

**OF MATTER AND MEANING: QUANTUM ENTANGLEMENT AND BIOLOGICAL
FANTASY IN PSYCHOANALYSIS**

by

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Abstract

This thesis offers a posthumanist reading of Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theories on body-ego and its somatic relations to the environment in *Das Ich und das Es* (*The Ego and the Id*), *Die Traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*), and *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (*Civilization and its Discontents*). Agential Realism, a philosophy proposed by Karen Barad, builds on recent insights in quantum physics. Using Barad’s theory, I read bodies as “intra-actively” entangled with matter and meaning, so that the body-ego as “phenomenon” materializes from a co-constitutive subject position within relationships with others. Unlike interaction, where pre-existing entities meet, “intra-action” emphasizes the mutual constitution of entangled agencies. This approach allows re-centering the body in ego formation and the subject-object relations in psychoanalysis. Following Barad’s understanding that “knowing is a direct material engagement” (*Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 2007), this analysis offers novel paths to engage with Freud’s creative somatic materializations in the body. Posthumanist feminist philosophies are uniquely situated to elucidate the intra-activity of the unconscious as enlivened and productive. This “biological phantasy” (Wilson, *Gut Feminism* 2015) as both somatic and imaginary, constitutes a collective event through which body-ego emerges. Just as “matter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers” (Barad), this material reworking provides a novel understanding of the creative relation of the Freudian body-ego with cultural phenomena and collective states. The proposed theory offers new perspectives on psychoanalysis through a new materialist lens when navigating the willful aberrations of bodily unruliness.

Lay Summary

This thesis looks at selected works of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) through the lens of contemporary feminist philosophies and philosophy of science. It seeks to understand the body's role in the development and constitution of cultural trends.

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Anna Westpfahl.

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To Aaron & Magda

Chapter 1: Introduction – With a Little Help from My Freud

Natur! Wir sind von ihr umgeben und umschlungen – unvernünftig aus ihr herauszutreten, und unvernünftig tiefer in sie hineinzukommen. Ungebeten und ungewarnt nimmt sie uns in den Kreislauf ihres Tanzes auf und treibt sich mit uns fort, bis wir ermüdet sind und ihrem Arme entfallen.

Sie schafft ewig neue Gestalten, was da ist, was noch nie, was war, kommt nicht wieder – alles ist neu, und doch immer das Alte.

Wir leben mitten in ihr und sind ihr fremde. Sie spricht unaufhörlich mit uns und verrät uns ihr Geheimnis nicht. Wir wirken beständig auf sie und haben doch keine Gewalt über sie.

Sie scheint alles auf Individualität angelegt zu haben und macht sich nichts aus den Individuen. Sie baut immer und zerstört immer, und ihre Werkstätte ist unzugänglich.¹

Georg Christoph Tobler, Die Natur²

As an undergraduate student in Vienna, Sigmund Freud immersed himself in the study of philosophy. Philosophical knowledge, Freud later states in a letter to his colleague Wilhelm Fließ, had been his “original goal” (Kaufmann 15). However, the recitation of the poem “Die Natur” in a public lecture at the University of Vienna tipped the scales for a young Sigmund Freud in favour of pursuing a career in medicine. At that time the poem was credited to Goethe,

¹“Nature! We are surrounded and embraced by her: powerless to separate ourselves from her, and powerless to penetrate beyond her.

Without asking, or warning, she snatches us up into her circling dance, and whirls us on until we are tired, and drop from her arms.

She is ever shaping new forms: what is has never yet been; what has been, comes not again. Everything is new, and yet nought but the old.

We live in her midst and know her not. She is incessantly speaking to us, but betrays not her secret. We constantly act upon her, and yet have no power over her.

The one thing she seems to aim at is Individuality; yet she cares nothing for individuals. She is always building up and destroying; but her workshop is inaccessible.” (T. H. Huxley. “Nature: Aphorisms by Goethe.” *Nature* 1, no. 1 (November 1, 1869): 9–11)

² (quoted in Goethe 1981)

who mistakenly had claimed credit for the poem in a later stage of his life. In fact, he had just edited the piece for the author Georg Christoph Tobler (Kaufmann 12). “Die Natur” articulates a natural philosophical view which raises the question of the interplay of the individual with culture and the biological with the social, all the while transcending the implied dualism, which deeply resonated with Sigmund Freud.

Although psychoanalysis is mostly concerned with individual subjects, Freud was puzzled and fascinated by cultural phenomena and group behaviour. Even though many of his theories formulate an attempt to reduce the psyche to a deterministic, mechanical, and reductive apparatus, Freud was also compelled to advance views of a more philosophical psychology that would extend to societal dimensions (Kaye 211).

Placing the body and body image as a curious site where culture and biology meet, scholars in feminist studies, the medical humanities, and psychology (see Butler; Bordo; Grosz, and Fuchs) have departed from Sigmund Freud’s materialist conceptualization that “the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego” (Freud, *Works* 26). These accounts examine how the body is subjected to social and cultural forces and inscribed by discourse. Judith Butler designates the body status as an organic substrate (58-59); Susan Bordo describes the body as “historical, plural, culturally mediated form” (288); Elizabeth Grosz’ somatic compliance describes the psychological pliability of biology (28); while Thomas Fuchs’ environmental impacts trigger automatic somatic responses (96). Nicola Diamond’s account in *Between Skins* (2013) moves towards a more fundamentally open and fluid account which will stress the need to think rather of bio-culture than culture versus biology.

These accounts successfully engage bodily materiality in an interplay with the cultural and the discursive. However, despite these scholars’ contribution to gender theory and understanding of body-image-issues, their approaches remain mainly constructivist in the sense

that they conceptualize the unilateral imposition and marking of culture and language on a passive biological body. They do therefore not account for the somatic materiality of the body as an enlivened and responsive force in dynamic interplay with culture.

Questioning how materiality and somatic responses shape, create, and disobey cultures, my work elucidates how biology and culture, soma and psyche relate and bring forth new developments and cultures. My research explores the body as a curious site of somatic playfulness and creativity in Sigmund Freud's texts *Das Ich und das Es (The Ego and the Id)*, *Die Traumdeutung (The Interpretation of Dreams)*, and *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur (Civilization and its Discontents)*. I have chosen these texts by Sigmund Freud for the purpose of this project due to their comprehensive elaborations on the body ego as foundational to ego development and the complete analysis of materiality of the psyche. Illuminating the inherent meaning-making properties of biological substrates, I interpret the relations between soma and psyche as multidirectional in the sense that biology and culture enter a "meaningful correspondence" (Atmanspacher 114). This vision extends the concept of somatic compliance to somatic creativity and responsiveness which uniquely places bodily materialities as a productive force in the co-emergence with the cultural and the symbolic, which warrants this novel analysis.

Drawing on Karen Barad's philosophy of agential realism, I argue for a multilevel approach that conceptualizes the unconscious as self-organizing body-soma-level that thinks and is willful. This creative bodily response system makes sense of complex cultural environments and responds in a meaningful and productive manner, where meaning is a precondition for responsiveness as basis of existence – our "being-of-the-world" (Barad, *Meeting* 160). My theoretical framework combines Barad's concept of the apparatus as site of bodily-production with Elizabeth A. Wilson's work on "biological phantasy" (*Gut Feminism*) and Jung's "synchronicity," demonstrating how materiality corresponds with and constitutes the collective.

The anticipated outcome is a better understanding and appraisal of meaningful somatic relations that both re-center the body and shape and constitute novel cultural collectives.

In the second chapter I provide a literature review of the most relevant and insightful theories by feminist and medical scholars that evolve around and critique Freudian ideas on the body and body ego in terms of their systemic and cultural implications. Analyzing how the body becomes a site of subjectification by language, discourse, and the social will help with identifying and later reworking these notions in my suggested notion of ‘body-absolutism’ (e.g. a body stylized as French monarch Louis XIV radiating from central Paris into all the lands: “La culture, c’est moi!”). The third chapter elaborates on the works that I use to build my theoretical framework: In particular, Karen Barad’s notions of apparatus as “boundary-drawing practice” (*Meeting* 140) and her insight that “knowing is a direct material engagement” (*Meeting* 379) aid in placing the body-soma-level not as merely complicit with discourse but as a dynamic and innovative agent in the entanglement with the environment in order to sketch out the body as a source of responsive creativity. In my reading the body is not a mere imprint of culture, but a body which acts out, disobeys, and has its own mind. The fourth chapter is the first analysis chapter in which I apply my theory to Sigmund Freud’s ideas evolving around the bodily materiality of the development of the psyche in order to show how bodily responses and responsiveness make up our mode of existence. The unconscious is dynamic and alive. Interpretation of complex environments and the body’s fantastic qualities allow the body to make sense of a situation and tailor its response. The fifth chapter consists of an agential realist reworking of the Freudian subject-object-relations. In analogy with Barad’s role of the scientist as an observer, I sketch out the psychoanalyst as a viable and constitutive force in the psychoanalytic process in order to rework the notions of agency, objectivity, and causality where meaning emerges as an ordering principle in addition to the notions of space, time, and causality.

The sixth chapter builds on the insights of chapters four and five and puts them in contact with cultural phenomena on a larger scale. I conceptualize the body as a source of immanent meaning-making which unveils the body's directive role not as the passive receiver of cultural symbolism but as the driving force of creation in cultural and collective affairs. I synthesize my findings in chapter seven, the conclusion.

Chapter 2: To All the Feminists I Have Read Before

Tracing Bodily Genealogies and Cultural Becomings in the Freud Reception

Bodily materiality and the significance of material consequences of cultural practices have been the focus of feminist critique, in particular gender theory. Scholars like Elizabeth Grosz, Judith Butler, and Susan Bordo refer to Freud's thought of a material and bodily ego with the intent to open up the constructivist approach where language, culture, and discourse become the sine qua non towards philosophies that highlight material conditions of the body arguing that materiality is implicated in discourse and the symbolic has real-life consequences for the material conditions of bodily being and boundaries. In this chapter I trace the feminist and psychoanalytic discussion which brought the body ego back into the equation. Elucidating how culture, language, and the social in these theories act as closed off, impenetrable, unilateral forces upon a passive and complicit body points to a missing link between a cultural-discursive symbolic sphere and creative bodily materializations that remain to some degree autonomous in their correspondences.

In *Unbearable Weight* (2004), Susan Bordo combines a Freudian psychoanalytic reading of the female body with what she calls the "feminist/cultural perspective" (54). Her astute cultural analysis that links the pervasiveness of hysteria in the Victorian era to the epidemic of eating disorders highlights the ways in which cultural meaning, the body, and bodily practices are entangled with each other. Bordo critiques Freudianism for the failure to integrate sociocultural factors into the analyses (46). However, she also stresses that "[t]raditional Freudianism is far more attuned to the symbolic nature of ... symptoms" (Bordo 46) in a time where "gender was either absent or essentialized" in other frameworks (Bordo 47).

Situating hysteria and eating disorders culturally and historically, Bordo criticizes contemporary medical models of eating disorders for failing to understand the body as a “historical, plural, culturally mediated form” (288). Critiquing medicine for its positivist obsession with progress, for Bordo, the attempt made by physicians and therapists to approach eating disorders as multidimensional inclusive of biopsychosocial factors represents “fantasies of precision and unification of phenomena that have become less and less amenable to scientific clarity and distinctiveness” (49). Here, it is important to note that the reductionist view lies clearly on Bordo’s side. Bordo’s attempts to integrate the personal history and struggles of patients often result in pathologizing individuals with references to systemic and social injustices rather than abstaining to impose a hierarchy onto personal and systemic factors which significantly limits the integrative range of more holistic models.

A theoretical avoidance of a more nuanced engagement with medical models that address both personal and systemic factors in their conceptualizations of eating disorders leads to Bordo being unable to incorporate the concept and weight of cultural meaning back into the individual mode of Freudian psychoanalysis. This ultimately reinforces a conceptual break between the meaning of cultural epidemics described by Bordo and the psychical functions of individual bodily practices illuminated in psychoanalysis. Symptoms speak, the body speaks. However, this meaning-making and its interpretation are highly contextual; for Bordo, eating disorders, for example, correspond to the expression of “overdetermined crystallization of cultural anxiety” (51). In contrast, I would suggest interpreting the individual bodily comportment and behaviours as bodies’ creative responses to this anxiety which seeks to establish sustainability and equilibrium in a challenging social climate. I agree with Bordo that medicalization in contemporary models examining eating disorders is problematic, as much as the sexist notions in the conceptualization of hysteria in Freudianism. Dysfunction does not void behaviours of

carrying out a function per se; they are maybe not physically or socially feasible. Rather, bodies responding to cultural climates in highly complex, meaningful, and symbolic ways bring about new cultural phenomena in an attempt to feel, metabolize, and manage the pressures provided through the environment (Wilson, *Gut Feminism* 77).

Surprisingly, Bordo blames cultural pressures of productivity and oppressive beauty ideals that propagate thinness for the adoption of harmful bodily practices but does not interrogate why and how individual people engage in such behaviours. It is obvious that beauty ideals as well as the cultural pressure of women with regard to constructions of femininity has changed since the Victorian era, but also that the body continues to function as a site of symbolization. What are the functions that this collective symbolism holds for the individual? What role does agency play when collective symptoms and meanings change over time and yet are also socially prompted? How does a generation's cultural anxiety via symbolism make its way into and materialize in a body and how can a symptom speak back to the culture?

The psychiatrist and philosopher Thomas Fuchs, whose clinical and theoretical work on female embodiment at the intersection of body image and eating disorders, formulates an attempt to reconcile psychoanalysis with phenomenology by giving an account of the unconscious as a “horizontal dimension of the lived body, the lived space, and intercorporeality” à la Maurice Merleau-Ponty (86). Crucial for this theoretical sketch is the notion of body memory, “which is defined as the totality of implicit dispositions of perception and behaviour mediated by the body and *sedimented* in the course of earlier experiences” (86, emphasis added). For Fuchs, the unconscious materializes in the body through bodily changes that express itself as an “implicit memory” which then structures the intercorporeal and intersubjective relations and fields in which the subject roams. The notion that all experiences, regardless whether they were perceived as positive or negative, can become “body memory” echoes Freud's thought of the body ego in

Das Ich und das Es: “Nicht nur das Tiefste, auch das Höchste am Ich kann unbewußt sein. Es ist, als würde uns auf diese Weise demonstriert, was wir vorhin vom bewußten Ich ausgesagt haben, es sei vor allem ein Körper-Ich”³ (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 255).

However, the insight that sedimentation as materialization of encounters with the world in the body functions simultaneously as archive and directive is of vital relevance, because it does not only reposition the subject within its environment, but it also penetrates subject leaving permanent marks and bodily changes of the outside world within. With regard to trauma, Fuchs elaborates:

The injury has penetrated the body of the subject and has left behind a permanent responsiveness, a readiness to defend itself. The traumatized person becomes hypersensitive to threatening, shaming situations similar to the trauma in some manner, even if this similarity is not consciously known, and tries to circumvent them. (98)

Through this theoretical thread Thomas Fuchs further introduces Freud’s concept of repetition compulsion as a procedural body memory accessing not just a specific memory but further an interactional scheme triggering an automatic somatic response that can “become symbolically or physically present in ... symptoms” (Fuchs 101). Similarly, as Bordo’s views on the sociocultural reign over the soma, the entanglement between the soma and the symbolic in Fuchs’s body memory requires further analysis. Fuchs highlights the “meaning of the symptom in the interactive field” (101), which structures the interactions between the subject and the

³ For reference, I provide the corresponding English translation issued by James Strachey for the *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, volumes 4, 5, 19 and 21 (1953): “[N]ot only what is lowest but also what is highest in the ego can be unconscious. It is as if we were thus supplied with a proof of what we have just asserted of the conscious ego: that it is first and foremost a body-ego.” (Freud, *Works* 27)

environment; in his conclusion, however, he fails to take into considerations the bodily changes and symptoms as a creative act and productive forces impacting and speaking back to the interactive field. How do the symptoms affecting and reconfigure the interactive field? What new culture is constituted immanently by the bodies' interpretations of the interactive field?

I suggest taking the conceptual framework one step further, moving from *inter*-relational, *inter*-active, *inter*-subjective engagements. This would emphasize encounters exclusively *between* bodies, to a reading of "*intra*-active" (Barad, *Meeting* 170) entanglements in order to account for permanent bodily sediments and materializations which shape the horizontal unconscious through ongoing meaningful directives in/for the body. Instead of an either/or, I argue for an and/and: there is a need to think the unconscious as intrapsychic *and* horizontal, to think of memory *and* body memory. The more interesting question will then be to see how the relations originating from the soma to the psyche, and further meaning can be thought.

Elizabeth Grosz is one of the early feminist scholars hitting where it hurts and posing questions at the intersection of psychology and biology. Grosz, unlike Bordo, does not side with social constructivism and does not shy away from the questions and problems entangled with scientific discourse. Departing from the crossroads of corporeality and subjectivity, Grosz reads influential theories on embodiment by Spinoza, Freud, Lacan, Schilder, and others with the objective to give an account on bodies "which refuses reductionism, resists dualism, and remains suspicious of the holism and unity implied by monism" (22). For Grosz, the notion of body image has had great impact in psychoanalytic conceptions of subjectivity because it combines the operations of both mind and body; because of this that Freud and Lacan return to the body ego when explaining the genesis and functions of the ego (62). Although for Grosz Freudianism can clearly be grouped within biologism (57), she appreciates Sigmund Freud's attempts to go beyond the conventional theories of his time and providing an account of biology as "pliable by

psychology” that allows for a clear interaction between the two (28). Freud’s ideas on the body ego as foundational to the ego, which according to Grosz was received but underdeveloped in scholarship, serve as a site where the body and the social meet (32).

Grosz’ analysis succeeds in linking the libidinal investment of secondary narcissism to bodies’ inherent meaningfulness (32). Since the body is continuously receiving of libidinal investments from the ego (whether positive or negative), it can never be just a functional entity: bodies are always already charged and loaded with values and meanings. This, for Grosz, represents the basis for bodily symbolizations, because the ego that emerges from the libidinal body thus becomes a “bodily tracing, a cartography of the erotogenic intensity of the body, an internalized image of the degrees of intensity of sensations in the ... body” (33).

The reason why the meaning of the body can shift, and symbolizing can extend to bodies is manifest in the arbitrariness of the erotogenic libidinal investment. Referring to Freud’s 1914 paper “On Narcissism,” Grosz illustrates how any body zone or body part can become a site of libidinal investment, and, as such, a site can assume different values and meanings as it must always already be invested with any morphisms of love and hate (as per Freud). This randomness of charging body parts with love, meaning, and functions, is further developed by Freud as the concept of somatization. Grosz speaks of “somatic compliance” as the body following suit to symbolic impulses originating from the psyche (Grosz 54). However, I would argue that the bodily response is in no way a prescribed default by the psyche. Returning to Bordo’s comparison of the pervasiveness of hysteria in the Victorian era and eating disorders today makes the case for the body’s ability to pick up, discriminate, and interpret different symbolic qualities in the environment. Therefore, there is a need to think of psyche-soma-relations not as mere somatic compliance but as a two-way-street in which the bodily-somatic sphere is intelligent and self-organizing in its responses to psychical and social stimuli.

Feminist accounts of the body often evolve around the discourse of body image as the site where the psyche and the soma are inextricable. In her work *Bodies That Matter* (1993), the philosopher Judith Butler has dealt at length with the conceptualizations of Freud's body ego and Lacan's mirror stage as foundational to the ego. Applying Foucault's concepts of discursive power and "docile bodies," Butler not only exposes the construction of gender as ritualized performance producing "bodies that matter," but further takes a hit at the nature/nurture predicament in *unnaturalizing* the category of the sexes as a cultural norm that governs bodily materialization. According to Butler, the performative nature of gender as a citational practice has morphogenetic effects on the body ego from which then emerges through the symbolic law what she calls an "imaginary morphology" (analogous to Jacques Lacan's imaginary anatomy).

I appreciate Butler's careful reading of Lacan and corresponding redeeming feminist theoretical reworkings of Lacan's mirror stage, but both Butler and Lacan place too much emphasis on the almighty symbolic law. I would agree that a cohesive view of the body and the mind through body image warrants a more detailed analysis of the complex interplay between psyche and soma, Butler, however, tries to tackle this predicament through a return to poststructuralism and its centrality of language and thus fails to further interrogate the formative powers of the soma and the respective non-linguistic responses. Recognizing somatic compliance of the body, Butler simply does not follow through on this ground-breaking new insight in providing a model that can speak to the multidirectional correspondence of soma, psyche, and the social. Freudian psychoanalysis suits Butler's poststructuralist agenda in her reworking well in terms of language's possibility to retrospectively 'travel back' and temper with the pre-linguistic sphere (see Freud's *Der Wolfmann*). *Gleich und gleich gesellt sich gern*.⁴ Butler picks

⁴ German expression translating to: Birds of a feather flock together.

fellow language aficionado Lacan over Freud in her return to the symbolic law: “The Real is that which resists and compels symbolization” (70). Fetishizing the Real as organic substrate (such as the body), Butler cuts off all possibilities for reciprocation between discourse and soma, demoting the ‘organic’ body to the chances of somatic compliance. She writes:

“Agency” would then be the double-movement of being constituted in and by a signifier, where “to be constituted” means “to be compelled to cite or repeat or mime” the signifier itself. Enabled by the very signifier that depends for its continuation on the future of that citational chain, agency is the hiatus in iterability, the compulsion to install an identity through repetition, which requires the very contingency, the undetermined interval, that identity insistently seeks to foreclose. (220)

Butler here limits the possibilities of her analysis for change and subversion to be exclusive of discourse which then sediments into the body; the body under gag order has the option to comply or to resist but there is no space for a body to do its own thing or have its own mind.

Butler’s imaginary morphology builds on Freud’s concept of erotogenicity “which seems defined as the very vacillation between real and imagined body parts” (Butler 59). Following the logic of libidinal investments in the body, a body part becomes intelligible psychically as idea conveying sensorial perceptions in processes of signification, or as Butler puts it, the idea guarantees accessibility to the body (59). In addition to Grosz’ interpretation, where there is always already a libidinal investment in the body, Butler’s conceptualization reads somatization and compliance as a series of substitutions and displacements in continuous procedural flows from the psyche to the soma. The idea of an inscription surface for one does not allow for the

body to be immanent with ideas and to construct meaning immanently from bodily thought as source of knowledge.

Moving away from organic notions of biology, the psychotherapist Nicola Diamond argues in her book *Between Skins* (2013) against an intact body in a “sealed off skin sac” which supposes the body as “discrete unit” (208). Her theoretical framework that maps the “body as interface” (208) primarily derives from combining Maurice Merleau Ponty’s idea of intercorporeality defined as a “bodily aperture to a field with others as a condition of existence” (209) and a critique of Freud’s biological propping through a critical reading of Didier Anzieu’s skin ego in which a sense of self first and primarily derives from the contact, sensory touch, and the care and affection of others. In Anzieu’s model of the skin ego, the skin represents not only the projection of surface as per Freud but also allows the transmission of embodied otherness from the environment carried by sensory experiences. Therefore, the skin becomes the borderline where internal and external perceptions meet and the ego arises.

Diamond is mindful of not romanticizing the communal aspect of intercorporeality and instead views openness and perpetual otherness linked together in an interactive field. She writes: “As such, intercorporeality is not a blissful state of oneness but is potentially and fundamentally disarming, opening up an irreducible alterity, an otherness that can never be incorporated into ownness” (209). Diamond goes on to describe cases from her clinical practice to illuminate how factors from the environment can impact bodily processes. From this follows the crucial impact that relationships with others have on bodily states through somatic responses. This insightful observation leads Diamond to localize the problem of accurately portraying the “relation between an affective imaginary body and alterations in actual bodily states” (211) in the philosophical remnants of Freud’s biological bedrock model which she deems as “simply unviable” (210). The problem with the base concept of propping lies in its implicit dualism,

which cannot account for a necessary two-way street between psyche and soma. In analyzing how secure attachment styles in individuals allow them to regulate bodily processes via the other, Diamond decenters the hierarchy that superimposes humans and their capacity for language by elucidating the role of and attunement with the environment, which lets her move “away from bio-logos and towards bio-life” (212). Diamond remains careful enough for her model to actually factor in culture, as she suggests viewing the environmental field as a “cultural organization of bodily rearing practices, social imaging of the body and styles of comportment” in which touch assumes the meaning and functions as a form of language (212).

Applying her models to Freud’s thoughts on narcissism brings about different psyche-soma-relations. In the most basic sense the “body narrates and enacts a symptom before it can be put into words;” this “somatic access to the symbol” allows the body to “tell a rudimentary story” (213). There is a difference between this and a symbolic processing where there seems to be a translation from affect into thought, Diamond states:

Finally, there is a further symbolic process which resembles the meaning normally used in the psychoanalytic literature where affective states are articulated linguistically, through words and speech, enabling affects to be contained and represented in thought, named, identified and elaborated upon so that reflection (including meta cognitive processes) becomes possible. In this sense, processing affect, and ideation come together and there is a transformation of affective states into reflective states that are attributed to ‘mind’. (213)

Through these bodily responses, bodies are marked, but they are also productive, which for Diamond confirms the “fundamental openness of biological systems” (215).

Crucial for this open relational biology is, for Diamond, a second propping, which turns the Freudian causality and temporality upside down (146). This propping as “leaning-on” exemplifies how a sense of self first depends on otherness but can then become independent. The “primacy of otherness embodied” and the necessity of sensory signifying marks are intertwined and in correspondence with the biological substrate (146). As narcissism presupposes for Diamond the body as object because it is “already outside the sphere of ownness” (152), bio and life become one. This “multi-person-approach” where “the third comes first” and “the perspective of the first person-body depends on and derives from a third-person perspectives” extrapolates Lacan’s mirror stage and fundamentally questions the autonomy of subjectivity (25).

The accounts of Fuchs, Butler, Grosz, and Diamond push towards a fundamental theoretical bodily openness. Butler’s marking of biology by means of culture and Diamond’s “fundamental openness of biological systems,” among others, are keys to an approach to think biology through culture and vice versa. A reappraisal of the somatic relations and their fantastic material capacities in Sigmund Freud’s theory paves the way for a body-centered approach with intelligent soma as source or origin of somatic relationality. Reading the symptom not only as complicit but also as fundamentally creative and adaptive I formulate a theoretical approach that allows addressing bodily responses as intelligent and productive engagements with the world in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: A Little Less Conversation, A Little More Action Please

A Feminist Science Studies Approach Towards Freudian Psychoanalysis

Tracing the genealogical feminist critique on Freudian psychoanalysis, the previous chapter lays the foundation for reworking the materialities in Freud's theories towards a materialist philosophy. Recall Judith Butler's return to matter and materialization which masterfully teases out the materialist undertones in the Freudian psyche alongside the phantasmatic qualities of the psyche-soma-relations as well as Nicola Diamond's dynamic restructuring of Didier Anzieu's skin ego. Diamond's approach connects the organism with its surroundings by means of sensory experiences that go beyond fixed bodily boundaries. In this chapter I formulate a theoretical approach that goes against the assumed unilateral working of culture implied in the concept of somatic compliance which demote the body to side with discourse. Instead I argue for a vision of bodily unconscious, immanently meaningful and willful.

Karen Barad's work *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007) is based on recent insights in the field of quantum physics and their philosophical implications on how we view the world. The designated lesson from quantum physics is that "we are part of that nature that we seek to understand" (*Meeting* 26). Taking into account that we are always already entangled with scientific practices of knowledge production, we are thus part of the phenomena we describe (*Meeting* 26).

Crucial to this philosophy-physics is the emphasized role of the scientist as observer who is always already implicated in the practice of science, particularly in scientific measurement processes. The double slit experiment in quantum physics illustrates this: it shows that light particles when they are being measured can either be modelled as a wave function or a particle

depending on *how* they are being observed or measured. This strange and notably ambivalent behaviour of light particles inspired the core thesis of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics, which is the foundation of Barad's philosophy. The Copenhagen interpretation states that quantum systems do not possess definite properties prior to measurement. This emphasizes the crucial directive role of the scientist in experiments in addition to measuring apparatuses as constitutive of the measured phenomenon.

Freudian psychoanalysis has been under scrutiny in terms of Freud's emphasis of the personal background of patients in the psychoanalytic process of analysis and treatment, such as early childhood experiences, social context, and the family history which function as the talking cure's substance matter and determinants for individual assessment, understanding, and possible treatment (Weinert 262; Kaufmann xl). Leaving room for individually differing and subjective personal information as a framework that guides the psychoanalytic procedure as close to the patient's own story as possible raised among critics the questions of how to move from subjective appraisals to standardized rigorous scientific practice. Weinert argues that "Freudian slips, dream analysis, and free association are neither objective nor intersubjective" (262). Let us take a look at Freud's practice of free association, Sigmund Freud writes:

Dagegen wird die Kritik nun etwa folgendes einzuwenden haben: Daß man von einem einzelnen Element des Traumes irgendwohin gelangt, ist nichts Wunderbares. An jede Vorstellung läßt sich assoziativ etwas knüpfen; es ist nur merkwürdig, daß man bei diesem ziellosen und willkürlichen Gedankenablauf gerade zu den Traumgedanken geraten soll. Wahrscheinlich ist das eine Selbsttäuschung; man folgt der Assoziationskette von dem einen Elemente aus, bis man sie aus irgendeinem Grunde abreißen merkt; wenn man dann ein zweites Element aufnimmt, so ist es nur natürlich,

daß die ursprüngliche Unbeschränktheit der Assoziation jetzt eine Einengung erfährt. Man hat die frühere Gedankenkette noch in Erinnerung und wird darum bei der Analyse der zweiten Traumvorstellung leichter auf einzelne Einfälle stoßen, die auch mit den Einfällen aus der ersten Kette irgend etwas gemein haben. Dann bildet man sich ein, einen Gedanken gefunden zu haben, der einen Knotenpunkt zwischen zwei Traumelementen darstellt.⁵ (*Gesammelte Werke* 2/3: 531-532)

While Freud explains his methods, he fends off potential criticism by framing his methods as overly arbitrary and subjective. His practice of free association curiously combines imagination with causality, or the practice of envisioning while visualizing. Causality here is brought about by imaging and imagining connecting links and meaningful relations, all with the help of the shared complicity with the analyst during the process.

Barad's insights on the implicated state of the observer in the measurement process suggests thinking of the psychoanalyst in the Freudian method as an observer and as such as in a system interacting with the patient's story, memories, and experiences. As the scientist, the analyst holds a crucial function for the outcome of the measurement in terms of the analysand's story: like the particles in the double slit experiment, the personal 'subjective' content that the patient brings into the psychoanalytic process does not possess determinate properties prior to

⁵ "Our critics argue against this along the following lines. There is nothing wonderful in the fact that a single element of the dream should lead us *somewhere*; every idea can be associated with *something*. What is remarkable is that such an aimless and arbitrary train of thought should happen to bring us to the dream-thoughts. The probability is that we are deceiving ourselves. We follow the chain of associations from one element, till, for one reason or another, it seems to break off. If we then take up a second element, it is only to be expected that the originally unrestricted character of our associations will be narrowed. For we still have the earlier chain of thoughts in our memory, and for that reason, in analysing the second dream-idea, we are more likely to hit upon associations which have something in common with associations from the first chain. We then delude ourselves into thinking we have discovered that we have discovered a thought which is a connecting point between two elements of the dream." (Freud, *Works* 527)

‘measurement’ or psychoanalytic interpretation with the help of the insights of the analyst which works, as measuring apparatus. Psychoanalysis has many of the characteristics that we find in quantum physics (Careggio 304): through the psychoanalytic process of signification causality is constructed and emerges, indeterminacy becomes determinate through psychoanalysis as measuring apparatus of which the analyst forms part. Establishing causality here is synonymous with constructing meaning.

At the core of agential realist productions of determinacies and bodily boundaries lies Barad’s concept of the measuring apparatus. She writes: “[A]pparatuses are the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering; they enact what matters and what is excluded from mattering.” (*Meeting* 148). Apparatuses perform agential cuts which “cut ‘things’ together and apart. Cuts are not enacted from the outside, nor are they ever enacted once and for all” (Barad, *Meeting* 179). Through this, inclusions and exclusions of matter and meaning alike become determinate.

I argue that the Baradian apparatus can be applied to psychoanalysis’ “subjective” methods, which work along the lines of causality and indeterminacy to draw boundaries that enact determinacy and make meaning. This drawing of boundaries of the quantum measuring process is analogous to qualitative analysis by the analyst, or the interpretation. Building on the analysand’s history, psychoanalysis then functions as a measuring instrument that reconfigures boundaries, produces new boundaries and, through this, creates subjects, objects, and determinacies. Freud allowing and accounting for indeterminacies where objectivity should rule in the scientific method, there was a far greater realm of the possibilities and impossibilities for him when dealing with his patients than narrow scientific requests for absolute determinacy and causality.

Barad's insight that causality is always already constructed to some degree in the enactment of determinacy highlights the psychoanalyst's role and power in the process of interpretation as enactment of determinacy as we have observed in the arbitrariness of the procedural free association. The psychoanalyst serves as both observer and apparatus in the psychoanalytic process.

To elucidate this procedural entanglement and sneaky play of "fort" and "da," let us turn to Barad's subject-object-theory for a closer analysis of the manifold ways subject and object overlap and distort each other: Barad places the observer and the observed phenomenon as interacting with each other and introduces the neologism of "intra-action" to describe the entangledness of both. Whereas "inter" speaks to the *between* or *among* actors, "intra-action" stresses the co-emergence of bodies within and together with the structure of the apparatus. Through the model of "intra-action," Barad argues that there are no pre-existing independent entities as such, but rather that subject and object co-emerge "intra-actively" within the phenomena so that the "line between the object and subject is not fixed" (*Meeting* 359).

What this means for my interpretation of Freudian theory in this thesis is a Baradian expenditure of Freud's couch. Recall that causality, indeterminacy, and determinacy exemplified in the double slit experiment in agential realism exist together. If the analyst functions as part of the measurement process and the analysand's backstory represents indeterminacies, determinacy such as meaning arises through the analyst's interpretation in the positing of causality. Therefore, meaning as determinacy co-emerges along the lines with subjects and objects in analyst-analysand-entanglements. Analysing Freudian subject-object relations under the premise of Barad's interpretation of the measurement problem illuminates and redeems the qualities of the meaningfulness of interpretation and signification in the psychoanalytic method. This allows elucidating the role that meaningfulness plays as a structuring device within the dynamic dance

of self-organization in matter/meaning entanglements (Colman 472). What is at issue is that both matter and meaning function as self-organizing and animated in the restructuring of the possibilities and impossibilities of the world (Main 176).

Judith Butler's notions of agency is inextricably linked to her theory of performativity; the subject's ability to subvert and reinscribe blurs the subject subjected to power (Butler 15). However, the anthropocentric pitting of human bodies against systemic power falls short of addressing the procedural nature of the blurring of relational structures and systems out of which subjects and objects co-emerge.

Barad successfully extrapolates implications of the role of the observer with regard to notions of agency and objectivity. When the observer and the observed are co-entangled, Barad argues, there can be "no absolute exteriority" but only what Barad calls "agential separability." "Agential separability" describes an enacted exteriority among co-emerging entities within the observed phenomenon (Barad, *Meeting* 175-177). This co-constitution of all bodies, human and nonhuman, entails not only a posthumanist reworking of the concept of objectivity as "agential separability" but it further scrutinizes individualistic notions of agency towards shared "response-ability" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 55) and accountability. As agency becomes a shared endeavour among entangled forces, an agential realist account illuminates the ethical challenges crystallized in each entanglement.

Recall that Freud places the origins of self as deriving from bodily experiences brought about by stimuli in the environment embodied in the mother and the caretaker. In *Das Ich und das Es*, he writes: "Das Ich ist vor allem ein körperliches, es ist nicht nur rein Oberflächenwesen,

sondern selbst die Projektion einer Oberfläche”⁶ (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 253). When sense of self emerges by means of experiencing embodied otherness through sensory experience or lack thereof, embodiment becomes a collective endeavour. Without primacy and privilege of language as source of ego, it is something other than discourse and representationalism, something more primordial that drives matter’s generative force towards meaningfulness in encounters that give way to bodily materializations and significations.

Barad critiques Butler’s building on Freud and the use of psychic identification as if these presuppose an inherent and exclusive parallelism with social powers (*Meeting* 209). I argue, however, that returning to Freud and reading his theories on subject-object relations through Barad’s agential realism allows for a more nuanced analysis of the procedural nature of the intra-play and the way (partial) subjects and (partial) objects co-emerge in an ongoing fraying of reconfiguring of the world. Envisioning matter as enlivened and subversive where meaning emerges prompts an approach that emphasizes the immanent meaning-constructing qualities that emerge in bodily correspondences with complex environments. What is at issue here is that responsive and phantasmatic capacities of biological substrates act not in prescriptive ways but as self-organizing and transcendental in meaningful ways. When cultural and collective symbols, bodies, and subjectivities are entangled in the same feedback system, immanence and transcendence implicate each other and the body becomes a site of embodying transcendence in bringing forth new meanings and cultural practices. We will see more on how this important thought experiment relates to bodily materializations in the following chapters.

⁶ “The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but itself the projection of a surface.” (Freud, *Works* 26)

Thinking of matter as responsive is directly linked to Barad's ethical appeal or knowing as "response-ability." The boundaries of the apparatus and the phenomena it produces are never fixed. They are subject to shifts in relations in matter's ongoing dynamic reconfiguring of the world. Boundaries, apparatuses, phenomena, bodies, subjects, and objects are all co-entangled and emerge together. Agential cuts, or how the boundaries are being drawn, for Barad determine how response-ability and accountability within the phenomenon is shared and ethics come into play. Knowing in this framework is not an intellectual capacity but the ability to respond, the response-ability in "intra-action," as well as accountability for the boundaries that are being drawn. This framework combines therefore epistemology, ontology, and ethics into one, which Barad calls "ethico-onto-epistemology" (*Meeting* 185). To summarize: Barad wants to ponder entanglements, because knowing as a capacity is our ability to respond and to be accountable within entanglements, which warrants considering the ethical dimensions of our responses.

Another aspect in Barad's theory which bundles matter and meaning derives from matter's ability to respond in the enfolding of the world. In this context, knowledge becomes a "direct material engagement" (*Meeting* 379). In an interview in *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* Karen Barad elaborates on the aliveness of matter: "Matter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers" (Qtd. in Dolphijn and van der Tuin 59). The qualitative aspect in the matter's liveliness endow its dynamism with meaning.

Barad's mascot for the materialities of knowing is the brittle star. A relative of the starfish, the brittle star's brainless existence and bodily ways of visualization for Barad represents the perfect catch to fend off the parasitic philosophical inheritance of Cartesian representationalism and the cerebral fetishism that stylizes the brain and cognition as a privileged site of knowing. Barad comments on the invertebrate marine creature whose vision depends on a network of micro lenses which are connected with nerve bundles: "Brittlestars don't *have* eyes;

they *are* eyes. It is not merely the case that the brittlestar's visual system is embodied; its very being is a visualizing apparatus. The brittlestar is a living, breathing, metamorphosing optical system" (*Meeting* 375). The point that Barad is making is that knowing cannot be equated with intellectual capacities and therefore "[k]nowing is not a capacity that is the exclusive birthright of the human" (*Meeting* 379).

Its responsiveness and capacity to be a non-rational knower is exemplified in the brittle star's defense mechanism. When in danger to become prey, the brittle star will let go of the compromised body part in order to avoid being captured. The notion of intactness and bodily boundaries is as much eroded as is the notion of the exclusivity of brain-centered or rational-cognitive forms of knowledge; instead the notion of knowing as responding which Barad extends to "response-ability."

In terms of alternative forms of knowing or the bastardization of the ability to know, Sigmund Freud's literary treasure chest provides much food for thought to extend the Baradian metaphor of the brittle star towards an open-ended multilevel and multidimensional response-network and entanglement webs with the world. Recall for example Freud's elaborations on the formation of the ego through body ego as a crucial point of departure:

Der eigene Körper und vor allem die Oberfläche desselben ist ein Ort, von dem gleichzeitig äußere und innere Wahrnehmungen ausgehen können. Er wird wie ein anderes Objekt gesehen, ergibt aber dem Getast zweierlei Empfindungen, von denen die eine einer inneren Wahrnehmung gleichkommen kann. Es ist in der Psychophysiologie hinreichend erörtert worden, auf welche Weise sich der eigene Körper aus der Wahrnehmungswelt heraushebt. Auch der Schmerz scheint dabei eine Rolle zu spielen und die Art wie man bei schmerzhaften Erkrankungen eine neue Kenntniss seiner Organe

erwirbt, ist vielleicht vorbildlich für die Art, wie man überhaupt zur Vorstellung seines eigenen Körpers kommt.

Das Ich ist vor allem ein körperliches, es ist nicht nur ein Oberflächenwesen, sondern selbst die Projektion einer Oberfläche.⁷ (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 253)

Although a psychical propping, or anaclisis, would place a priori biological substrates at the origin of consciousness, I want to emphasize Freud's insistence of simultaneity of the entanglements of inside and out, matter (organs) and meaning (pain and the body) in the formation of the ego in this passage. Recall that matter here is not a property or an entity, but a procedural enfolding, an active reconfiguring of the world, or what Barad calls "worlding" (*Meeting* 180-181). I read pain not analogously to language as a form of mediation but see pain itself as a meaningful level in the worlding within the body-world-entanglement that Freud describes. Matter, body, organs, pain, and the ego co-emerge simultaneously on multiple levels. In other passages of *Das Ich und das Es*, Freud conceptualizes sensations as multilocular processes originating simultaneously in different places (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 249; Freud, *Works* 22). Meaning does not possess an a priori symbolic origin or functions as the by-product or tool of mediation through language. Rather, meaning emerges as immanent and embodied and therefore inextricably linked with matter and processes of mattering. Pain is a meaningful

⁷ "A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception. Psychophysiology has fully discussed the manner in which a person's own body attains its special position among other objects in the world of perception. Pain, too, seems to play a part in the process, and the way in which we gain new knowledge of our organs during painful illnesses is perhaps a model of the way by which in general we arrive at the idea of our body. The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but itself the projection of a surface." (Freud, *Works* 25-26)

response and an utterance as that which is feeling and responding in multidimensional spheres of knowing.

Let us turn to Elizabeth A. Wilson's reading of Sigmund Freud, Sándor Ferenczi, and Melanie Klein's animisms (2015) in order to complement Barad's quantum realism and its animate concept of matter with Wilson's enchantments of a fantastic biology. Wilson's rebellious *Gut Feminism* makes its point not only for matter's animism but further for phantasy in biology by arguing for several dissonant claims. Elizabeth Wilson writes:

One of the key contributions that *Gut Feminism* has to offer to this kind of dissonant alliance is the concept of biological phantasy (the other contribution is an analysis of hostility, more of which below). Sándor Ferenczi's wild speculations about bodily materializations (a lump in the throat, a child in the stomach, a penis in the rectum) and amphimixis (anal-urethral-erotic admixtures) have been particularly important for encountering biology as a nonfoundational substrate. His speculations about a "third dimension" to biology (its capacity to be motivated and to think) and Klein's unruly account of the primordial-biological nature of phantasy have been crucial to reading biology as something other than dispassionate bedrock – without having to read against biology *in toto*. That is, a juridical register; it has given me the tools to start displacing an imperious, unyielding biology with one that (no less intricate and perhaps no less vicious) is keenly motivated, networked, and mobile. (172)

Both Wilson and Barad make an exemplary case of arguing for matter's capacities to think without falling into the trap of a mechanical bedrock model that would essentialize bodies and cement the reign of a mechanical science/biology. Instead their accounts infuse organic

structures with a playful open-endedness, perpetual motion, and adaptability, a theoretical dynamism that mimics not progress but evolution; in both accounts meaning and matter comply.

Wilson's "biology-with-phantasy" opens the door for matter to take on even more "response-ability" than intended by Baradian theory: the phantasmatic capacities of the multilevel organization and feedback with their ability of psychic identifications (critiqued by Barad in Butler's account), here, seem to have taken on life on their own. Played out in feedback loops between matter's motivation, a *quest for meaning* guides their specific responses as "response-ability" in the ongoing reconfigurings of the world. With meaning here I am not referring to a disconnected transcendental symbolic system that is either superimposed on biology or propped up by a biological bedrock, but matter's motivation to respond in a unique and specified manner from within the entanglements, making use of the possibilities and availabilities in an attempt to stabilize and sustain an equilibrium through meaningful responses. "Response-ability" for me extends the Baradian appeal to ethical responsiveness. Therefore, matter's quest for meaning is not only adaptive and adapted, self-organizing, and integrating into bigger webs of entanglements, but it is further motivated to synthesize and sustain itself within the system. This then translates into the making of meaning, determinacies, and causalities within the dynamism of bigger arrangements. Without meaning there could be neither determinacy nor causality. Without meaning there is no responsiveness.

Responsiveness as a quest for meaning not only underlies Freud's thoughts on the body-ego but can also be traced in his prolific speculations around the concepts of somatization and regression which I read as foundational acts of meaning in their undoing and subverting of causality; in this sense psychoanalysis affirms non-linearity and non-irreversibility. Matter's ability to self-organize and to make sense of stuff and span over multiple levels is expressed in Freud's expenditure of the body-ego from conscious aspects of the ego towards the unconscious.

In *Das Ich und das Es*, he elaborates: “Wollen wir zu unserer Wertskala zurückkehren, so müssen wir sagen: Nicht nur das Tiefste, auch das Höchste am Ich kann unbewußt sein. Es ist, als würde uns auf diese Weise demonstriert, was wir vorhin vom bewußten Ich ausgesagt haben, es sei vor allem ein Körper-Ich”⁸ (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 255). For as meaning does not possess transcendental truths nor is it an inherent property of stuff, we might think of the uniquely and specifically somatic responses issued in any given entanglement as a multilevel quest for meaningfulness. In an attempt to self-organize, adapt, and sustain, these responses draw all resources available, may they be organic, psychic, biological, or cultural.

This dynamism of multiple forces at play where meaning emerges as an ordering principle of the material-discursive manifests pervasively in the works of one of Freud’s prodigal sons, Carl Gustav Jung. Interestingly enough, Jung held a close friendship and working collaboration with the quantum physicist Wolfgang Pauli and their own brand of physics-philosophy anticipate or relate to many of the theoretical insights of agential realism and Barad’s analysis of quantum physics. With meaning, Jung and Pauli came up with an additional category with which they sought to complement the conventional structuring devices we deploy, such as space, time, and matter. For Jung especially meaning represented an ordering principle. In collaboration with Pauli, Jung manages to combine the Baradian concept of “quantum wholeness,” where the scientist/observer always already forms part of the measured phenomenon, with meaning as a structuring device spanning over multiple levels. Where Barad invokes wholeness, Jung refers to “complementarity” or his all-encompassing idea of the *unus mundus* – the one world. He writes:

⁸ “If we come back once more to our scale of values, we shall have to say that not only what is lowest but also what is highest in the ego can be unconscious. It is as if we were thus supplied with a proof of what we have just asserted of the conscious ego: that it is first and foremost a body-ego.” (Freud, *Works* 27)

The very diverse and confusing aspects of these phenomena are, so far as I can see at present, completely explicable on the assumption of a psychically relative space-time continuum. As soon as a psychic content crosses the threshold of consciousness, the synchronistic marginal phenomena disappear, time and space resume their accustomed sway, and consciousness is once more isolated in its subjectivity. We have here one of those instances which can best be understood in terms of the physicist's idea of "complementarity." When an unconscious content passes over into consciousness its synchronistic manifestation ceases; conversely, synchronistic phenomena can be evoked by putting the subject into an unconscious state (trance). (*Structure* 300)

Jung here makes use of the same metaphor as Barad, the measurement problem. Recall the odd behaviour of particles behaving like a wave or as particles when measured in the double slit experiment. He quotes his colleague Pauli on this one:

Professor Pauli formulates the physical side of the complementarity relationship here expressed, as follows: "It rests with the free choice of the experimenter (or observer) to decide ... which insights he will gain and which he will lose; or, to put it in popular language, whether he will measure A and ruin B or ruin A and measure B. It does not rest with him, however, to gain only insights and not lose any." (*Structure* 300-301)

For Jung this measurement problem finds expression in whether concepts register consciously or unconsciously, which is problematic in the sense that a multilevel approach is not based on

either/or but rather advocates for and/and. “Synchronicity” for Jung complements causality in that it fosters a causal yet meaningful connection on the unconscious level.

Further problematic in Jung’s view of the archetypes and “synchronicity” is the underlying representationalism and idealism, he writes: “Archetypes, so far as we can observe and experience them at all, manifest themselves only through their ability to organize images and ideas, and this is always an unconscious process which cannot be detected until afterwards. By assimilating ideational material whose provenance in the phenomenal world is not to be contested, they become visible and psychic” (Structure 299). Here, Jung misses out on the opportunity to follow through with the multilevel account of his proclaimed psychophysical parallelism. Instead of taking matter into account, the passage conjures up not only metaphysical and split off transcendental qualities of the archetypes and meaning but even invokes a certain mysticism present in these mentioned patterns of holism. Nonetheless, the notion of an animism in underlying patterns of meaning as a driving force and structuring device, as a *quest* which Jung introduces through “synchronicity” to the unconscious is extremely insightful and helpful when applied to the level of matter and the body. The biological capacities of thought motivate and structure meaningfully on more levels than the psychic/conscious one.

Jung’s animism powered by a collective unconscious is an extremely daring concept that levels with many implications of Karen Barad’s quantum philosophy. What is at issue here is the notion of scalability, as the irreconcilability of micro- and macro-scales, and quantum entanglement. Giving nothingness a structure and charging the void, Barad tackles representationalism and transcendentalism in her essay “On Touching – the Inhuman That Therefore I Am” which seeks to demystify and ground some of the Jungian boldness. She writes:

Clearly, if we take quantum mechanics seriously as making a statement about the real

world, then the demands it places on our conventional thinking are enormous. Hidden behind the discrete and independent objects of the sense world is an entangled realm, in which the simple notions of identity and locality no longer apply. We may not notice the intimate relationships common to that level of existence, but, regardless of our blindness to them, they persist. Events that appear to us as random may, in fact, be correlated with other events occurring elsewhere. Behind the indifference of the macroscopic world, “passion at a distance” knits everything together. (7)

Barad’s thought on the issues of scaling infuses Jung’s ordered idealism with matter and the void with particles; “synchronicity” becomes weighty when read diffractively through Barad’s interpretation of quantum field theory. Her interpretation furthermore leaves room to pronounce meaningfulness as being a self-organizing principle of response-ability despite the fact that Barad does not explicitly take matters there herself. Meaningfulness – as a quest – represents matter’s animism as the ability to respond and self-organize critically in an adaptive, sustainable, and harmonizing manner. Matter’s motivation with its phantasmatic capacities enlivens macro-scale’s “sense world.”

Also, somewhat fantastic and inspirational for my project here is Jung’s attempt to fuse biology/evolution with his own brand of idealism in the concept of the “collective unconscious,” based on his notions of the archetypes as ideational ordering principles. Unlike the “personal unconscious” that groups together psychic contents of psychic energetic value too low to pass the threshold to consciousness (179), the “collective unconscious” represents a priori modes of psychic apperception which are not individually distinct and acquired but rather inherited such as instinct and impulse (179). Jung’s evolutionary Kantianism unfortunately again voids the unconscious of particles and matter.

An agential realist account of the personal and collective unconscious challenges the void notions of energy level in the sense that what is excluded from mattering can be understood as that which has been excluded from the phenomenon by the measuring apparatus. Nevertheless, the boundaries of phenomena and apparatuses alike are never fixed nor eternal. Therefore, what in Jung's account is contingently unconscious due to low energy levels, in an agential realist account depends the bigger web and complexities of the entanglement, which highlights the very limited notion of agency or autonomy as mere agentic separability. This then perhaps eludes to a notion of the unconscious that is contingent on the collective entanglement ingrained by power dynamics, and possibly up for grabs and reconfigurings in the ongoing worlding of shifting boundaries and co-emergence of new bodies and phenomena. This notion of the "collective unconscious" as that which is collectively excluded from materializing, emerging, mattering brings to light a new side of systemic analysis in psychoanalysis and matter's prominent role to meaningfully express and push into existence what discursively is excluded from mattering.

As a matter of fact, both Jung's biological idealism and Barad's account fail to adequately account for matter's fantastic quality to be motivated and responsive in critical ways and to act as an agentic force. What is at issue here in Barad's agential realist account is the contradictory message that on the one hand praises matter as agentic, dynamic, and motivated, and on the other hand is excluded from acting in a "response-able" way as in an ethical way. For the concept of "response-ability," Barad's ethics seem to appeal exclusively to humans and their access to discourse to right the wrong by means of discursive subversions to which matter then will follow suit. What is the ethics of the brittle star? Do ethics require a brain after all? I agree with the agential realist linkage and the entanglement as inextricability of material-discursivity. However, the logical issue for me in Barad's approach, which echoes my critique of Butler's performativity, is that there seems to be no direct correspondence between bodies and discourse.

Rather the concept of “response-ability” entails ethical reflection and the rational assessment of possibilities and accountability (*Meeting* 218) which presuppose (exclusively human) cognition which Barad had set out to transcend. This suggests a one-way-street from the human to engage, shift, subvert matter through discourse (analysis), which is precisely what Barad had set out to eliminate.

Barad’s work is eye-opening and her posthumanist ethics admirable, but with her attempt to subvert the anthropocentric philosophic history of human exceptionalism, I am left somewhat unsatisfied with Barad’s attempt to drown out all differences between the systems she seeks to describe. Barad’s theory of agential realism sets the baseline for us to think of the co-constitution of matter and discourse in an open-ended, non-linear enfolding of matter, which dethrones Anthropos and cognitive capacities and therefore democratizes human bodies and cultures as systems that co-emerge like all other systems. I agree. Yet, there is a promise unfulfilled in her theory with regard to her ethico-onto-epistemology. Recall the image of the brittle star as knower, her icon of brainless decision-making. Contradictory to this image, we find Barad’s ethical appeal to make informed and more importantly *conscious* choices when it comes to our agentic forces within the entanglement. It seems that Barad wants to have her cake and eat it, too, in that she presupposes that humans are *just like* other systems and that knowing does not presuppose intellectual abilities. However, it seems that reflection plays an important role in making ethical choices, which would therefore be limited to humans and ultimately perpetuate humans’ privileged role as master of the universe. This leaves us in need to find a way to philosophically grapple with all the complexities and specificities of the human without doing away with or arranging these differences into hierarchies.

While Barad’s theory is painfully realist, refreshingly reconciling, and as much enlightening as it is down-to-earth, her approach does also feel mechanic and to some degree

even reductionist at points. Barad seems to be accounting for an intra-play with all there is in the present, in this worlding, yet her quantum philosophy does not dare to move into the direction of innovation and change. Technology as innovation is accounted for in the what is, today and now, and yet it appears there is a lack of envisioning novelty, and change, which appears to be an all too common characteristic of positivist scientific models.

It is this accounting for the present while avoiding the future, the dwelling on what has been and the steering away from what might happen that for me sets the limits of Barad's agential realism. It is extremely dense, thoroughly backed up with highly technical sources and evidence, and in all this high and mighty science it feels too safe, too sober, too neat, and simple sometimes to really grapple with differing complex systems in a nuanced manner. Carl Gustav Jung on the other hand contents with trying to claim that idealism goes hand in hand with Darwinism. Thankfully, in Wilson's account there are insightful hints at matter's ability to engage and respond in a critical and material manner from within its entanglements with the symbolic, cultural, and discursive. She writes: "As Ferenczi would remind us, there is much that is wormlike in the human mind, there are psychic functions (like anxiety) that fissure the organic world, disrespecting the divisions of species, genus, family, order, class, or phyla" (*Gut Feminism* 176).

This responsiveness as self-organizing of meaning making which enables meaningful correspondence across multiple levels sets the stage for us to think matter's directed motivation as self-organizational in the production of bodily boundaries, not only in personal, but also in collective spheres. A collective unconscious brought about by a fantastic biology cannot be an essentialized one as Jung had envisioned but rather a material quest for meaning as ability to respond and adapt to stimuli and cues within the entanglement from which determinacy is enacted. The enactment of determinacy both requires response-ability as it further enables it.

Shared meaning as a common theme among the agentic forces at play emerges in the enactment of determinacy as determinacy. Meaning allows to respond, to strive for something, harmonization, equilibrium, and sustainability. In systems that are dynamic and constantly undergo changes, the idea of feedback loops between personal and collective levels and their presupposed responsiveness from within the entanglements permits us to envision matter's motivation as functional responses to a determinacy that has emerged as a common theme of interpretation across individual and collective scales from within their multilevel direct correspondence and response. Meaning as co-emergent plays a crucial role in the enactment of determinacy, which make responsiveness and response-ability possible in the first place.

The idea that matter is in “meaningful correspondence” (Atmanspacher 114) – Pauli's preferred term when talking of “synchronicity” – with other levels and collectives and that meaning and responsiveness implicate each other so that phantasy is a part of matter and biology open the door to think about bodily processes and bodily *responses* in the production of bodies as an endeavor that enacts meaning as agentic force along the lines of determinacy as a structuring device that evokes Jung idea of “synchronicity.”

This approach to matter's animism as self-organizing allows for a traversing of multiple implicated levels without privileging discourse over matter, the many over one, the body over the mind, or quantity over quality. It illuminates matter's sway of responsiveness in phantasy and phantasy in responsiveness in foundational acts of meaning as productive, innovative, generative.

Chapter 4: Me, My Superego, and I

A Posthumanist Glimpse on the Fantastic Materiality of the Freudian Psyche

My theoretical framework highlights the need for a body-centered approach where matter is conceptualized as agentic, imaginative, and resourceful. Karen Barad's agential realism benefits from the imaginary qualities of Wilson's biology in the sense that fantasy plays a crucial role within the body's material ties to the world. Envisioning the material intentionalities of bodily thought allows one to rethink the cultural and the social from and through the body. This fosters a better understanding of bodily becoming in the scaling from individual to collective affairs.

In this chapter, with the help of Wilson's fantastic biology I trace matter's phantasmatic properties as well as the notions of non-linearity and reversibility in the Freudian psyche in order to bring forth a multilevel approach that conceptualizes matter not just as self-organizing and responsive in terms of compliance but that also grants matter's motivation the ability to respond in meaningful ways. Locating the unconscious in the body enlivens matter's innovative abilities to constitute an agentic force in "intra-action" with the discursive. This account does not reduce or prioritise matter over discourse or vice versa, nor does it reduce entanglement to a psychophysical parallelism as proposed in Barad's agential realism. Rather matter and discourse are thought of in alignment with Carl Gustav Jung's and Wolfgang Pauli's philosophical interpretation of quantum physics in terms of complementarity: "[T]he simple but radical idea proposed by Pauli and Jung suggests a background domain from which the mental and the material are supposed to emerge as epistemically distinguishable" (Atmanspacher 111). This framework lays the foundation to conceptualize the principle of meaning as a function that co-emerges with and responds to material bodily responses of biological substrates. Meaning,

therefore, acts as a structuring device for matter to correspond, shape, and constitute complex symbolic and collective systems as envisioned in Jung's "synchronicity."

Both Wilson and Barad make a point for matter to be animated in some sense. Recall Barad's statement that "[m]atter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 59). Whereas Barad's thoughts on matter mostly keep to quantum models of particles with little reference to the creative capacities of materializations when it comes to bodies (*Meeting* 393), Wilson dives deep into the philosophical implications of the animate nature of biological substrates and unruly bodily materializations. This rebellious and willful biology is as much as Wilson's claims in *Gut Feminism* "anti-conciliant" (170). In both cases it is not matter triumphing over mind, cognition, or language, but rather that matter has a mind on its own and works as agentic force in its "intra-actions" from within the entanglement.

In Freudian theory, matter's capacity to be motivated and think is embodied in the id, and many of its workings exclusively take place in the unconscious. As part of the psychic apparatus, the id, as well as the ego, and the superego form different instances which function as placeholders for both internal and external worlds. Freud seems at times undecided in *Das Ich und das Es*. Within several pages of this work he declares both that the id represents the external world for the ego and the other way around, that the ego acts as representative of the external world for the id (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 267, 285; *Works* 38, 55). As in "intra-action" where the entangled agencies do not possess fixed and closed off boundaries or unilateral relationships but co-emerge together, there are no fixed boundaries between the Freudian institutions. This appears like the Freudian version of material-discursivity.

One might say the psychic apparatus as Freud conceived it anticipated the concept of "intra-action" with the ego, the id, and the super ego representing agentic forces from without

and within the psyche. Psychoanalysis like agential realism provides insights into agential separability of entangled agencies at play. Freud writes:

Die funktionelle Wichtigkeit des Ichs kommt darin zum Ausdruck, daß ihm normaler Weise die Herrschaft über die Zugänge zur Motilität eingeräumt ist. Es gleicht so im Verhältnis zum Es dem Reiter, der die überlegene Kraft des Pferdes zügeln soll, mit dem Unterschied, daß der Reiter dies mit eigenen Kräften versucht, das Ich mit geborgten. Dieses Gleichnis trägt ein Stück weiter. Wie dem Reiter, will er sich nicht vom Pferd trennen, oft nichts anderes übrig bleibt, als es dahin zu führen, wohin es gehen will, so pflegt auch das Ich den Willen des Es in Handlung umzusetzen, als ob es der eigene wäre.⁹ (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 253)

Visualizing which forces pull on the ego subverts traditional understandings of agency and autonomy and complicates conventional notions of individual responsibility.

In psychoanalysis the id represents matter's animism equipped with immanent responsiveness; much like the brittle star whose response represents a prerequisite of our "being-of-the world." Following this analogy, the superego exemplifies how apparatuses produce bodily boundaries from within the entanglement on behalf of demands from environment and other others in an enactment of determinacies. The superego as internalized materialization of values, judgements, and norms shows Freudian "intra-action" in the psyche as a co-emergent

⁹ "The functional importance of the ego is manifested in the fact that normally control over the approaches to motility devolves upon it. Thus in its relation to the id it is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse; with the difference, that the rider tries to do so with its own strength while the ego uses borrowed forces. The analogy may be carried a little further. Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go; so in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own." (Freud, *Works* 25)

phenomenon. In this scenario, the ego functions become highly relevant with regard to Barad's notions of ethics as response-ability. Recall that on the one hand Barad argues against intellectual ways of knowing, on the other hand it is clearly a resource exclusive to human cognition if one wants to live up to Barad's ethical maxim to be able to be accountable within the "intra-action" (*Meeting* 178-179). The ego as Freud had envisioned it has strangely similar ethical implications in that Freud endows psychoanalysis with the delicate task to foster the ego's autonomy from the pulling agentic forces (Goldberg 901). Freud writes:

Das Ich entwickelt sich von der Triebwahrnehmung zur Triebbeherrschung, vom Triebgehorsam zur Triebhemmung. An dieser Leistung hat das Ichideal, das ja zum Teil eine Reaktionsbildung gegen die Triebvorgänge des Es ist, seinen starken Anteil. Die Psychoanalyse ist ein Werkzeug, welches dem Ich die fortschreitende Eroberung des Es ermöglichen soll.¹⁰ (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 286)

Freud encourages sustainable ego functions as he further places melancholia and the neurosis a case for the ego's struggling with internally materialized demands from the superego (*Gesammelte Werke* 13: 282-283, Freud, *Works* 52-53). The ego mediates morality and is held responsible. Although Barad rejects any form of mediation between discourse and matter, bodies and the world, and advocates for a one-level-parallelism, her ethico-onto-epistemology also calls for reflection, which implies cognition, critical representationalism, or at the very least a similar sort of mediation as Freud's ego as conscious overwatch. Not only does this calling for reflective

¹⁰ "The ego develops from perceiving instincts to controlling them, from obeying instincts to inhibiting them. In this achievement a large share is taken by the ego ideal, which indeed is partly a reaction-formation against the instinctual processes of the id. Psycho-analysis is an instrument to enable the ego to achieve a progressive conquest of the id." (Freud, *Works* 55-56)

ethics restore and re-center Anthropos into the equation of all worldly entanglements, but the argument I want to make is that Barad – by allowing cognition to intercept and modify responses – inadvertently acknowledges a multilevel approach that switches between response as reflex (the brittle star) and reflection as response-ability (ethico-onto-epistemology). This exceptionalism of abstract thought and the possibilities of subversion in Baradian ethics do not fit with her otherwise post-anthropocentric material-discursivity which plays out on one level for all systems, species, organisms. Instead, I propose a vision of matter's vitalist role in the entanglements where matter takes on a life on its own.

Keeping an eye open for matter's animism, let us now take a closer look at the unconscious playing field of materialization in psychoanalysis. We have seen in Freudianism that both the highest and the lowest qualities of the ego may be unconscious. It seems though that matter when it is acting out does not have a field day on its own. Here, where the borders of biology and phantasy fray, Barad's simply-put material-discursivity fails to account for a nuanced multilocular approach that is able to provide specificity of different spheres making space for language and cognition. Intra-acting with matter's animism gives weight to both while making sure not to reduce one to merely *complying with* the other as suggested in the poststructuralist language centered approaches by Butler, Bordo, Grosz, Barad, and Fuchs. Barad puts the material and the discursive as always already entangled in the ongoing enfolding of matter which is one of the biggest contributions agential realism brings to the table. But is that enough to address matter's capacities to think on its own, to respond in creative ways and even to disobey and defy discourse? Yes, matter and discourse emerge together, but how and under which conditions do they do so? Freud's and Barad's ideas are promising in cross-fertilizing each other, in particular regarding the aspects of development and change in both philosophies. Freud was one of the first scholars to gain traction with emphasizing the significance of

childhood experiences and developmental changes (Gay, *Freud a Life* 146-147). Recall that Barad's view uniquely places matter at the heart of dynamic enfolding, or as she says worlding. Apparatuses such as institutions, power structures, social conventions, scripted relationships all leave material marks on the body as a stabilizing force (*Meeting* 140).

Barad goes out of her way and does a marvelous job at elucidating material consequences of the discursive practises in which apparatuses reconfigure boundaries. Making use of 3D ultrasound technology, Barad elaborates how this techno-specific practice, which allows to make the fetus visible in the womb in early stages of pregnancy, becomes discursively instrumentalized to ascribe subjectivity to the fetus in order to limit choice and autonomy of the person carrying the fetus. Barad's example shows how subversion of discourse could lead to the production of other bodies, boundaries, and subjectivities. The example illuminates how the material and discursive constitute one another placing discourse at the heart of subversion, oppression, as the directive force in material-discursive entanglements. Barad draws heavily on Foucauldian power after all. However, for Barad Foucault is "not clear about the material nature of discursive practices" (*Meeting* 63) and therefore does not account for how "discourse is made possible through specific material practices" (*Meeting* 148). Barad does well in showing the material consequences of discourse, but where does matter play an agentic role in the "intra-action?" Where does she allow matter and biology to appear as sneaky, vicious, and forceful, as Elizabeth Wilson makes it out to be?

Freudian theory relies on material sedimentations, materializations, and concrete matter as implications for psychic processes, or is there more to it? Does Freudianism, to some degree, not just anticipate but even exceed the material implications present in the feminist and new materialist critiques of his work (Foucault, Grosz, Butler, Barad)? In both *Die Traumdeutung* and *Das Ich und das Es*, the Freudian bodily ego is constantly being reconstructed and reconfigured.

Psychoanalysis as practice and apparatus especially reserves right to interfere.

“Erinnerungsreste”¹¹ (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 248), “das konkrete Material des Gedanken”¹² (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 248), “Objektbesetzung und Identifizierung”¹³ (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 257) as the groundwork for character formation all indicate bodily mouldability and openness expressed in the formation and acquisition of functions with the objective to co-adapt with the environment in order to find a sustainable balance for body and psyche (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 258-259; Freud, *Works* 30-31).

As much as the internal and the external worlds blur, merge, and shift in Freud’s view, the boundaries of the psychic and material dissolve as well in their mutual constituency. When considering the unconscious qualities which Freud groups into superior and inferior, we are dealing with concrete materializations in the bodily unconscious. Thomas Fuchs’s (2012) proposition to approach the unconscious as body memory extends mostly to the ways we have become accustomed to engaging with environment and habitual behaviours (86), whereas theories that locate power outside the body like Barad’s philosophy include societally maintained structures and habitualities as apparatuses stabilizing bodies. Freudianism allows for single events to have a severe impact on the body such as the building of character in the aftermath of egoical loss (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 257; Freud, *Works* 29-30). Not only can strong, reiterative nudges on the ego lead to material eternalizations in the ego structure but as such, they possess the ability to pass on in the id as permanent characteristics of the species. With respect to the unconscious working dimensions of matter and their ability to intra-act with other spheres, Freud writes:

¹¹ “mnemic residues” (Freud, *Works* 21)

¹² “the concrete subject-matter of the thought” (Freud, *Works* 21)

¹³ “object-cathexis and identification” (Freud, *Works* 29)

Die ausgiebige Kommunikation dieses Ideals mit diesen ubw Triebregungen wird das Rätsel lösen, daß das Ideal selbst zum großen Teil unbewußt, dem Ich unzugänglich bleiben kann. Der Kampf der in den tieferen Schichten getobt hatte, durch rasche Sublimierung und Identifizierung nicht zum Abschluss gekommen war, setzt sich nun wie auf dem Kaulbachschen Gemälde der Hunnenschlacht in einer höheren Region fort.¹⁴ (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 267)

Freud's comparison to the Kaulbach painting here has far more reaching implications for the routes and stages in which change materially manifests in the body. The id in Freud's view is as adaptive as it is creative in expanding its rule over the unconscious and functions held by the body ego. As adaptation always already includes creation, Freud is convinced that this way even complicated thought processes can occur unconsciously (*Gesammelte Werke* 2/3: 598; Freud, *Works* 593). This early granting of self-organization and agentic force to matter in terms of the id and the unconscious reserves a wider and more complex scope for matter's animism than Barad's agential realism including its Butlerian and Foucauldian legacy. Locating a self-organizing and creative unconscious in the body goes beyond the implications of material-discursive performativity and maps out matter to take on the role of an agentic force within the Baradian apparatus. Acknowledging matter's own mindedness and imagination calls for a closer look on how matter stands its ground as responsive *and* innovative in material-discursive "intra-actions."

¹⁴ "The abundant communication between the ideal and these *Ucs*. Instinctual impulses solve the puzzle of how it is that the ideal itself can to a great extent remain unconscious and inaccessible to the ego. The struggle which raged in the deepest strata of the mind, and was not brought to an end by rapid sublimation and identification, is now continued in a higher region, like the Battle of the Huns in Kaulbach's painting." (Freud, *Works* 39)

In particular Freud's thoughts on regression build a case for matter's ability to center itself and become agentic in the entanglements with the environment. Regression in psychoanalysis refers to a defense mechanism in which the ego reverts back to an earlier stage in the development of the psyche in order to cope with the demands of the present, for example a return to the stage of oral fixation in psychoanalysis could manifest in the adult subject's turning to cigarettes or food for comfort. For Freud the return to material stages that evoke the foundation of the ego by means of the body seems to be first and foremost determined by notions of space, time and causality. The technical language applied presupposes an assumed linearity and chronology between conscious and bodily responsiveness in "intra-actions" with the environments. Therefore, self-organizing materialization becomes equated with retrograding the development of individual and the species, he writes:

Über die Regression wollen wir noch bemerken, daß sie in der Theorie der neurotischen Symptombildung eine nicht minder wichtige Rolle wie in der des Traumes spielt. Wir unterscheiden dann eine dreifache Art der Regression: a) eine topische im Sinne des hier entwickelten Schemas der ψ -Systeme, b) eine zeitliche, insofern es sich um ein Rückgreifen auf ältere psychische Bildungen handelt, und c) eine formale, wenn primitive Ausdrucks- und Darstellungsweisen die gewohnten ersetzen. Alle drei Arten von Regression sind aber im Grunde eines und treffen in den meisten Fällen zusammen, denn das zeitlich ältere ist zugleich das formal primitive und in der psychischen Topik dem Wahrnehmungsende näher.¹⁵ (*Gesammelte* 2/3: 554)

¹⁵ "It is further to be remarked that regression plays a no less important part in the theory of the formation of neurotic symptoms than it does in that of dreams. Three kinds of regression are thus to be distinguished: (a) *topographical* regression, in the sense of the schematic picture of the ψ -systems which we have explained above; (b) *temporal* regression, in so far as what is in question is a harking back to older physical structures, and (c) formal

Even though referencing topical, temporal, and formal notions highlighting the positivist framework superimposed by Freud on psychoanalysis, I argue in line with Barad's presentist notion of spacetime that what really guides the shift in focus within the "intra-actions" among the agentic forces is non-linear and reversible. Recall that in agential realism the past is never finished in the ongoing enfolding of matter; states are never fixed, and determinacy is enacted. In lines with these conceptualizations, I would argue that the body-level responses exhibited in somatization and regression do not represent a primitive relic exclusively 'activated' when the subject reverts back from their modern toolbox of language and abstract thought but rather that regressions happen parallel on another level and metabolize stimuli from the environment and produce an ad hoc response to them. Freud reflects on the positivist notions of chronology or temporality in *Die Traumdeutung*. He writes:

Ich glaube aber nicht, daß es notwendig ist, anzunehmen, die Traumvorgänge hielten bis zum Bewußtwerden wirklich die zeitliche Folge ein, die wir beschrieben haben; es sei zuerst der übertragene Traumwunsch vorhanden, dann gehe die Entstellung durch die Zensur vor sich, darauf folge die Richtungsänderung der Regression usw. Wir haben eine solche Sukzession bei der Beschreibung herstellen müssen; in Wirklichkeit handelt es sich wohl vielmehr um gleichzeitiges Erproben dieser und jener Wege, um ein Hin- und

regression, where primitive methods of expression and representation take the place of the usual ones. All these three kinds of regression are, however, one at bottom and occur together as a rule; for what is older in time is more primitive in form and in physical topography lies nearer to the perceptual end." (Freud, *Works* 548)

Herwogen der Erregung, bis endlich durch deren zweckmäßigste Anhäufung gerade die eine Gruppierung die bleibende wird.¹⁶ (*Gesammelte* 2/3: 581-582)

Regression then is actually not a chronological retrograding; matter's motivation is never overcome or put to bed once the ego reigns. Rather, I would argue that regression implies different levels or spheres of thought, different kinds of knowledge to be accessed. Any unique response would impose determinacy on the "intra-action" which presupposes interpretation as the basis of responsiveness. Since causality and temporality as structuring notions become suspended, and unable to provide explanation and qualify, a quest for meaning as precondition for responsiveness guides the structural processes of in/determinacy.

Dreams and regressions, the psychopathologies of everyday life, memories, and trauma impact "response-ability:" we are confronted with meaning as a structuring device that signals non-linearity and reversibility. In Freudian psychoanalysis, regardless, the notions of space and time prevail in terminology: regression, cannibalism, psychical topologies, and memory traces. Change is indicated in linear and causal ways which function as scientific rationale rather than qualifiers. Barad is clear about this. There is no going back, no reversibility, and thus regression is not a reversal of development but productive engagement of matter and the nervous substrates as responses from within the "intra-action." Regression is not a going back to a different space, in alignment with Barad's spacetime it is one of our abilities of knowing and responding like the brittle star. The functions taken over by matter reveal themselves as heavily reliant on

¹⁶ "But it seems to me unnecessary to suppose that dream-processes really maintain, up to the moment of becoming conscious, the chronological order in which I have described them: that the first thing to appear is the transferred dream-wish, that distortion by the censorship follows, then the regressive change in direction, and so on. I have been obliged to adopt this order in my description; but what happens in reality is no doubt simultaneous exploring of one path and another, a swinging of the excitation now this way and now that, until at last it accumulates in the direction that is most opportune and one particular grouping becomes the permanent one." (Freud, *Works* 576)

interpretation as basis for the enactment of determinacy or what Jung calls “meaningful orderedness” (*Synchronicity* 124). Matter’s phantasmatic qualities show up in the making of meaning as a baseline of responsiveness.

Somatization, another Freudian concept that equips matter with willfulness, illuminates the body’s unmediated meaningful correspondence from within the entanglement. Matter’s responsiveness as biological phantasy does not disavow material-discursivity, it actually specifies and qualifies it. At issue here is to include biology’s fantastic and rebellious capacities in order to rework somatic notion where soma becomes more than contingency of discourse, or mere accomplice. I want to move beyond somatic compliance towards somatic responses that playfully create novel ways when interpreting the complex “intra-action” with cultural factors of the environment. Recall, as “[m]atter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers” (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 59), innovation and subversion as dynamic enfolding must happen in the sphere of the material in overarching correspondence with material-discursivity.

In *Die Traumdeutung* Freud describes the symptom as doubly-determined which hints at contingency as intra-activity holding more than one function, one wish, one meaning. As agentic forces these meanings compete with each other, adapt, harmonize, or neutralize each other within the conditions of stabilizing apparatuses of bodily production. Freud writes:

Das Symptom ist nicht bloß der Ausdruck eines realisierten unbewußten Wunsches; es muß noch ein Wunsch aus dem Vorbewußten dazukommen, der sich durch das nämliche Symptom erfüllt, so daß das Symptom mindestens zweifach determiniert wird, je einmal von einem der im Konflikt befindlichen Systeme her. Einer weiteren Überdeterminierung sind – ähnlich wie beim Traum – keine Schranken gesetzt. Die Determinierung, die nicht dem Ubw entstammt, ist, soviel ich sehe, regelmäßig ein Gedankenzug der Reaktion

gegen den unbewußten Wunsch, z. B. eine Selbstbestrafung. Ich kann also ganz allgemein sagen, *ein hysterisches Symptom entsteht nur dort, wo zwei gegensätzliche Wunscherfüllungen, jede aus der Quelle eines anderen psychischen Systems, in einem Ausdruck zusammentreffen können.*¹⁷ (*Gesammelte Werke* 2/3: 575)

Here both the original and the new wish do not side with one or the other, nor are they their mere sum. But novelty comes into being under the complex intra-play and the sway of all entangled agencies. This possibility of double and new determinations assumes a multilocular and multilevel approach in which matter acts as its own advocate and not just as an accomplice to discursive power. Material-discursivity then must not only assume unidirectional, unnuanced paralleled “intra-actions” but leave room for matter to do its own thing, to have its own goals, and to impact the entanglement by self-motivated assertiveness in material subversions.

Matter responds agentially making sense of and commenting on symbolic complexities, discourses, cognitive processes and intra-actions guided by bodily meanings and symptomatic processes of expression. This fantastic ability of matter to tap into the cultural and collective complexities in “intra-action” of nature-culture-media allows to think about bodily responses and practice such as the prevalence of hysteria in Victorian or nowadays pervasive eating disorders which Bordo mentions as a creative and novel response for matter to enter the conversation.

¹⁷ “A symptom is not merely the expression of a realized unconscious wish; a wish from the preconscious which is fulfilled by the same symptom must also be present. So that the symptom will have *at least* two determinants, one arising from each of the systems involved in the conflict. As in the case of dreams, there are no limits to the further determinants that may be present – to the ‘overdetermination’ of the symptoms. The determinant which does not arise from the Ucs. Is invariably, so far as I know, a train of thought reacting against the unconscious wish – a self-punishment, for instance. I can therefore make the quite general assertion that *a hysterical symptom develops only where the fulfilments of two opposing wishes, arising each from a different physical system, are able to converge in a single expression.*” (Freud, *Works* 569)

Freud is explicit about a multilevel approach and the self-sufficiency of the different levels, he writes:

Ein psychischer Apparat, der nur den Primärvorgang besäße, existiert zwar unseres Wissens nicht und ist insofern eine theoretische Fiktion; aber soviel ist tatsächlich, daß die Primärvorgänge in ihm von Anfang an gegeben sind, während die sekundären erst allmählich im Laufe des Lebens sich ausbilden, die primären hemmen und überlagern und ihre volle Herrschaft über sie vielleicht erst mit der Lebenshöhe erreichen. Infolge dieses verspäteten Eintreffens der sekundären Vorgänge bleibt der Kern unseres Wesens, aus unbewußten Wunschregungen bestehend, unfaßbar und unhemmbar für das Vorbewußte, dessen Rolle ein für allemal darauf beschränkt wird, den aus dem Unbewußten stammenden Wunschregungen die zweckmäßigsten Wege anzuweisen. Diese unbewußten Wünsche stellen für alle späteren seelischen Bestrebungen einen Zwang dar, dem sie sich zu fügen haben, den etwa abzuleiten und auf höher stehende Ziele zu lenken sie sich bemühen dürfen. Ein großes Gebiet des Erinnerungsmaterials bleibt auch infolge dieser Verspätung der vorbewußten Besetzung unzugänglich.¹⁸

(*Gesammelte* 2/3: 609)

¹⁸ “It is true, so far as we know, no psychical apparatus exists which possesses a primary process only and that such an apparatus is to that extent a theoretical fiction. But this much is fact: the primary processes are present in the mental apparatus from the first, while it is only during the course of life that the secondary processes unfold, and come to inhibit and overly the primary ones; it may even be that their complete domination is not attained until the prime of life. In consequence of the belated appearances of the secondary processes, the core of our being, consisting of unconscious wishful impulses, remains inaccessible to the understanding and inhibition of the preconscious; the part played by the latter is restricted once and for all to directing along the most expedient paths the wishful impulses that arise from the unconscious. These unconscious wishes exercise a compelling force upon all later mental trends, a force which those trends are obliged to fall in with or which they may perhaps endeavor to divert and direct to higher aims. A further result of the belated appearances of the secondary process is that a wide sphere of mnemonic material is inaccessible to preconscious cathexis.” (Freud, *Works* 603-604)

Biological phantasy is expressed in the body's complicated unconscious thinking abilities as matter's ability to interpret, assign meaning, and respond accordingly to conscious thought and cultural symbols by means of animism. Bodily responses and the body's fantastic interpretations hold vital functions, whether by societal standards these are deemed dysfunctional, or unsustainable such as hysteria or eating disorders is another issue.

Re-determining and redefining desires and wishes sets responsiveness not as the precondition for knowing, as Barad envisions, but for being. A wish, a desire, a stimulus, a demand requires an action as response, therefore responsiveness becomes the default mode of our being-of-the-world. In a constant need to respond, interpretation and meaning is that which allows responsiveness – a way to harmonize across multiple levels. These multiple levels are possibly best observed in the Freudian notions of sublimation. Freud writes: “Ja, es entsteht die eingehender Handlung würdige Frage, ob dies nicht der allgemeine Weg zur Sublimierung ist, ob nicht alle Sublimierung durch die Vermittlung des Ichs vor sich geht, welches zunächst die sexuelle Objektlibido in narzißtische verwandelt, um ihr dann vielleicht ein anderes Ziel zu setzen”¹⁹ (Freud, *Gesammelte Werke* 13: 258). Although sublimation decidedly tries to move away from the liveliness and wilfulness of the id, it illuminates how the unconscious is always already entangled as an agentic force, actively reconfiguring bonds.

In this chapter, I have read the material implications of “intra-actions” as responsiveness, departing from the touchy-feely brittle star to the Freudian body ego as a precondition of existence. Applying Elizabeth Wilson's ideas on the biological power of phantasy, I critique Barad's mechanic one-level-approach to redeem the multilocular arrangement of the Freudian

¹⁹ “Indeed, the question arises, and deserves careful consideration, whether this is not the universal road to sublimation, whether all sublimation does not take place through the mediation of the ego, which begins by changing sexual object-libido into narcissistic libido and then, perhaps, goes on to give it another aim.” (Freud, *Works* 30)

psyche to argue for matter not as merely complicit and dependent on the symbolic, but for a willful, disobedient, and smart materiality that intra-acts with other levels and the world related but with significant qualitative difference to what Barad calls enfoldings. In the following chapter I build on the co-constituency of materialities in the Freudian body ego to give an account of the subject-object relations that highlights not only mutual dependency in the dynamics but illuminates how the subject-mode primarily comes into being from within the entanglement and on behalf of the objects the environment is composed off.

Chapter 5: He Said, She Said

Posthumanist Subject-Object-Relations and the Couch as Apparatus of Bodily Production

Drawing on Freud's speculative ruminations with regard to the credence of causality, I have read regression against itself with help of Barad's agential realism and Wilson biological phantasy. The purpose is twofold: first, to illuminate that regression is not a chronological going back in time to a prior state of mind but a productive and generative leap to a different level thinking, and second, to show that matter's somatic capacities are not mechanically attached to discourse, as implied by sober notions of agential realism. Rather matter is animated, productive, creative in the making of meaning. This state of animation and autonomy actually displays disobedience, not compliance.

I want to turn to the repercussions of matter's disobedience from the Freudian psyche towards the subject-object relations in order to illuminate their co-constituency as the notion of "intra-actions" suggests. Whereas Barad uses the image of the enfoldings to visualize the materializations of change and development in bodies, the Freudian approach focuses on different levels of thinking. Agential realism provides a fresh perspective for thinking of all bodies as mutually implicated and co-constituted with the world as they emerge as phenomena through procedural and productive apparatuses. Recall that neither the boundaries of the apparatus nor the phenomena are fixed, and that stuff can mutually serve as apparatus on the one and phenomenon on the other hand. We have seen that Freud's regression equips the soma with vital force by means of imagining a going back in time and temporal reversal of psychic development. Regression thus becomes ingrained with primordial and primitive notions which notoriously demotes its functionality. What is at issue through the impositions of progress and linearity in Freudianism is an innate degradation of the bodily and material forms of knowing

and responding. When the boundaries of the subject shift, there must be time travelling at play in psychoanalysis. This chapter builds on the intra-activity of the Freudian psyche to explore the subject-object-relations as intrapersonal endeavor. Reading these relations through Wilson's idea of biological fantasy along a fantastic body ego allows questioning the intactness of the ego. The much-unified notions of subjectivity and assumed fixed bodily boundaries can then be reshaped into open-ended creative material-discursive practices. This chapter will deal with the subject-object relations with an emphasis on the analysts-analysand-relationship as envisioned by Freud. Examining the Freudian couch as an apparatus of the production of subjectivity elucidates the intra-activity of subject-object-relations at large while also accounting for the specificities that psychoanalysis as a phenomenon enters into the entanglement.

What is at issue is that Freud's notions of cannibalism and object loss as character building drowns out to some degree the Baradian idea of agential separability. In the ongoing affair of enfolding materialities that turn into habits and heredity, at what point does that which has left a mark on me become my responsibility? Even if I act according to Barad's ethical maxim, there is certainly something to be gained from stressing the nature of multiple overdeterminations in the enfolding of wishes, desires, responsibility and so forth, as that which defies the bare feasibility of agential separability in the hot mess of blurred subject-object-relations. Thinking these relations as "intra-actions" does not only make good on Freud's concept of partial-objects but talk about partial-subjects here!

Tracing the genealogy of discursive materiality in the analysand's psyche, Freud himself materializes as "Homo vestiga faciens, 'Man'-the-tracemaker" – or he who cannot not leave a trace (Horn, 16). Considering the intricate nature of the co-constitution of bodies, I want to point out the pervasiveness of psychoanalysis in the production of bodies and subjectivities. Reading the psychoanalytic couch as an apparatus and the psychoanalyst as scientific observer sheds light

on the communal nature of subjectivity and redeems psychoanalytic methods and their focus on interpretation as a way to establish determinacy as baseline which makes responsiveness and response-ability possible in the first place. Recall that the measurement problem in quantum physics describes the indeterminacies of the behaviour of particles indicating that specific measurements only give partial information about the measured phenomenon depending on the apparatus involved in the process. According to Karen Barad's reading of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics, apparatuses are open-ended practices that do not measure or describe a closed-off, exterior reality but rather create boundaries by means of enacting determinacy (*Meeting* 179). In this approach towards apparatuses, the scientific observer is always already entangled with the measuring apparatus and thus also the phenomena it produces. The observer is implicated in the process of the making of determinacies because "[w]hat matters is marked from that which is excluded from mattering but not once and for all" (Barad, *Meeting* 181). As relationality of entanglements builds contingency and co-dependency, notions of objectivity in scientific practice must be rethought to consider the complexities of subjectivities at play. The Baradian observer as part of the measuring apparatus sets the framework for what knowledge can be produced. In the psychoanalytic method we find in the psychoanalyst a similar figure as the one who administers the practice and guides the process, sets boundaries, and therefore possesses great impact on the bodies being produced.

Let us return to the psychoanalytic method. Freud describes the use of purposive ideas in *Die Traumdeutung* with similarly limiting functions as some of Barad's apparatus. He writes:

Wenn ich einem Patienten auftrage, alles Nachdenken fahrenzulassen und mir zu berichten, was immer ihm dann in den Sinn kommt, so halte ich die Voraussetzung fest, daß er die Zielvorstellungen der Behandlung nicht fahrenlassen kann, und halte mich für

berechtigt zu folgern, daß das scheinbar Harmloseste und Willkürlichste, das er mir berichtet, im Zusammenhang mit seinem Krankheitszustande steht. Eine andere Zielvorstellung, von der dem Patienten nichts ahnt, ist die meiner Person. Die volle Würdigung sowie der eingehende Nachweis der beiden Aufklärungen gehört demnach in die Darstellung der psychoanalytischen Technik als therapeutischer Methode. Wir haben hier einen der Anschlüsse erreicht, bei denen wir das Thema der Traumdeutung vorsätzlich fallenlassen.²⁰ (*Gesammelte Werke* 2/3: 537)

Both the “purposive idea” of the psychoanalytic treatment as well as the institution of Sigmund Freud himself function in the context as guidance which stabilize and determine what becomes relevant and what is redundant in the exchange between the analyst and the analysand. For Barad, agential cuts cut together and apart. Here, the exchange between therapist and patient is cut apart and together by the guiding “purposive idea” of the analysand constituted through the time of treatment, the arrangement of his office, the psychoanalytic couch, the greater environment surrounding the practice, the activity in the streets of Vienna, and so forth. All these characteristics play a role as stabilizing forces within the apparatus and are therefore implicated parts of the determinate phenomena. In this intertwinement of entangled agency and feigned objectivity, Barad’s concept of agential separability is highly useful to shed light on Freud’s role in the psychoanalytic processes of interpretation. In the absence of an absolute objectivity or

²⁰ “When I instruct a patient to abandon reflection of any kind and to tell me whatever comes into his head, I am relying firmly on the presumption that he will not be able to abandon the purposive ideas inherent in the treatment and I feel justified in inferring that what seem to be the most innocent and arbitrary things which he tells me are in fact related to his illness. There is another purposive idea of which the patient has no suspicion – one relating to myself. The full estimate of the importance of these theorems, as well as more detailed information about them, fall within the province of an account of the technique of psycho-analysis. Here, then, we have reached one of the frontier posts at which, in accordance with the programme, we must drop the subject of dream-interpretation.” (Freud, *Works* 531-532)

neutrality, Barad suggests that there can only be agential separability, in the sense that we are unable to escape or avoid our entanglement with others nor be autonomous or have full agency. Ethics for Barad translates into awareness of how things become entangled.

Freud had similar hopes and goals for psychoanalysis. Claiming that not all things are transparent or entirely analyzable, he wanted psychoanalysis to grant greater autonomy to people by way of understanding how they are constituted within their environment. By interpreting things in new and bold ways with regard to societal norms, Freud not only illuminated the complex entanglement for his patients, but he provided a different apparatus that would produce new subjectivities and boundaries. For example, his thoughts on hysteria represented a different interpretation of the circulating ideas and ideals of femininity. Drawing on his theories on sexuality, his interpretation was no more or less causal than the common beliefs but provided another meaning to structure experience which allowed for a reconfiguring of the boundaries of subjectivities and bodies. Shifting the determinacies of the boundaries for the analysand does not entail a suspension or change in the causalities per se, rather another sense of meaning is brought about by a different interpretation of the context by means of agentially separating the entangled forces. This allows for another sense of determinacy being enacted which gives rise to new meanings and interpretations in a way that aims at establishing sustainable ego functioning.

By extrapolating the role of the observer with the complexities of the workings of the analyst in subject-object-relations, I argue that the Baradian role of the observer extends to include by definition the psychic states of subjectivities within the entanglement. Mapping out the complex and privileged role of the analyst in the enactment of determinacies, not objectivity should be at the heart of concerns for psychoanalytic practice but accountability and responsibility in light of the complicated relationality within of the power structures at play.

Considering the impact of the agentic entanglements and response-ability that structures the

encounter through “purposive ideas” and interpretations, the dynamic relationality of transference and countertransference in the materializations and enfoldings charge this specificity of the “intra-action” of subject-object-relations with their own sets of complexities and possibilities. Freud himself – with his vision but also biases and limitations – acts as a stabilizing force and common denominator among all patients determining the apparatus as much as the phenomena that can be produced. Reading the psychoanalytic couch as an apparatus of bodily production and meaning as determinacy both subject and object constitute each other in the interplay of determinacies.

On the basis of the quantum revolution, Barad’s quantum posthumanism turns many conventional perceptions of the philosophical tradition upside down. Agential realism allows to think about complex entanglements from which bodies emerge in “intra-action” which enables us to understand the co-constitution of subjectivities but also questions notions of objectivity and the status of the human as rational, neutral, foreclosed entity in world’s dynamism. In particular, Barad’s philosophy provides a lens to zoom into complex webs of intra-acting agencies without forgetting about their material discursive ties, and this same sharp, precise, and nuanced vision provides a concept to zoom in and out of entanglements without losing relations.

Recall that in the psychical apparatus, function and meaning are closely related as structuring devices that emerge in co-constitution with the demands from the environment. Since bodies and subjectivities emerge along with the environment, meaning also serves in the subject-object-relations as property and functions in that meaning determines bodily responses: *to wave or not to wave (and to particle instead)*.

Chapter 6: New Culture – who dis?

Bodily Interpretations and Collective Materialities in Freud's Civilization and Its Discontents

So far, I have traced a quantum approach of matter's animism in the psyche and the developmental aspect of the subject-object-relations using agential realism and Jung's concept of "synchronicity" as a blue print illuminating matter's "creative acts" (*Synchronicity* 142). Endowing biological substrates with motivation and responsiveness as adaptability, or as biological or evolutionary stakes in the game, meaning co-emerges as one of principles guiding matter in terms towards a functionality. This multilevel bodily approach allows matter to intra-act and function in direct correspondence with symbolic and cultural meanings, where meaning plays the role of an "instance of acausal orderedness" (Jung, *Structure* 646). This "synchronicity" or in Pauli's words "meaningful correspondences" ("Sinn-korrespondenzen") (Atmanspacher 114) makes a case to view matter's animism in complementarity with other levels and functions in Freudian psychoanalysis which offers new ways to engage in the notions of scalability, from individual psychoanalytic to cultural and group analysis.

In this chapter I draw on Jung's thoughts on the collective unconscious in relation to biological phantasies in order to make a leap from multilocular "intra-actions" of psyche and subject object-relations as matter's playing field to elucidate matter's animation from within collective states and cultural meanings in Sigmund Freud's *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. This idea, inspired by the Jungian engagements with quantum physics, seeks to be more daring than Barad's agential realism. Instead of limiting material discursivity to one sphere and tie matter on a short leash to discourse, this view does not shy away from the potential of direct material and meaningful correspondences and their subversive and fantastic capacities. In this train of thought

the animation of biological substrates might represent possible sources for innovation, creativity, and ultimately a driving force for development, change, and even evolution.

Friedel Weinert argues for the prevalence of individualism in Freudian ideas on culture and collectives (249). Referencing sublimation, Weinert elaborates that Freud as a psychoanalyst “explains group phenomena in terms of what individuals do; and what individuals do he reduces to their unconscious motivations” (249). In my view, this is a reductionist interpretation of Freud in the sense that before the individual’s stake becomes so high in the makeup of groups, the body ego and subsequently subjectivity emerge from collective environments, or what Freud calls “‘ozeanisches’ Gefühl”²¹ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 430). This becomes beautifully clear in Sigmund Freud’s ruminations in *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, which he starts off with the delineation of ego and ego borders as always shifting, changing, and never fixed (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 423; Freud, *Works* 65-66).

Describing dysfunction of the ego-feeling (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 424, Freud, *Works* 66), Freud exemplifies how the body and body ego recalibrate in attunement with the environment. The body here feels out new dimensions of the environment and responds in material changes such as different perception of bodily boundaries and self. Placing this non-linguistic correspondence as material responsiveness between bodies as the baseline for cultural conceptualizations, Freud illustrates matter’s susceptibility to know and to respond to complex nuances regarding the cultural and the symbolic. It is not that either the individual precedes culture or vice versa, rather that both levels intra-act and emerge in co-constitution. As I have analyzed regression as a multiple level endeavor, ego and body ego represent different levels that intra-act, with their respective abilities to interpret, to know, and to respond.

²¹ “‘oceanic’ feeling” (Freud, *Works* 72)

Freud makes a case for the nature of multiple levels bringing in the ‘oceanic’ feeling as a primordial instance that like the id continues as a remnant of the past. Freud insists on the notion of progress in the development of the psyche. He writes: “Ein quantitativer Anteil einer Einstellung, einer Triebregung, ist unverändert erhalten geblieben, ein anderer hat die weitere Entwicklung erfahren”²² (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 426). For Freud, the effect of an apparatus of multiple levels comes into being during the course of personal development of the individual. Matter as an agentic force comes into the equation by means of primordial and primitive roots that have not yet undergone any further refinement or advancements since “[u]nser heutiges Ichgefühl ist also nur ein eingeschrumpfter Rest eines weitumfassenderen, ja – eines allumfassenden Gefühls, welches einer innigeren Verbundenheit des Ichs mit der Umwelt entsprach”²³ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 425). The notion that another part has undergone advancements seems equivalent with the elimination or the isolation of this former all-encompassing feeling which makes the primordial only accessible through a going back in time, namely regression.

I would suggest a more involved and creative vision of material-discursivity with matter not just becoming weighty through discourse, but with matter behind the steering wheel in “intra-actions.” For this, however, matter must be envisioned as implicated in symbolic and cultural correspondences by way of the body ego’s ability of attunement with the environment. Therefore, I want to draw on Carl Gustav Jung’s ideas on the collective unconscious in order to

²² “[O]ne portion (in the quantitative sense) of an attitude or instinctual impulse has remained unaltered, while another portion has undergone further development.” (Freud, *Works* 68-69)

²³ “Our present ego-feeling is, therefore, only a shrunken residue of a much more inclusive – indeed, an all-embracing – feeling which corresponded to a more intimate bond between the ego and the world about it.” (Freud, *Works* 68)

make room for matter to intra-act and respond to discourse and symbolism. On the nature of the collective unconscious Jung writes:

But, over and above that, we also find in the unconscious qualities that are not individually acquired but are inherited, e.g., instincts as impulses to carry out actions from necessity, without conscious motivation. In this “deeper” stratum we also find the a priori, inborn forms of “intuition,” namely the archetypes of perception and apprehension, which are the necessary a priori determinants of all psychic processes. Just as his instincts compel man to a specifically human mode of existence, so the archetypes force his ways of perception and apprehension into specifically human patterns. The instincts and the archetypes together form the “collective unconscious.” I call it “collective” because, unlike the personal unconscious, it is not made up of individual and more or less unique contents but of those which are universal and of regular occurrence. Instinct is an essentially collective, i.e., universal and regularly occurring phenomenon which has nothing to do with individuality. Archetypes have this quality in common with the instincts and are likewise collective phenomena. (*Structure* 179)

I do not agree with Jung’s definition of the archetypes which map out the collective unconscious as kind of a bulk order of Kantian glasses of perceptionism, reifying and mystifying the exceptionalism of human cognition. Jung’s key idea of inheritance of the unconscious which echoes the Lamarckian notion in Freud’s idea that the individual development is a summary of the development of the species (Wilson, *Psychosomatic* 68) opens up the possibility to extend the framework from matter’s ability to intra-act on a bodily and intra-personal sphere towards material attunements with the entirety and complexity of material-discursive relations. What is at

issue here is a view of matter as self-organized and responsive in “intra-actions” that not only impact complex symbolisms and cultural phenomena but can as much as create them.

Firstly, Jung’s emphasis on inheritance – other than arguing on behalf of genetics or learning – locates material-discursivity in the unconscious and thus puts matter in the driver seat; secondly, although not envisioned by Jung, the notion of inheritance implies an open-endedness of the relational system that is susceptible to change and development and is not finite at birth. Combining Jung’s idea on “synchronicity” which conceptualizes the animation of matter guided by meaning as an acausal ordering principle sets matter up with an access to a collective unconscious by means of bodily responsiveness which uniquely connects matter, meaning, and the collective in ways that allow to think of adaption, evolution, and functions as bodily creative acts. This grants the body a crucial position of knowing, interpreting, and responding and also places bodily processes as a site of transcendence.

In *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, Freud refers to the body similarly as a site of tapping into collective meaning and making meaning. He writes:

Ein anderer meiner Freunde, den ein unstillbarer Wissensdrang zu den ungewöhnlichsten Experimenten getrieben und endlich zum Allwisser gemacht hat, versicherte mir, daß man in den Yogapraktiken durch Abwendung von der Außenwelt, durch Bindung der Aufmerksamkeit an körperliche Funktionen, durch besondere Weisen der Atmung tatsächlich neue Empfindungen und Allgemeingefühle in sich erwecken kann, die er als Regressionen zu uralten, längst überlagerten Zuständen des Seelenlebens auffassen will. Er sieht in ihnen eine sozusagen physiologische Begründung vieler Weisheiten der Mystik. Beziehungen zu manchen dunkeln Modifikationen des Seelenlebens wie Trance

und Ekstase lägen hier nahe. Allein mich drängt es, auch einmal mit den Worten des Schillerschen Tauchers auszurufen:

“Es freue sich, wer da atmet im rosigen Licht.”²⁴ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 430-431)

The imbalances in the ego feeling which Freud here refers to as “Allgemeingefühle” link the ‘oceanic’ feeling, “ein Gefühl der unauflösbaren Verbundenheit, der Zusammengehörigkeit mit dem Ganzen der Außenwelt”²⁵ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 422) to the body’s ability to interpret and respond to complex environments by means of the body ego. This attunement can therefore not be limited to material or physical phenomena but corresponds to the material-discursive. Jung’s idea of the *unus mundus*, the interconnectedness of the world that flows through all organisms (Donati 712), is so revolutionary not for its mysticism or the designation of spirituality to matter but actually quite the opposite. This restoration does not stylize meaning as something supernatural, imperceptible, or transcendental as innate truth or higher order; it manifests the reappraisal of meaning as a guiding principle in the sense of interpretation which complements the triadic forces of scientific rationalism time, space, and causality (Atmanspacher 112-113). Interpreting meaning is a natural trait not only in humans but all organisms that makes responding, adapting, and functioning possible in the first place. Therefore, it is not an

²⁴ “Another friend of mine, whose insatiable craving for knowledge has led him to make the most unusual experiments and has ended by giving him encyclopaedic knowledge, has assured me that through the practices of Yoga, by withdrawing from the world, by fixing the attention on bodily functions and by peculiar methods of breathing, one can in fact evoke new sensations and coenaesthesias in oneself, which he regards as regressions to primordial states of mind which have long ago been overlaid. He sees in them a physiological basis, as it were, of much of the wisdom of mysticism. It would not be hard to find connections here with a number of obscure modifications of mental life, such as trances and ecstasies. But I am moved to exclaim the words of Schiller’s diver:—

‘... Es freue sich, Wer da atmet im rosigen Licht.’ [Let him rejoice who breathes up there in the roseate light!]” (Freud, *Works* 72-73)

²⁵ “A feeling of an indissoluble, of being one with the external world of a whole.” (Freud, *Works* 65)

exclusively human characteristic founded in cognition and language but meaning and interpretation form the basis for the enactment of determinacy as our being-of-the-world. The Baradian brittle star, the Freudian neurotic – matter is thinking, interpreting, and responding accordingly on a bodily, material level.

Regarding these bodily responses, I want to draw attention to Freud's thoughts on repression and the ego pathologies in order to establish a link with material engagements with the collective unconscious and the *unus mundus*. Freud speaks to the nature of the neurosis as "eine Abart der Angst"²⁶ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 495). He views the individual expression of this fear as libidinal investments manifesting in bodily symptoms. Interestingly, Freud locates the symptom as response in the material and bodily level and emphasizes that the neurotic in general has no conscious knowledge about the internalized attitudes and patterns that build the neurosis (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 494-495; Freud, *Works* 134-135). However, Freud does not account for where to localize the fear as trigger, it appears to be working on a collective level in the discontent brought about by technological progress. My point is that there is no account how the fear and the neurosis such as hysteria co-emerge together, collectively and individually. The bodily symptom, the body's response is not mediated through language or a critical, conscious analysis. Rather the fear or uncanniness in the culture co-emerges together with the neurosis as a form of correspondence with the body. There is no meta-analysis of the phenomenon of hysteria in the Victorian era before there is a manifestation and epidemic of hysteria. It appears then to be the case that the body, and bodies in general, have a way to tap into the cultural and collective tendencies and changes of the zeitgeist respond from within the entanglement before there ever being a consensus, an interpretation, even an awareness. In hysteria, the body responds to the

²⁶ "a topographical variety of anxiety" (Freud, *Works* 135)

cultural environment in a way that both the hysterical body and the cultural pressures on women become determinant. The bodily reaction thus encompasses both, the interpretation of complex cultural phenomena such as constructions of femininity and a meaningful bodily response such as hysteria. Only afterwards the body's speaking symptoms and the complex meaning can be traced and causally understood.

For Jung and Pauli, meaning emerges as structuring experiences in addition to the notions of space, time, and causality. Atmanspacher writes: "According to this hypothesis, which differs from both Darwin's and Lamarck's conception, we encounter the requested third type of natural laws, consisting of corrections of the fluctuations of chance due to meaningful or purposeful coincidences of non-causally connected events" (115). The efforts to deal with tensions and demands within "intra-actions" are uttered in meaningful ways on a bodily level, repression therefore does not just provide the diffusion of tension but the libidinal energy deals with the complex symbolism in a meaningful way as the body's form to respond uniquely.

Freud attributes this kind of bodily forms of knowledge or body wisdom as a consequence of repression. He writes: "[W]enn eine Triebstrebung der Verdrängung unterliegt, so werden ihre libidinösen Anteile in Symptome, ihre aggressiven Komponenten in Schuldgefühl umgesetzt."²⁷ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 499). For Sigmund Freud, repression is the process and a result of information being banned from consciousness (Lohmann and Pfeiffer 121). Here, in analogy with my interpretation of regression as the expression of a response system on another level, when approaching repression continuing to build on Jung's complementary view of "synchronicity" as it seeks to avoid reductionism to the qualifiers of space, time, and causality

²⁷ "When an instinctual trend undergoes repression, its libidinal elements are turned into symptoms, and its aggressive components into a sense of guilt." (Freud, *Works* 139)

for complex “intra-actions” (Gullatz and Gildersleeve 89-91). I do not view bodily responses and body knowledge such as symptoms as a product of displacement of censored information as implied by the Freudian mechanism of repression. Bodily symptoms do not merely express and represent repressed conscious material and cognitive processes and their response is not just the consequential physical compliance as a coping with displaced discomfort regarding cultural and technological changes. Rather, I argue that in a multilevel approach the biological unconscious is actively involved and responsive in the “intra-actions;” biological substrates think, interpret, and respond to collective streams and cultural phenomena in a self-organized and meaningful way in correspondence with other bodies in the *unus mundus*. This way cultural phenomena like hysteria co-emerge ‘responsively’ across multiple levels spanning from many bodies by means of meaningful correspondences and bodily interpretations of the zeitgeist. Neurosis and cultural epidemics collectively emerge in a drawing and reworking of bodily boundaries which makes them apparatuses of bodily production and sites of creative and innovative bodily phenomena. Their classification as dysfunctional or pathological as is tradition in psychoanalysis and western medicine does not void them either of their meaningfulness, their creativity to respond to culture, nor do they rid them of the function they are fulfilling to sustain bodies and boundaries. Therefore, I propose to view these types of individual and collective behaviours as bodily responses and interpretation in which meaning co-emerges materially, phantasmatically, and acausally.

I want to return to negativity as aggression in Freud’s theory as a source of ambivalence as the root cause for dualistic tensions and schizophrenic demands on the ego by the pulling forces of the id and the super ego. Elizabeth A. Wilson makes the point that “feminism shuns its own hostilities” in order to make good (*Gut Feminism* 170). What Wilson describes is the

disavowal and repression of negativity and the superimposed maxim to not rest until all despair is turned into hope, all hate into love, and damage into reparation.

Freud leaves room in his ideas to factor in negativity and he remains less punitive of these tendencies, however, in Freudianism these also clearly represent a source of conflict for the ego. The pulling ambivalent forces of love and hate, Eros and the death drive, which Freud detects between the family relations and humanity, the personal or communal interest do not form mutually exclusive dualism or either/or tensions and conflicts, but they co-emerge together. Freud names three developmental spheres, organic life, development of the individual, and culture, in which Eros and the death drive reign, he writes:

Manche Leser dieser Abhandlung mögen auch unter dem Eindruck stehen, daß sie die Formel vom Kampf zwischen Eros und Todestrieb zu oft gehört haben. Sie sollte den Kulturprozeß kennzeichnen, der über die Menschheit abläuft, wurde aber auch auf die Entwicklung des Einzelnen bezogen und sollte überdies das Geheimnis des organischen Lebens überhaupt enthüllt haben.²⁸ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 499)

Reading this multiple-level determination through an agential realist account where agency is partial and limited to representing agentic forces within the entanglement, Eros and the death drive would rather appear as overdetermined (Gay, *Reader* 647), enfolding omnipresent forces on a spectrum upon which to enact determinacy. In the event of the absence of negativity or positivity in the enactment of determinacy and drawing of bodily boundaries, the underlying

²⁸ “Some readers of this work may further have an impression that they have heard the formula of the struggle between Eros and the death instinct too often. It was alleged to characterize the process of civilization which mankind undergoes but it was also brought into connection with the development of the individual, and, in addition, it was said to have revealed the secret of organic life in general.” (Freud, *Works* 139)

ambivalence of both forces is still a given. Even if the particles in the measurement process collapse as a wave function, the quantum ambivalence of underlying mixed-statedness perseveres. In the spirit of Jung's quantum holism, positivity entails negativity and vice versa. Positivity and negativity emerge as finite only as interpretations of the same ambivalent state.

In an agential realist account the opposition between individual and culture yields to embedding within the entanglement. Thinking of these forces not as dualistic but intra-acting sheds light on the zeitgeist-y nature of the super ego as "Über-Ich einer Kulturepoche"²⁹ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 501). In "intra-action" with matters animism, the zeitgeist is in direct correspondence with the bodily constitutions of the ego. Idealism becomes a bodily endeavor, culture is materially instilled and created from manifold forms from within physical landscapes. Thinking about the emergence of phenomena from animated bodily sites places the body as construction site of meaningful interpretations of the world. This allows to think about cultural phenomena such as racism, homophobia, fatphobia to be approached from the same angle as so-called bodily disorders and pathologies such as hysteria, neurosis, and eating disorders, as bodily responses to culture. It implicates bodily knowledge as immanent and the cultural and individual sphere as mutually implicated with each other.

Freud shares the notion of co-development and emergence of the individual and collective, he writes:

Ein anderer Punkt der Übereinstimmung ist, daß das Kultur-Über-Ich ganz wie das des Einzelnen strenge Idealforderungen aufstellt, deren Nichtbefolgung durch »Gewissensangst« gestraft wird. Ja, hier stellt sich der merkwürdige Fall her, daß die

²⁹ "the super-ego of an epoch of civilization" (Freud, *Works* 141)

hierher gehörigen seelischen Vorgänge uns von der Seite der Masse vertrauter, dem Bewußtsein zugänglicher sind, als sie es beim Einzelmenschen werden können. Bei diesem machen sich nur die Aggressionen des Über-Ichs im Falle der Spannung als Vorwürfe überlaut vernehmbar, während die Forderungen selbst im Hintergrunde oft unbewußt bleiben. Bringt man sie zur bewußten Erkenntnis, so zeigt sich, daß sie mit den Vorschriften des jeweiligen Kultur-Über-Ichs zusammenfallen. An dieser Stelle sind sozusagen beide Vorgänge, der kulturelle Entwicklungsprozeß der Menge und der eigene des Individuums regelmäßig mit einander verklebt. Manche Äußerungen und Eigenschaften des Über-Ichs können darum leichter an seinem Verhalten in der Kulturgemeinschaft als beim Einzelnen erkannt werden.³⁰ (*Gesammelte Werke* 14: 502)

This passage illustrates the multilevel nature of the entanglements with the environment; the same issue can be dealt with either on an unconscious level in which the substrates calls the shot or through symbolistic interpretation, neither superior to the other. When becoming conscious, Freud places them in accordance with the ideals guarded by the super ego. This illustrates the bodily level of interpretation and the establishment of determinacies. Here, I question the status of regression as fall back and repression as displacement since these routes seem to be the first and more natural ones as first responders engaging with the world. I wonder why Freud paints the demands of the id as so malicious and primitive when its responsiveness is crucial to our survival and the very basic prerequisite for our “being-of-the-world.”

³⁰ “Another point of agreement between the cultural and the individual super-ego is that the former, just like the latter, sets up strict ideal demands, disobedience to which is visited with ‘fear of conscience.’ Here, indeed, we come across the remarkable circumstance that the mental processes concerned are actually more familiar to us and more accessible to consciousness as they are seen in the group than they can be in the individual man.” (Freud, *Works* 142)

The unconscious is alive and well. In a multilevel approach the body's wisdom and imaginary capacities are intrinsically implicated in the collectives it produces. Envisioning the material sneakiness of the id, the body becomes a site of embodied meaningfulness and transcendence as archive and directive in the becomings and forth comings of cultural phenomena.

Chapter 7: Conclusion – My Body, My Culture

For Karen Barad, the brittle star fends off “disembodied epistemologies” by means of embodying entangled practices of knowing and being (*Meeting*, 376). Much like Elizabeth Wilson’s engagement with Sándor Ferenczi’s wormlike human mind, Barad concludes that “‘mind’ is a material configuration of the world” which cannot be equated with brain or reduced to cerebral processes (Barad, *Meeting* 379). Where Barad showcases the brittle star as enactor of agential realism, Carl Gustav Jung makes an example of the conscious actions of bees and their newly discovered talents of perception and communication. Pondering upon the notions of consciousness in humans versus insects, Jung notes:

This view has recently been challenged by the researches which von Frisch, of Graz, made into the life of bees. It turns out that bees not only tell their comrades, by means of a peculiar sort of dance, that they have found a feeding-place, but that they also indicate its direction and distance, thus enabling the beginners to fly to it directly. This kind of message is no different in principle from information conveyed by a human being. In the latter case we would certainly regard such behaviour as a conscious and intentional act and can hardly imagine how anyone could prove in a court of law that it had taken place unconsciously. (*Synchronicity* 130)

According to Jung, bees as “reflex automata” regardless of whether their actions are regarded as conscious or unconscious, achieve similar results regarding perception and precise communication as our cerebral system (*Synchronicity* 130). Jung displays caution in not imposing definitive judgement on the minded states of bees. But, after all, what can we say for

certain about the nature of brittle star thought, feeling, and perception of non-human species other than what must be made up and ascribed from an anthropocentric stance? My focus in this thesis has rather been on tracing the material connectivities of somatic thought among bodies and their communal implications. The bees' dance is immanently endowed with meaning, not in the sense of a transcendental truth but in that meaning emerges as a function of bodily thought as directive of their creative somatic response.

Sigmund Freud's analysis of bodily intentionality and superimposed human causal rationale frames unconscious motivation and will in the evolution of culture as overarching bodies and their productive adaptability. On the value judgement of human culture, he writes: "Meine Unparteilichkeit wird mir dadurch licht, daß ich über all diese Dinge sehr wenig weiß, mit Sicherheit nur das eine, daß die Werturteile der Menschen unbedingt von ihren Glückswünschen geleitet werden, also ein Versuch sind, ihre Illusionen mit Argumenten zu stützen"³¹ (Gesammelte Werke 14: 505). The indeterminacy of unconscious wishes and their agentic force seems quite revealing with regard to Barad's, Wilson's, and Jung's argument that the biological periphery is implicated in minded states. These illusions including their superimposed causality then are reifications of material thought processes and creative bodily becomings. For Sigmund Freud, illusions demand thinking culture first and foremost through the body and embodiment. Just as bees recognize, metabolize, and respond intentionally to environments spontaneously with the body (Wilson, *Gut Feminism* 82), Emmanuel Levinas argues that "the cultural is embodied thought" (qtd. in Barad, *Meeting* 392). I would then suggest approaching newly emergent social phenomena not as a passive effect or product but as a playful

³¹ "One thing only do I know for certain and that is that man's judgements of value follow directly his wishes for happiness – that, accordingly, they are an attempt to support his illusions with arguments." (Freud, *Works* 145)

‘dance’ with the environment, as willful expressions from bodily spheres of mind of the nervous substrate.

In *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, Freud relates individual to communal neurosis, he writes:

Bei der Einzelneurose dient uns als nächster Anhalt der Kontrast, in dem sich der Kranke von seiner als „normal“ angenommenen Umgebung abhebt. Ein solcher Hintergrund entfällt bei einer gleichartig affizierten Masse, er müßte anderswoher geholt werden. Und was die therapeutische Verwendung der Einsicht betrifft, was hülfe die zutreffendste Analyse der sozialen Neurose, da niemand die Autorität besitzt, der Masse die Therapie aufzudrängen?³² (Gesammelte Werke 14: 505)

Here, Sigmund Freud argues on the grounds of normalcy in terms of a numbers game. Leaving judgement values aside – not one of Freud’s strong suits – I would suggest reading the productive bodily expressions not in terms of their dys/function in comparison with ‘normal society’ but as intent to adapt to an ongoingly changing and dynamic field of which they form part.

Recall that Susan Bordo perceives the pervasiveness of eating disorder as solidification of one generation’s cultural anxiety. With regard to bodily-cultural responsiveness, I want to address a recent study which linked the Netflix show *13 Reasons Why* that depicts the suicide of

³² “In an individual neurosis we take as our starting-point the contrast that distinguishes the patient from his environment, which is assumed to be ‘normal.’ For a group all of whose members are affected by one and the same disorder no such background could exist; it would have to be found elsewhere. And as regards the therapeutic application of our knowledge, what would be the use of the most correct analysis of social neuroses, since no one possesses the authority to impose such a therapy upon the group?” (Freud, *Works* 144)

a teenage girl to a significant increase in suicide rates among US youth aged 10 to 17 in the month following the release (Bridge et al. 2019). The malleability and spontaneity in which bodies respond to stimuli and even other bodily interpretations of complex climates and environments suggests that it is not culture that imprints and defines bodies through social phenomena but rather that bodies creatively metabolize cultural and social factors bringing forth new cultures in which the community is constituted in terms of bodily meaningful correspondence across multiple bodies and levels.

If we are inherently constituted by the otherness that surrounds us, the aspects of self-harm in practices such as hysteria, eating disorders, and suicides are highly relevant for thinking of culture as embodied thought. Sigmund Freud's comment on communal neurosis positions individuality and collectivity in neurosis as irreconcilable. However, I argue that conceptualizing culture as specific bodily responses allows one to approach phenomena that are dealt with as mostly social or cultural from a new angle. If responses are always already aimed at the otherness within and around us, then eating disorders and suicidality, deemed as pathology of individuals, must be thought of as responses to communal and collective aggression. Consequently, I would suggest approaching aggressions expressed through social phenomena, motivated by, e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia, from within the body. It is curious how sometimes psychological illnesses are instrumentalized to justify crimes and violence committed on behalf of white supremacy or racism; recall Anders Behring Breivik's 2011 Norway attack and the controversy of his mental state. If eating disorders and suicides emerge as functions which collectively harm the self, why is racism as a function that collectively motivates to harm others not in the DSM-5 as pathological?

If the fragile mental state of an individual emerges and is expressed in collective fantasies of self-harm and harm of others through the body, then, I argue, that taking the body as a point of departure will aid in avoiding illusions and arguments as justification.

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