He sees the suggestion by Nancy and Derrida as forcing the psyche to be thought of in purely bodily terms, and instead connects the concept of extension to Freud's topical model: i.e. to the description of a spatially subdivided psyche. To his credit, Moroncini connected Freud's note to *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* written in the

[6]The idea of a transcendental psychoanalysis has an illustrious precedent, that of Tausk who at a "Wednesday meeting" in Freud's house, on 24 November 1909, proposed replacing the term "metapsychology" with that of "*transcendental psychology*" (Nunberg and Federn 1967, p. 332).

same period (and so places it in a context), and in particular to some passages in which Freud refers to the psyche's spatiality. However, there are some questions left in the air about this unexpected appearance by Kant and his connection with the idea of an *extended psyche*. Why, in those days of exile and sorrow, was Freud thinking about Kant?

There is a source from the same period which the studies have overlooked. The previous day, 21 August, Freud wrote a letter to Marie Bonaparte in which he informed her that he had just finished reading her "paper on 'Time'." This was a manuscript version of her "Time in Life, Dream and Death," read by Bonaparte at the XV International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Paris during early August 1938, a paper that would be published in 1939 under the title "L'inconscient et le temps" in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* (Bonaparte 1940). Reminding his friend that they had earlier had a chance to discuss certain questions raised by the article and congratulating her on the quality of the paper, Freud allowed himself to offer a "modest suggestion":

> There is an area whose frontiers belong both to the outer world and to the ego: our perceptual superficies. So it might be that the idea of time is connected with the work of the system W.-Bw [perceptual consciousness]. Kant would then be in the right if we replace his old-fashioned "a priori" by our more modern introspection of the psychical apparatus. It should be the same with space, causality, etc. (Jones 1953, p. 466)

This passage is fundamental[7] because it proves how much Freud was thinking about Kant at that time, going back over the possibility of broadening the concept of *a priori* by explaining it via the functioning of the system Perception–Consciousness, enriching transcendental philosophy in the light of the knowledge gained by psychoanalysis. He invites his pupil to take a second look at the Kantian concepts of space and time, and to consider them not as *a priori* categories of the intellect, but as products of psychic activity, constitutive elements of the psychic apparatus, and suggests that she substantially modify the Kantian *a priori*, transforming it into a precise and investigable function of the psychic apparatus. However, the perception of time, space and causality, while dependent on the specific modes in which the psychic apparatus functions, would remain fundamentally an *a priori* in relation to any subsequent knowledge.

Well, we now know that reading Bonaparte's article about time was the reminder that led Freud to write that brief note. But we still need to understand how it was that his pupil's article could arouse such interest.

A few lines before in the letter of 21 August, Freud writes, "We have already talked about our agreement over the final conclusion." Bonaparte's "final conclusions," which appeared subsequently in two paragraphs entitled *Attempts to resolve the enigma of time* and *Concluding remarks: synthesis and criticism*, are a succinct philosophical investigation of the concept of time starting from Kant, showing Bonaparte critiquing the German philosopher's conception of space and time as *a priori* categories deriving from

[7]The letter was pointed out both by Fell in an article with the suggestive title *Was Freud a follower of Kant?* (1976, p. 116) and, the following year, by D.B. Klein, in a paragraph with the similar title *Was Freud influenced by Kant?* (1977, p. 104), as an explicit link between Freud and Kant, but without connecting it to the note from the following day. The similarity between the letter and Freud's note had been recognized by Smith (1999, p. 193), who describes the note as "apparently inspired by the correspondence with Bonaparte." More recently Askay and Farquhar have commented on this letter, underlining how "space and time were conceived by Freud as projections of the functioning of our mental apparatus" and then in a footnote they quote the entire aphorism from the next day, without indicating its contemporaneity and admitting that they do not know how to interpret it (2006, pp. 49 and 376).

experience and fundamental to our knowledge and consciousness of phenomena, and not of "things-in-themselves." Bonaparte writes:

> It is true that our senses only allow us to form a very imperfect picture of the universe and it is doubtless correct to say that they only fasten upon inadequate samples of reality, in the form of "appearances". But, after all, everything we perceive with the aid of our senses must in some way be derived from external reality in which those senses have gradually been developed in the course of the evolution of the human race. (1940, p. 459)

For Bonaparte, the concepts of time and space are acquired through experience and learned from external reality. For Kant, space and time are a form of intuition, *a priori* conditions for any experience. Freud seems closer to Kant than to his pupil, since he attributes the perception of time (and space) to the specific modalities of the functioning of the apparatus Perception–Consciousness, thereby attributing the faculty for knowing time and space to the principal characteristics of the intellect. So Freud has Bonaparte's manuscript in mind when he writes that note the following day, a note which nevertheless contains elements of a further reflection: the perception of space as a product of the projection of the extension of the psychic apparatus. Don't they say it's always a good idea to sleep on it?[8]

"We have already talked about our agreement … " must be a polite way of registering his disagreement. Besides, Bonaparte writes in sarcastic and critical terms about Kant, and we cannot rule out the likelihood that Freud had been irritated by her tone. Among other things, she writes:

> [Kant] pitched his tent, as so many had done before him, in front of the Monster of time and, reversing the rôles of Oedipus and the Sphinx, sought to elicit from it an answer to this philosophical problem: "What is your true nature, you who seem to devour all things, you without whom I could not perceive the world?" And before long we find Kant claiming that he has torn away the mask assumed by Time and discovered behind it nothing but smoke. "Forms of our perception," he exclaimed, "time as well as space! Apart from the subject, they are nothing at all! So much so that they are not determined by anything in experience but exist in us a priori." (pp. 456–57)

For a man brought up in the German culture of the 19th century, it cannot have been easy to accept such a harsh and mocking position towards the great Enlightenment philosopher, a philosopher to whom Freud was significantly indebted, as we shall see. In this paragraph Bonaparte had criticized Kant's view that we cannot know time by means of the senses, attributing this to his inability to escape from the philosophical tradition that separates soul and body:

> [Kant] had not really been able to renounce the dualistic belief in a soul independent of the body and in a creative God. … This God, who creates souls at his pleasure and has deposited in them *a priori,* prior to all experience, those forms of our perception or intuition which we call space and time, can no longer command our adherence. (pp. 467–68)

[8]It was only after the present manuscript had been accepted that I came across the book by Kelly Noel-Smith, *Freud on Time and Timelessness*, which provides the following information: Freud's letter, quoted in part by Jones, was wrongly dated 21 August by Jones, whereas the actual date was 22 August, the same day on which the note was written. This information comes from Leonard Bruno, one-time head of the Manuscript Section at the Library of Congress in Washington, where the letter is housed and will only be available for consultation by the public from 2020 (Noel-Smith 2016, p. 73). If this information is confirmed it will not modify my argument: on the contrary, it strengthens the connection between the note and the letter. The link between Freud's aphorism and the dialogue with Marie Bonaparte is very well brought out by Noel-Smith in her book, which does not, however, reveal the close contemporaneity of the two texts.

Freud, by contrast, contests this claim too, connecting the Kantian *a priori* with the possibility of conceiving a mind extended in the body. It is clear that there was a substantial disagreement between Freud and Bonaparte both from Freud's letter and, as we shall soon see, from what Bonaparte reported in the article itself.

Freud writes that he has previously had an opportunity to discuss Marie Bonaparte's article on time with her, perhaps in London when she visited between 23 and 26 June, perhaps earlier, on the occasion of his journey to Paris; although an arduous day filled with the anguish of having to leave his city in the Nazis' hands would not seem to offer the best circumstances for a scientific discussion. Perhaps Bonaparte left the text of the article with Freud on one of her trips to London, and he then had a copy made of it. More probably, his daughter Anna brought it back with her on 5 August from the Paris Congress organized by Bonaparte herself, where the princess had just read the paper. On 8 September, Freud underwent further surgery on a papilloma in his nose (Schur 1972, p. 509). Bonaparte visited Freud in London on 29 October and stayed until 2 November, this time at 20 Maresfield Gardens, where Freud had moved on 27 September (Jones 1953; Molnar 1992). But on this occasion too (the first since 21 August), there would be no way of talking about the paper on time, probably because of the slowness of Freud's convalescence.

On 12 November, Freud wrote to his friend, "Your comments on 'time and space' have come off better than mine would have – although so far as time is concerned I hadn't fully informed you of my ideas. Nor anyone else. A certain dislike of my subjective tendency to grant the imagination too free a rein has always held me back. If you still want to know, I will tell you next time you come" (Freud 1960, p. 455). The tone is that of the letter of 21 August: high praise, but a firm resistance to his pupil's philosophical reflections and an invitation to hear his objections.

If his proposals are to be taken seriously, we can imagine this dialogue taking place between 4 and 8 December on the occasion of the Princess's fourth visit to Freud (see the "Kürzeste Chronik" of 1938 in Molnar 1992, p. 252), a dialogue which Bonaparte fortunately decided to include at the end of her paper, and which we here quote in full:

> In a conversation which I had with him after he had read this paper, *Freud confirmed that his views were potentially in agreement with those of Kant*. The sense we have of the passing of time, he observed, originates in our inner perception of the passing of our own life. When consciousness awakens within us we perceive this internal flow and then project it into the outside world. The perception of space, Freud went on, cannot be separated from that of time. How have we come to acquire it? To begin with we must ask ourselves whether there is anything in the world which we can conceive of apart from space, non-spatially. One such thing does exist, namely the mind or psyche. But this discovery must itself provide us with food for reflection. If the mind seems thus to lack the quality of space, perhaps it is by reason of a massive projection outwards of all its original spatial attributes. Psycho-analysis has in fact taught us that the psyche is composed of separate institutions which we are obliged to represent as existing in space. It might be said that this is due to our introjecting external space. But why should it not be the other way round? When our consciousness begins to establish itself, it would perceive these internal institutions, the reconstruction of which we owe entirely to depth psychology, as located in space. No doubt they even possess an anatomical substratum, although the nature of this has still to be determined. We should then project this internal act of cognition outwards, so that the space inhering in the outside world would originate in a projection of our own internal space which we should then

> proceed to deny.[9] The perceptions which we owe to our physical senses, Freud continued, are themselves "projections" in varying measure, according to the particular sense involved. Those associated with our sense of touch and taste remain almost entirely an internal matter. The sense of smell already begins to project its perceptions into the surrounding atmosphere. Hearing distributes them equally between the inner and outer world. And as regards sight, its perceptions are completely "projected". Impressions and images which are inscribed in the optical layers of our brain and thus located rather far back in the cranium, seem to us in fact to exist in the outside world. So much so, I might add, that for thousands of years men believed that it was their eyes which projected some kind of rays on to objects. May it not be the same, Freud concluded, with our external perceptions of space and time, and would not this translation into psycho-analytical language of the old *a priori* judgements of Kant vindicate him approximately? (pp. 466–67)

Here, thanks to the thoroughness and honesty of Marie Bonaparte, who does not hide the master's objections to her work, we have a detailed testimony to Freud's thinking, a sort of itemized commentary on the note from 22 August after a lapse of three and a half months (if my dating is correct). The emphasis of the initial statement is, however, noticeably different. *Psyche is extended, knows nothing about it* is made clearer: the psyche is first of all that "anything in the world" which can be conceived as being outside space; in other words, that *cogito* which needs no objective material reality in order to exist. But Freud suggests that this might only be an illusion. The extension of the psychic apparatus would be projected outwards, and the negation of the spatiality of the psyche itself would then derive from this projection. The psyche as a sort of thinking function of the body, which, projected out of the body, loses the characteristics of corporeality and materiality (space, time, cause–effect) in order to foster the knowledge of reality. The sense organs (frontier territory between the Ego and the external world) would develop this function of projection. So it seems obvious that the psyche can know nothing of this, precisely because it has lost all perception of its own extension.[10] Well then, thinking about the extended psyche, ignorant of its own extension but capable of perceiving the extension of external space, would that not be the necessary condition for being able to have an *a priori* intuition of space? The conclusion of Freud's thought, more clearly than the one

[9]This passage from Freud's communication to Bonaparte enables us to clear up a doubt raised by Watkin (2014) and Segal (2016, p. 273)—English translator of a book by Anzieu—who point out with reference to Freud's aphorism, that *weiß* in the German text is ambiguous because it can be both first and third person singular, and so the phrase could just as well be translated "Psyche is extended; *I don't know* anything about this," a declaration of ignorance by Freud and not ignorance on the part of the psyche itself. This passage (like others elsewhere) would seem to put the matter beyond doubt: the negation of an internal psychic space sets a limit on our knowledge of the psyche's extension, in this way confirming the validity of Strachey's translation and of those that have followed it.

[10]Hartocollis, however, resolves this *ignorance* on the part of the psyche by assimilating it into the unconscious ("by psyche, Freud means the realm of the unconscious, that part of the psychic apparatus which 'knows nothing about it'" (Hartocollis 2006, p. 134), which knows nothing of the Kantian categories of space and time. Nevertheless, there is a precedent in Freud's writings which should be placed alongside this "ignorance of the psyche" and which contradicts Hartocollis's hypothesis. As early as the *Project* of 1895, Freud wrote that "every psychological theory, apart from what it achieves from the point of view of natural science, must fulfil yet another major requirement. It should explain to us what we are aware of, in the most puzzling fashion, through our 'consciousness'; and, since this consciousness knows nothing of what we have so far been assuming – quantities and neurones – it should explain this lack of knowledge to us as well" (1895, 307–8). Therefore it is consciousness itself – not the unconscious psyche – which does not know its own extension, its being a body, its being "quantities and neurons". Nancy problematizes this ignorance so far as to consider it Psyche's own corporeality: "This non-knowledge is the very body of Psyche, or rather, it is the body that Psyche herself *is*. This non-knowledge is not negative knowledge or the negation of knowledge; it is simply the absence of knowledge, the absence of the very relation of knowledge, whatever its content. Using a certain vocabulary, one could say: knowledge wants an object, but with bodies there is only subject; with bodies, there are only subjects. But one might say that in the absence of an object there is no subject either, no transcendental ground, and what remains is precisely the body, bodies. *The "body" is grounds for not having any object.*" (1993, p. 199).

proposed in the previous fragments, is substantially in agreement with the Kantian categories and in disagreement with Bonaparte, who explicitly declares her disagreement with Kant (and Freud), insisting that she cannot accept the hypothesis that "our perceptions of space and time are originally and essentially an internal affair," and claiming, with Goethe, that "all that is within us exists without" (Bonaparte 1940, p. 467). At this point, Bonaparte records in a footnote another personal communication from Freud,[11] sent after having read her article: "[…] the attention which we bestow on objects is due to rapid but successive cathexes which might be regarded in a sense as quanta issuing from the ego. Our inner perceptual activity would only later make a continuity of it, and it is here that we find, projected into the outside world, the prototype of time." Freud goes on to say that this is why there is no perception of time during sleep. "The upshot of all this would be the equation 'attention = perception – time'" (p. 467). We could say, paraphrasing the 1938 note: "Psyche is discontinuous, knows nothing about it." This idea of a psychic apparatus which projects its own functioning outwards, so as to be recognized later as belonging to reality, had previously been expressed by Freud in the paper on *Negation*, where he wrote, "It is now no longer a question of whether what has been perceived (a thing) shall be taken into the ego or not, but of whether something which is in the ego as a presentation can be rediscovered in perception (reality) as well. It is, we see, once more a question of external and internal" (1925, p. 237).

Metapsychological aspects

We were saying that, perhaps in May, or perhaps in July 1938, Freud started to compose *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*. The topic we are considering reappears, in a different guise, right at the start of this essay:

> We know two kinds of things about what we call our psyche (or mental life): firstly, its bodily organ and scene of action, the brain (or nervous system) and, on the other hand, our acts of consciousness, which are immediate data and cannot be further explained by any sort of description. Everything that lies between is unknown to us, and the data do not include any direct relation between these two terminal points of our knowledge. If it existed, it would at the most afford an exact localization of the processes of consciousness and would give us no help towards understanding them. Our two hypotheses start out from these ends or beginnings of our knowledge. The first is concerned with localization. We assume that mental life is the function of an apparatus to which we ascribe the characteristics of *being extended in space* … (my italics). (1940, pp. 144–45)

Here Freud begins with a topic dear to him, one that has accompanied his whole life's work: the possible relationships between body and mind, between cerebral functions and psychic apparatus, neurology and psychology, etc. Beginning as far back as the *Studies on Aphasia* and the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (that "Psychology for Neurologists"[12] which was also saved thanks to Princess Bonaparte), this theme re-emerges continually out of the twists and turns of psychoanalytic research. It is an unresolved, and perhaps unresolvable theme, which goes on to trouble Freud for long periods of his career (Jones 1953, vol. I, pp. 311–312), one that he cannot get free of, especially now

[11] Annette Laget supposes that this is the text of a letter from Freud to Marie Bonaparte, but as far as I can tell, this is in fact more likely to be part of the dialogue conducted with her towards the end of 1938 (1995, p. 45).
[12] Letter to Fliess of 27 April 1895 (1954, p. 118).

that he is ill and coming to the end of his life. Both in the *Studies on Aphasia* and in the *Project*, Freud had fought against the so-called localizationism theory, or at least narrow localizationism[13] which looked for correspondences between a neurological anatomy and a psychological physiology, but he had always conceived the psyche as subject to a spatial sub-division, a topicality: it occupies space, and this space is divided into regions. Here again returns the idea that the psyche, the life of the soul, has its own extension, occupies space, makes itself into body, and occupies that intermediate territory situated half way between the brain and consciousness. As we know, Freud thinks of the unconscious as a deep, extended province of the psychic apparatus and first psychic expression of the body, a body which makes itself into mind, the missing link to which he refers in the famous letter to Groddeck of 5 June 1917.[14]

The explicit references to Kant in Freud's work—with the exception of the passages I have quoted—are fairly generic: whether they refer to the categorical imperative, to dreams, or to the *a priori* forms of the intuition of space and time, Freud never goes far into Kant's philosophy, does not quote it in detail, and investigates neither his psychology nor his metaphysics. On a first reading, Freud always seems to refer to the Kant of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to the philosopher of intellect, to the student of rational rather than empirical psychology. But in this final note, Freud's interest in a *space that arises from the body* and in an *extended psyche* suggests another debt to Kant, or a debt to a different Kant from that of the *Critique*. I propose the hypothesis that we should look in Kant for the implicit source of that cryptic note which Freud left us in the gloomy summer of 1938.

Kant's influence on Freud

Freud was trained in a cultural climate in which knowledge of Kant's philosophy and the application of Kantian theory to science were taken for granted (especially in Austria, where an early form of *Naturphilosophie* was emerging) and this was part of every scientist's cultural patrimony, just as it was for every German-speaking intellectual.[15] It is, therefore, difficult to trace the contribution of Kantian philosophy in Freud's thought, since it actually impregnates many aspects of psychoanalytic theory. This explains the fact that we do not find many references to Kant in Freud's works (even though he remains the philosopher most often quoted by the Viennese psychoanalyst). An interesting attempt to specify Freud's debt to the philosopher from Königsberg has been made by A. Brook, who compares and connects the second Freudian model with Kantian thought, finding correspondences between the concept of knowledge in Kant and the Ego of Freud,

[13]On 'narrow' or 'well-tempered' localization in Freud, see Napolitano (2010).

[14]The passage from Freud's letter to Groddeck is worth quoting because it conveys an idea of how Freud rejected extremes in his thinking—in this case, an excessive reduction of the autonomy of the psychic: "It seems to me as wilful completely to spiritualise nature as radically to despiritualise it. Let's leave it its extraordinary variety which reaches from the inanimate to the organic and living, from the physical life to the spiritual. Certainly, the unconscious is the proper mediator between the somatic and the mental, perhaps the long-sought 'missing link'" (Groddeck 1976, p. 18).

[15]As the historian of philosophy, Kuno Fischer, wrote in 1862: "There is no reputable thinker since Kant, whose own teaching does not have to reckon with Kant's; none who, whether by developing Kant's teacher further or by contradicting it, has not derived his own from it: none who has not wished to adduce evidence that Kantian teaching, correctly understood and independently judged, leads directly to his own." (quoted in Bona-Meyer 1870, p. 41) [Translator's version]. We can be fairly sure that this thought can also apply to *fin de siècle* Vienna. The battle cry uttered by Liebmann in 1865, *Zurück zu Kant!* (back to Kant!) perfectly marks the start of the neo-Kantism which was to impregnate German scientific culture in the second half of the 19th century (Liebmann 1865).

between that of moral reason and the Superego, and between inner sense and the Id (Brook 1988). But there are few exceptions to the lack of works that try to identify Freud's debt to Kant.[16]

In support of this hypothesis, it must be remembered that, even in his adolescence, Freud had been attentive student of Kant's philosophy. In a letter of 11 April 1875 to his friend Silberstein, the 19 year-old Freud shows a refined knowledge of the metapsychology of the "venerable Kant" (Freud and Silberstein 1992, p. 112) whom he calls, following Douay, "the most thoughtful of philosophers" (p. 110). McGrath too, commenting on the letter, claims that Freud had a "highly sophisticated grasp of the Kantian framework" (1986, p. 348). As Askay and Farquhar say, "the German Enlightenment exerted its impact on Freud predominantly via Kant's philosophy in extensive and often unrecognized ways. Freud was clearly quite familiar with Kant's philosophy" (2006, p. 47). We know that on 24 April 1882, shortly after graduating, he bought an edition of writings from the pre-critical period, *Kleinere Schriften zur Naturphilosophie*, and a copy of the *Critique of Pure Reason* which he annotated in detail and which, along with Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, kept a special place in his library, most of which was now in London (Zaretsky 2004). Two months after buying these volumes, Freud left Brücke's Institute of Physiology to devote himself to clinical work. But besides these specific points of reference, we have to bear in mind that Kant's thought had a very great influence on *fin de siècle* German culture, and that knowledge of Kantian theory was generally taken for granted. We must further bear in mind that several of Freud's teachers could be considered fully fledged Kantians: Brentano, Brücke, Herbart, Helmholtz, Meynert, Fechner, Mach, and Lipps, to name only a few. As an example, Hermann von Helmholtz, the great German physicist and physiologist, and founder of a school of research to which Brücke also belonged, had emphasized in his book *The Facts in Perception* the profound "agreement between the recent physiology of the senses and Kant's doctrines", and had also claimed that in scientific research "we will stand on the ground of Kant's system" (1878, p. 711). In his *Zollikon Seminars*, Heidegger underlines precisely this mingling in Freud of empirical science with the Kantian system: "Freud's metapsychology is the application of Neo-Kantian philosophy to the human being. On the one hand, he has the natural science, and on the other hand, the Kantian theory of objectivity" (Heidegger 2001, p. 207).

This vision of Heidegger's seems to echo—in a different tone—Bonaparte's admiration for her teacher when she called him "a mixture of Pasteur and Kant" (Jones 1953, v. 2, p. 415). The interweaving of transcendental theory with natural science has recently acknowledged by Tauber, who goes so far as to speak of a "Kantian structure of psychoanalysis." He writes, "Sigmund Freud's basic philosophical commitments were divided between his aspirations for a positivistic science of the mind (originating in his neuroscience investigations) and an interpretative strategy that rested upon Immanuel Kant's

[16]Among these, besides the essay by Brook (1988) quoted earlier, those of Scarpellini (1962), Fell (1976), Fulgencio (2001), and Loparic (2003) deserve mention. P.-L. Assoun (1976) devotes a chapter of his book to the attention paid to Kant by Freud, and a paragraph to Freud as a reader of Kant. He quotes the 1938 aphorism twice, but without analysing it. The sole exception seems to be the recent studies by Tauber (2009, 2010), the first serious attempt to assess the debt owed by psychoanalysis to Kantian thought. He devotes a whole paragraph to 'Freud's Understanding of Kant' (2010). It should be remembered that the founder of the study of Freud's relationship to Kant was Adorno, who in 1924, while Freud was still alive, published his *Habilitationschrift*, entitled *The Concept of the Unconscious in the Transcendental Theory of Mind*. As a premonition of the poor reception of this line of enquiry, it should be noted that Adorno's thesis was failed, and he only gained an academic position seven years later, with a study of the aesthetic in Kierkegaard (Adorno 1926).

argument about the transcendental relation of mind and nature" (2009, p. 2). He stresses the importance of the philosophical impact of Kant and Kantism in the dichotomized description of a mind subject to biological and deterministic laws of nature (the unconscious) and a rational mind capable of knowing and interpreting the unconscious and free to make responsible choices.

Furthermore, it was Freud himself who inserted psychoanalysis into the furrow ploughed by Kantian tradition when he claimed in his essay *The Unconscious* that

> the psycho-analytic assumption of unconscious mental activity appears to us […] as a further expansion of the primitive animism which caused us to see copies of our own consciousness all around us, and, on the other hand, as an extension of the corrections undertaken by Kant of our views on external perception. Just as Kant warned us not to overlook the fact that our perceptions are subjectively conditioned and must not be regarded as identical with what is perceived though unknowable, so psycho-analysis warns us not to equate perceptions by means of consciousness with the unconscious mental processes which are their object. Like the physical, the psychical is not necessarily in reality what it appears to us to be. (Freud 1915, p. 71)

This was an old theme for Freud: his hypothesis of the existence of an unconscious system, inaccessible—except indirectly—by consciousness, had from the start been permeated by a philosophy of science bearing the stamp of Kant, whose presence in Freud's thinking is explicit when, in the *Traumdeutung* he provides an illuminating definition of the unconscious:

> The unconscious is the true psychical reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs*. (1899, p. 557)

This interpretation of the unconscious as the thing-in-itself, the *noumenon* of the psychic apparatus, would merit investigation, but this is not the place for it.[17] What concerns us here is how deeply permeated Freud was by the Kantian system, and so he could not really be ignorant of the fact that the concept of space and its relationship with sensible consciousness was not really consistent in the German philosopher's thinking, since at different times it took on the character of objective reality, of pure intuition lacking objective reality, or a form of sensible intuition. Here a brief digression is needed. It is clear that Freud's idea of Kant's thought is by no means pure and uncontaminated, but certainly marked by the idealist tradition which at the same time takes into account the rationalism and empiricism, the Enlightenment and Romantic aspects of the Königsberger philosopher's thought. Bonaparte, however, seems to read Kant via Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, which leads her to contradict him with Goethe.[18]

Pre-critical Kant and the philosophy of the body

Naturally, the complexity of Kantian thought has to be reconstructed by following its whole thread up to the formulation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*; so we have to go

[17]We cannot fail to recall Freud asking the Swiss philosopher and psychologist Häberlin in May 1913 if the unconscious and the Kantian thing-in-itself were not in the end the same thing (Freud and Binswanger 1992, p. 237).

[18]In this I can go along with the criticisms made by Moroncini to Assoun, who reads Freud in a Schopenhauerian vein Moroncini 2006; pp. 577–578 and Assoun 1976, pp. 218–250). There is a psychoanalytic tradition which likes to regard Kant and Goethe as antitheses, as we have seen in the case of Kaufmann. As Tauber (2009, 22, fn. 7) points out, Goethe's debt to Kant was acknowledged by Goethe himself.

back to the so-called pre-critical Kant,[19] and in particular to the period of Kantian production from 1766 to 1770, which anticipates some themes present in the first edition of the Critique in 1781, and which precede the long silence—lasting more than a decade—in which Kant studied for the preparation of his most celebrated text. The works in question are three essays—which Freud had in all probability read—which according to Kant himself constitute the basis of the 1781 text: *Dreams of a Spirit-seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics* from 1766, *On the First Ground of the Distinction of Regions in Space* of 1768, and *The Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World* of 1770, the famous *Dissertatio* which gained Kant a university appointment as Professor of Logic and Metaphysics. To these essays we should add the cycle of university lectures probably delivered during the later 1770s, known as *Metaphysics L1*, and translated into English with the title *Lectures on Metaphysics*. In this phase of his speculations, Kant still seems to be looking for those human invariants that are at the base of the categories of understanding which constitute the *conditio sine qua non* of knowledge, formal categories which would be studied and more precisely defined from the *Critique of Pure Reason* onwards.

The path that leads Kant to elaborate his conception of space and time as "*a priori*" conditions needed to make any intuition possible, and hence that there can be knowledge, is a path rich in reflections on the relationship between the perception of space and the dialogue or, to use Kant's term, the *commercium,* between soul and body.[20] Along the way we find many elements which evidently constitute the source of Freud's note and his marginal reflections, without our knowing by what route they led there.

From the start of his philosophical output, in his first work, *Thoughts on the true estimation of living forces*, Kant, still a student in 1749, asks himself the dual question of how matter is capable, through physical influence, of creating effective representations in the soul, and in what way the soul, for its part, is capable of putting matter into motion (1749, p. 24). In 1764 he writes two essays, both devoted to the theme of mental illness, the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1764a) and the *Essay on the Maladies of the Head* (1764b). This second essay, well-known to Freud and quoted in the *Traumdeutung* (1899, p. 90), ends with a reflection on the bodily origin of mental illnesses in which he claims that the body announces dysfunctionality well before a disequilibrium can be detected in the spirit: "one should rather say that the human being became arrogant because he was already disturbed to some degree, than that he was disturbed because he was so arrogant" (1764b, p. 77).

Kant pondered the intertwining of soul and body from the start of his philosophical reflections, attributing a subordinate position to the former and a temporal precedence at the least to the latter. But in 1766 Kant addressed the subject with greater determination, publishing a brief text, *Dreams of a Spirit-seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, composed because of the "insistent demands of inquisitive and idle friends" (1766, p. 353) that he should express his opinions about *Arcana Coelestia*, the multi-volume work of the Swede, Emanuel Swedenborg (a precursor of the students of spiritualism who so

[19]As the thoughtful Kant scholar, Michael Otte, writes, "Kant's so-called pre-critical work constitutes the richest and most polemical philosophy of the body in the Enlightenment" (quoted in Bochicchio 2006) [Translator's version].

[20]It is not my intention to go further into this field of study than is necessary for the purposes of this article. There is recent work that I would suggest for a deeper investigation of the relationship between soul and body in Kant: Meld Shell (1996), Carpenter (1998), Bochicchio (2006), Svare (2006), Fabbrizi (2008), Nuzzo (2008).

fascinated the young Jung) who claimed to be able to communicate with spirits and with the souls of the dead (Swedenborg 1749–56). In fact, the occasion was a pretext for addressing the soul–body problem and of giving voice to his own materialism. In this essay, he offers some passages which can hardly have escaped Freud. Let's select quite a long one which, unless it is an extreme coincidence, must in my opinion be considered a primary source for Freud's note. By means of an imaginary dialogue, Kant is debating the existence of spirits and writes:

> Where is the place of this human soul in the world of bodies? My answer would run like this: The body, the alteration of which are *my* alterations – this body is *my* body; and the place of that body is at the same time *my* place. If one pursued the question further and asked: Where then is *your* place (that of the soul) in this body*?* then I should suspect there was a catch in the question. (1766, p. 312)

It is clear that Kant is posing a very similar question to the one Freud would ask around 170 years later. How (and if) the soul can be located in the body, whether a circumscribed place exists within which our Ego can be delimited, or if instead our soul is extended in the body. Let's read further.

> For it is easy to see that the question already presupposes something with which we are not acquainted through experience, though it may perhaps be based on imaginary inferences. The question presupposes, namely, that my thinking "I" is in a place which is distinct from the places of the other parts of that body which belongs to my self. But no one is immediately conscious of a particular place in his body; one is only immediately conscious of the space which one occupies relatively to the world around. I would therefore rely on ordinary experience and say, for the time being: Where I feel, it is there that I *am* [*Wo ich empfinde, da bin ich*]. I am as immediately in my finger-tip as I am in my head. It is I myself whose heel hurts, and whose heart beats with emotion. And when my corn aches, I do not feel the painful impression in some nerve located in my brain; I feel it at the end of my toe. No experience teaches me to regard some parts of my sensation of myself as remote from me. Nor does any experience teach me to imprison my indivisible "I" in a microscopically tiny region of the brain, either so as to operate from there the levers governing my body-machine, or so as myself to be affected in that region by the workings of that machinery. For that reason, I would insist on its strict refutation before I could be persuaded to dismiss as absurd what used to be said in the schools: *My soul is wholly in my whole body, and wholly in each of its part"* [Totam animam in toto corpore omnibusque partibus corporis organici praesentem esse]. (pp. 312–13)

I am very interested in this anti-localizationist position *ante litteram* adopted by Kant. The soul cannot be localized in one point of the body; it is everywhere, in every part. The modifications introduced by sensations bring it about that I am in that point where the modification, the change, occurs before I move into another place, another bodily point, so as to be always in that *da* where I feel: literally, *where I feel, there I am*. So the soul wanders through the body in the impossibility of finding a place, a determined space: indeed, what is introduced in this way is "a sort of destruction of the localization of the ego, the soul, the subject […] but also, more radically, destruction of the very possibility of such a localization" (Leoni 2002, p. 69) [Translator's version]. During these years, Kant seems profoundly convinced of the impossibility of differentiating the bodily dimension from the experience of the soul, and as early as the *Lectures on Metaphysics*, he called the soul's *commercium* with the body a "mutual dependency", a "community":

> *A community is a connection where the soul constitutes a unity with the body, where alterations of the body are at same time alterations of the soul, and alterations of the soul at the same time alterations of the body.* (mid-1770s, p. 73)

It is precisely this community which makes it impossible to identify a place where the soul can reside since its extension is no less than the body's. In the *Lectures on Metaphysics*, Kant states that it is very difficult to observe this *commercium* since the soul is an object of our internal sense, whereas the body is an object of our external sense; it is not given to us to know.[21] This makes it impossible to locate the soul in the body:

> Now since the soul stands in interaction "*commercio*" with the body, we ask: where does the soul have its *seat* in the body? The location of the soul in the world is determined by the location of the body; *my soul is there where my body is.* But where in the body does the soul have its seat? The location of the body in the world is determined only by *outer* sense; now since the soul is an object of *inner* sense, but no location can be determined by inner sense: *the location of the soul in the body also cannot be determined*, for no outer relation can be determined by inner actions. (mid-1770s, p. 91)

Is it possible that Freud had no memory of these *Lectures on Metaphysics* by Kant—published for the first time in 1821—when he stated that the psyche is extended? That it occupies space, that it is spatial, and that this enables it to perceive space outside it? When Freud writes that the only non-spatial thing we can conceive is the psyche, is he not recalling Kant's thought that, since the soul is not an object of external intuition "it is also not in space, but rather works only in space"? (mid-1770s, p. 92).

Let's go back for a moment to the *Dreams* and continue reading from where we left off, and look closely at this passage:

> Sound common sense often apprehends a truth before it understands the reasons by means of which it can prove or explain that truth. Nor would I be entirely disconcerted by the objection which maintained that I was, in this way thinking of *the soul as extended* [Seele ausgedehnt] and as diffused throughout the whole body. (my italics) (1766, p. 313)

The terms used by Kant are the same as those used by Freud:[22] the soul (or psyche, but let's remember that Freud also often refers to the *Seelenleben* when speaking about psychic life) is extended, *ausgedehnt*, occupies space. The coincidence is significant, above all at a time when Freud seems to be thinking about the spatial aspects of the psychic apparatus with the Kantian categories in mind. The German term *ausgedehnt*, moreover, cannot have been chosen by chance, since it goes on to be used by Kant on many other occasions, in line with Cartesian tradition, specifically to characterize the specific qualities of bodies. In the *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, he uses the following example to describe the principle of contradiction on which all *a priori* analytical

[21] Here the psychoanalyst distinguishes himself from the philosopher. While Freud investigates the borderland between body and mind, and tries to describe its functioning and internal laws by means of concepts such as drive, *Es* and unconscious, Kant describes "inquiries as to the manner in which bodily organs are connected with thought" as "subtle and […] eternally futile" (1773, p. 141). Kant wants to describe the limits of knowledge with the aim of defining metaphysics as a "science of the limits of human reason" whose doubt "does not cancel useful certainty, but only useless certainty" (1764-65, p. 24). And here the useless certainty could be the ambition to know the meeting place between soul and body.

[22] Nuzzo, via Derrida, seems to acknowledge the connection between Freud's aphorism and Kants *Dreams*, but curiously relates Freud's aphorism to Swedenborg's thought rather than to Kant's, while providing no explanation for her idea (2008, p. 316).

judgements are based: "Every body is extended (*ausgedehnt*), and: No body is unextended (*unausgedehnt*)" (1783, p. 29).[23]

Subsequently, in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, he differentiates the possibilities of knowing the extended (*ausgedehnt*) body by means of the external sense and the thinking soul by means of the internal sense. This claim of Kant's in the 1766 essay acquires all the more significance precisely for its apparently paradoxical character as a conviction which Kant persists in defending:

> My soul, in its manner of being present in space, would not differ from any element of matter, and since the power of the understanding is an inner property which I cannot perceive in these elements of matter, even if that same property were present in all of them, it follows that no valid reason can be adduced for supposing that my soul is not one of the substances which constitute matter, or for supposing that its particular manifestations should not originate exclusively from the place which it occupies in such an ingenious machine as the body of an animal, and in which the confluence of the nerves assures the inner capacity of thought and the power of will. But in that case one would no longer be able to recognise with certainty any distinctive characteristic mark of the soul, which distinguished it from the raw elementary matter of corporeal natures. (1766, p. 314)

It is striking how close Kant's claim is to certain statements of Freud's about the corporeality of the Ego (and how wide of the mark Bonaparte was when she accused Kant of adhering to Cartesian dualism!).[24] We know that the Kant of the *Critique* reduces the importance attributed to sensory experience (that is, to the experience of the sensible data) in order to privilege the formal aspects of the intellect's possibilities: in other words, the prerequisites for knowledge.[25] It must also be said that a century of neo-Kantism has ended up pushing to its extreme a position which was much more nuanced in Kant, even in the *Critique*. For Kant, it is the encounter between sensibility and intellect which produces knowledge; the absence of this encounter produces sterile effects: "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind," writes Kant at the start of Transcendental Logic in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, p. 93). But in the years which precede and prepare for the compiling of the *Critique*, greater weight is given to sensible experience than to the attempt to find an "internal principle in the mind" (1770, p. 428). Thus space, first considered as the product of the body's experience, progressively becomes a condition abstracted from external sensations, not created by them, but presupposed by them: "The possibility, therefore, of outer perception as such *presupposes* the concept of space; it does not *create* it" (1770, p. 395). The change seems to happen in 1769, when Kant received "the great light" that would lead him to the formulations of the *Dissertation*, which would in turn form the starting point of the *Critique*. But the path which brings him to the "great light" that will lead him to consider space as a form of intuition, *a priori*, is full of the predetermination of the body.

[23]The idea that the soul could be extended in the body had precedents in French Enlightenment thinking. De La Mettrie had dedicated a whole chapter of his *Histoire naturelle de l'âme* to this subject, using arguments very similar to those made by Kant. The paragraph entitled *De l'étendue de l'âme* specifically emphasizes the need to think of a soul positioned within the body (1745, p. 88).

[24]By contrast, Kant's distance from Cartesian thought had been well understood by Abbot Albertino Bellenghi who, in the name of the Holy Congregation of the Index, wrote a condemnation which required the withdrawal of the Italian translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason* on 11 June 1827. In this text, Kant was censured for his opinion that the soul needed the senses in order to know (Tolomio 1999).

[25]It must, however, be remembered that, as can be seen from two letters of 7 June 1771 and 21 February 1772 to Marcus Herz, Kant would initially entitle his most famous work *The limits of sensibility and reason* since the main aim with which he had begun drafting the *Critique* was specifically that of describing such limits (Kant 1771, p. 127; 1772, p. 132).

The argument which Kant wants to present is that of *incongruent counterparts*. This inspired intuition, a first step for Kant towards the incontestable proof of the existence of a space absolutely independent of the existence of material objects and, that being the case, a condition for the knowledge of them, required a premise which Kant offers the reader in his 1768 article, *On the First Ground of the Distinction of Regions in Space*:[26]

> Because of its three dimensions, physical space can be thought of as having three planes, which all intersect each other at right angles. Concerning the things which exist outside ourselves: it is only in so far as they stand in relation to ourselves that we have any cognition of them by means of the senses at all. It is, therefore, not surprising that the ultimate ground, on the basis of which we form our concept of directions in space, derives from the relation of these intersecting planes to our bodies. (1768, p. 366)

Kant goes on to define these three planes: a horizontal which distinguishes between *above* and *below*, and two verticals: the former distinguishes between *right* and *left*, and the second between *in front* and *behind*. Our perception of space is subordinate to our body's anatomy and orientation, and even the most remote regions of cosmic space are determined in relation to the sides of our body (1768, p. 413). The aim of this premise was to introduce the *incongruent counterparts* (*inkongruente Gegenstücke*) and thereby demonstrate the Newtonian idea of the existence of absolute space. What does this mean? According to Kant, in order to determine a bodily figure with precision it is not sufficient to determine the relationship and reciprocal position of the parts, as is the case with a pair of two-dimensional geometrical figures, which if they are equal can be superimposed on each other. The situation is different when we move to "corporeal extension" (*cörperliche Ausdehnung*). These surfaces can be the same in all respects, but so different that "the limits of the one cannot also be the limits of the other" (p. 369). It is specifically from the human body that Kant draws the example which will serve to demonstrate the existence of space independently of the objects which occupy it:

> The most common and clearest example is furnished by the limbs of the human body, which are symmetrically arranged relative to the vertical plane of the body. The right hand is similar and equal to the left hand. And if one looks at one of them on its own, examining the proportion and the position of its parts to each other, and scrutinising the magnitude of a whole, then a complete description of the one must apply in all respects to the other, as well. I shall call a body which is exactly equal and similar to another, but which cannot be enclosed in the same limits as that other, its *incongruent counterpart*. (1768, p. 370)

Essentially, if we place a man's two hands on top of each other, unlike the geometrical figures, they cannot be superimposed on each other. Hence derives the existence of a space independent of bodies: that is, an absolute, original space that is not an object of sensation, but a condition of all possible sensations.

Space, therefore, the absolute space which precedes all experience and which in the *Critique* is called an *a priori* concept, becomes the condition for that feeling to which Kant was referring as a hypothetical, indeterminate, and extended place, that *da* where the Ego can be situated at any given moment. It is the premise for that distinction between *sensitive* and *intellective* faculties which Kant was to propose in 1770 in the *Dissertatio*, where the example of the counterparts serves to demonstrate instead how space

[26]This essay is contained in the *Kleinere Schriften zur Naturphilosophie* acquired by Freud in 1882 and preserved in his library.

is a pure intuition without objective reality. Conversely, the same example is used in the *Prolegomena* and the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1786) to describe space as a form of sensible intuition (Scaravelli 1968). But while the example is used for different ends, what remains constant over the years, as Nuzzo points out, is the link between the incongruent counterparts and bodily asymmetry, "the connection between incongruence and embodiment" (2008, p. 26) [Translator's version].

Freud and Kant

And here we can return to the comparison between Freud and Kant. For Freud, the perceptions may be thought of as projections of an internal act of knowledge into the external world. We should remember Kant's distinction between a materiality of the body which can be known by means of the external sense and the soul known by means of the internal sense, so that we can notice what a Kantian language Freud is using; and Freud's hypothesis that different perceptions can be the product of an operation that goes from inside to outside seems to find some points in common with the concept of sensibility which appears for the first time in *On the form and principles of the sensible and the intelligible world*. For Kant, sensibility is the subject's ability to be *modified* by the presence of the object, and every sensation is nothing but a specific modification. This concept will persist unchanged in the works that follow, and in the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant will reiterate the idea, writing that "the only manner in which objects can be given to us is by modification of our sensibility" (1781, p. 182) which, added to the fact that "we know nothing but our mode of perceiving them (the objects)," (1781, p. 82) puts the sensitive faculty in extremely subjective terms, a faculty that says more about the subject than about the object, or that speaks about the object through the subject. There seems to be an enormous similarity between Freud's thought and this approach. Knowledge is given by the subject's faculty of entering into an osmotic relationship with the object and letting itself be modified. It is clear that for both Kant and Freud (and not for Locke), sensation in itself does not constitute knowledge. In order for there to be knowledge there needs to be attention, evaluation, judgement. The intellect's faculties (for the philosopher), or the unconscious which makes itself conscious (for the psychoanalyst), are the conditions for a genuine knowledge. As Kant stresses, the proposition "*sensu non fallunt*" is false not because the senses do not judge correctly, but because they do not judge at all: it is not their job, and indeed they can deceive, in the sense that they can prompt an erroneous judgement such as the apparent movement of the sun around the earth. And for his part, on a page of the *Outline of Psycho-Analysis* where he speaks again about his hypothesis of a "psychical apparatus extended in space," claims that however we may refine our artificial instrument for increasing the power of our senses, "we have no hope of being able to reach [the real state of affairs] … Reality will always remain 'unknowable'" (1938, p. 196): a further homage to the thinking of Kant.

Conclusions

Kant's legacy to philosophy and scientific epistemology, and that of Freud to psychology and psychoanalysis are indispensable for all those who aim to engage with these disciplines. The 19th century for Kant and the 20th for Freud were centuries of immense

good fortune, and as we know, success distorts. Kant has become the philosopher of the intellect and of rationalism, and Freud the physician who freed the psyche from the encumbrances of organicism. Today it is difficult to relocate them in a more balanced dimension, the original one where there was no sensibility without reason, soul without matter, unconscious without drives, the psychological without the biological, mind without body. "Where I feel, there I am" writes Kant, and Freud echoes him a century and a half later: "[the conscious ego] is first and foremost a body-ego" (1923, p. 27). Kant's legacy has in some ways passed to Freud, leaving him perhaps more indebted than is believed even today, and more than he would ever have thought himself: Kant's transcendental psychology is transformed into transcendental psychoanalysis.

We started with an apparently cryptic and obscure phrase of Freud's for which I have tried to illuminate nodes and connections which emerge from an analysis of this fragment and its context. The extension of the psyche: an apparent paradox which has the merit of indissolubly interlinking body and mind without falling into the constraints of reductionism, nor the mystique of dualism. The incessant tension generated by these two polarities is fundamental to our way of being and of thinking. Once again, and for the last time, Kant comes to our aid with a lesson in anthropology where, with the freedom allowed him in the context of a university lecture, he explains to his students, "Our soul never thinks alone, but in the *laboratory of the body* [Laboratorio des Körpers]; there is always a harmony between the two of them. As the soul thinks, so it moves the body with it." (my italics) (date unknown, p. 145) (Translator's version). My hope is that it will not be forgotten how the Freudian method also, from the *Studies on Hysteria* to the *Outline of Psychoanalysis*, to the last (and I hope now less cryptic) aphorism of summer 1938, presents itself as just such a *laboratory of the body*.

Translations of summary

L'auteur de cet article s'inspire de l'une des dernières notes de Freud, que son étonnante conclusion a rendue célèbre : « La psyché est étendue, n'en sait rien », où il décrit la perception de l'espace comme un produit de l'extension de l'appareil psychique et la compare aux catégories a priori de Kant. L'auteur reconstruit le contexte historique inhérent à cette pensée qui prit forme au détour d'une discussion prolongée entre Freud et son élève, Marie Bonaparte, dans la seconde moitié de l'année 1938, et montre comment la pensée de Freud relative à la relation entre le corps et les fonctions psychiques fut influencée par sa dette intellectuelle envers Kant. Après avoir brossé à grands traits les tenants et aboutissants de l'influence de la philosophie kantienne sur l'éveil de la Naturphilosophie dans la Vienne fin de siècle, l'auteur s'attache à montrer comment la pensée de Freud fut profondément influencée par celle de Kant. En faisant sienne une vision moderne et non-dualiste de la relation entre corps et psychisme, Freud conçoit un lien indissoluble entre l'esprit et le corps tout entier – et non simplement le cerveau – y compris dans son extension spatiale. L'auteur conclut son article en établissant un lien étroit entre l'aphorisme de 1938 et la pensée kantienne de la période pré-critique, et, de façon plus générale, en mettant en évidence l'influence du philosophe de Königsberg sur la conception de la relation entre le psychisme et le corps et celle de la perception du temps et de l'espace dans la pensée freudienne.

Der Beitrag wurde angeregt durch eine der allerletzten Notizen Freuds, die aufgrund ihrer stupenden Schlussfolgerung berühmt wurde: „Psyche ist ausgedehnt, weiss nichts davon." Die Raumwahrnehmung wird als Produkt der Ausdehnung des psychischen Apparates beschrieben und mit Kants Apriori-Kategorien verglichen. Der Autor rekonstruiert den historischen Hintergrund dieser Überlegung als Bestandteil einer langen Diskussion zwischen Freud und seiner Schülerin Marie Bonaparte in der zweiten Hälfte des Jahres 1938. Gezeigt wird, wie Freuds Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen

dem Körper und den psychischen Funktionen durch seine intellektuellen Anleihen bei Kant beeinflusst wurde. Eine Darlegung des Einflusses, den die kantianische Philolophie auf die neue Naturphilosophie des Wiener Fin des siècle ausübte, illustriert die profunde Einflussnahme der kantianischen Philosophie auf die Entwicklung von Freuds Denken. Indem Freud für ein modernes, nicht-dualistisches Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen Körper und Psyche eintrat, ging er von einer unauflösbaren Verbindung zwischen der Psyche und dem Körper insgesamt, also nicht nur dem Gehirn, aus, welche die räumliche Ausdehnung des Körpers miteinbezieht. Abschließend identifiziert der Autor einen engen Zusammenhang zwischen dem 1938 notierten Aphorismus und dem kantianischen vorkritischen Denken. Er beleuchtet den Einfluss des Königsberger Philosophen auf Freuds Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen Psyche und Körper und der Wahrnehmung von Zeit und Raum.

Questo paper prende spunto da uno degli ultimi appunti di Freud – famoso per la sua stupefacente conclusione: "Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it" – nel quale la percezione dello spazio viene descritta come prodotto dell'estensione dell'apparato psichico e confrontata con le categorie a priori di Kant. L'Autore ricostruisce il contesto storico in cui questo pensiero prende forma nella seconda metà del 1938, all'interno di una prolungata discussione con la sua allieva Marie Bonaparte e mostra come il rapporto tra corpo e funzioni psichiche nel pensiero di Freud fosse influenzato dal suo debito intellettuale nei confronti di Kant. Attraverso una breve ricostruzione dell'influenza della filosofia kantiana sulla nascente Naturphilosophie nella Vienna fin de siècle, l'Autore vuole mostrare in che modo Freud fosse stato profondamente influenzato nella sua formazione dal pensiero di Kant. Accogliendo quella che potremmo definire una concezione moderna, non-dualista, del rapporto tra corpo e mente Freud concepisce un'indissolubilità del legame della mente, non tanto con il cervello, quanto con l'intero corpo e la sua estensione spaziale. Le conclusioni a cui giunge l'Autore portano ad individuare uno stretto rapporto tra l'aforisma del 1938 e il pensiero kantiano del periodo precritico e, più in generale, a mettere in luce l'influenza del filosofo di Königsberg sulla concezione del rapporto fra mente e corpo e su quella della percezione del tempo e dello spazio nel pensiero freudiano.

Este trabajo está inspirado en una de las últimas notas de Freud, famosa por su asombrosa conclusión: "La psique es extendida; no sabe nada al respecto", que describe la percepción del espacio como un producto de la extensión del aparato psíquico, y la compara con las categorías a priori de Kant. El autor reconstruye los antecedentes históricos de esta idea como parte de una larga discusión entre Freud y su discípula Marie Bonaparte en la segunda mitad de 1938, y muestra cómo la relación entre el cuerpo y las funciones psíquicas en el pensamiento de Freud estuvo influenciada por su deuda intelectual con Kant. Mediante un esbozo de la influencia de la filosofía kantiana en el surgimiento de la Filosofía de la Naturaleza en la Viena de *fin de siècle*, el autor busca demostrar la profunda influencia de la filosofía kantiana sobre el desarrollo del pensamiento de Freud. Al adherir a una concepción moderna, no dualista, de la relación entre cuerpo y mente, Freud concibe un lazo indisoluble entre la mente y, no solo el cerebro, sino todo el cuerpo y su extensión espacial. El autor concluye identificando un vínculo estrecho entre el aforismo de 1938 y el pensamiento pre-Crítica kantiana, y, de manera más general, hace hincapié en la influencia del filósofo de Königsberg sobre la relación entre mente y cuerpo y sobre la percepción del tiempo y del espacio en el pensamiento freudiano.

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