

Cinematic Articulations of the Jungian 'Symbolic' and the Cultivation of Mindfulness in Hypno-Psychotherapy



Jan Peters | Universit d'Orl ans

Abstract

Focussing primarily on Bergman's *Persona* (1966) and Herzog's *Heart of Glass* (1976), this essay examines how cinematic articulations of the Jungian *Symbolic* dovetail with hypno-psychotherapeutic modalities aimed at cultivating the 'mindful' awareness of the 'groundlessness of being'. Mindfulness involves renouncing conceptions of who or what we are, so that we can dwell within an authentic 'ground of being' that is truly 'groundless'. Likewise, Jung's conception of the *Symbolic* refers to those numinous, unknowable aspects of the psyche that defy conceptualization.

Heart of Glass documents the devastating consequences of a society that has sundered its vital connection to the *Symbolic*. In this connection, I suggest that the ability of trance states to set meanings adrift from their conventional moorings may provide the beleaguered villagers in *Heart of Glass* with the means by which they can restore the sundered link with this *Symbolic* realm. *Persona*, while ostensibly touching upon core Jungian concerns, exemplifies the pivotal theme in this essay, namely the assumption that Jung's *Symbolic* resembles Lacan's *Register of the Real*. Yet, the Lacanian *Real* is absolute plenitude, and thus is infinitely full and over-determined. For life, movement and individuated consciousness to exist, a 'space', 'void', or 'gap' needs to be breached. I contend that Bergman's cinematic articulation of the Jungian *Symbolic* effectively performs this task, and that hypnosis likewise seeks to create a clearing among the overgrown thickets of mental constructs that constitute a 'false' plenitude, or sense of self.

Introduction

Focussing primarily on Bergman's *Persona* (1966) and Herzog's *Heart of Glass* (1976), this essay examines how cinematic articulations of the Jungian *Symbolic*

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dovetail with hypno-psychotherapeutic modalities aimed at cultivating the 'mindful' awareness of the 'groundlessness of being'. As our mental biases are conceptual maps that ultimately fail to fully represent the bewildering, complex territory of reality, mindfulness involves renouncing conceptions of who or what we are, so that we can dwell within an authentic 'ground of being' that is truly 'groundless'. Likewise, Jung's conception of the *Symbolic* refers to those numinous, unknowable aspects of the psyche that defy conceptualization. As such, the *Symbolic* is intimately connected with 'primordial images', the 'collective unconscious' and 'archetypes'. According to Jung:

[The symbol] attempts to elucidate, by means of analogy, something that still belongs entirely to the domain of the unknown or something that is yet to be. Imagination reveals to us, in the form of a more or less striking analogy, what is in the process of becoming. If we reduce this by analysis to something else universally known, we destroy the authentic value of the symbol (Jung, *Two Essays in Analytical Psychology* 299).

More importantly, with regard to 'primordial images' and the archetypal realm, Jung asserts:

archetypes are not determined as regards their content, but only as regards their form and then only to a very limited degree. A primordial image is determined as to its content only when it has become conscious and is therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience (Jung, *CW 9:I*: para. 155).

Evidence of film-makers attesting to the power of the Jungian *Symbolic* in these terms include this remark by Buñuel: "A film is like an involuntary imitation of a dream ... On the screen, as within the human being, the nocturnal voyage into the unconscious begins ... The cinema seems to have been invented to express the life of the subconscious, the roots of which penetrate poetry so deeply" (qtd.

in Kyrou 109-111). Commenting on the meaning of *Persona*, Bergman laconically remarks: "On many points I am uncertain and on one point I know nothing at all" (Bergman 21).

I begin with an analysis of Werner Herzog's 1976 feature, *Heart of Glass*. In addition to the paradoxical role of hypnosis in the film (Herzog famously placed most of the cast under hypnosis), *Heart of Glass* documents the devastating consequences of a society that has sundered or lost its vital connection to primordial images. At first sight, *Heart of Glass* appears to validate many of the misconceptions about hypnosis, and indeed a number of critical responses to the role of hypnosis in the film choose to focus on the aura of passivity, resignation and fatefulness that accompanies the collective trance state depicted in the film. A closer inspection, however, reveals the pivotal role played by hypnosis in governing the film's dialectical relationships between the real and the ideal, subjectivity and objectivity, and rationality and mysticism. In this connection, I suggest that *Heart of Glass's* close metaphorical and metaphysical kinship with certain central concerns within German Romanticism regarding the nature of human perception can shed light on the troublesome ontological status of hypnotic trance. By the same token, the ability of trance states to set meanings adrift from their conventional moorings may provide the beleaguered villagers in *Heart of Glass* with the means by which they can restore the sundered link with the realm of primordial images.

Hypnosis potentially enacts a process of deconstruction through challenging, reframing and transforming obsolete, self-limiting beliefs and thought patterns. In this regard, the villagers' zombie-like 'trance' state may actually serve to parody their largely unconscious, automated responses to the existential predicament they find themselves in. I conclude my analysis of *Heart of Glass* with a quote from an interview with Werner Herzog, in which the director highlights the importance of hypnosis in promoting a sense of fluidity

and movement in the film, a vital concern shared with the aims of Bergman's cinematography.

I then move on to Bergman's 1966 masterpiece, *Persona*. While *Persona* ostensibly touches upon such core Jungian concerns as the dialectic between persona and shadow, and how the process of individuation can become thwarted, the film – not least, Bergman's cinematography – exemplifies a number of pivotal themes in this essay.

Perhaps the most prominent of these is the assumption (mistaken or otherwise) that Jung's *Symbolic* resembles Lacan's *Register of the Real (Réel)*, or that which lies beyond the representation or the apprehension of both the *Imaginary* (the realm of internal objects) and *the Symbolic* (as opposed to the Jungian 'Symbolic', Lacan's formulation refers to 'consensual' reality, cultural or linguistic norms, the Law of the Father, or that which can be said).

For Lacan, the child is born into the *Register of the Real*, a state preceding the formation of the ego and the organization of the drives, a state characterized by pure plenitude and symbiotic unity with the mother¹. At this stage, the child is incapable of recognizing the mother's (or the breast's) absence. As the child matures, recognition of this absence, the primary acknowledgement of loss and lack, sets the scene for the crucial *Mirror Stage (stade du miroir)*:

Only at this moment does it become capable of distinguishing itself from the 'outside' world, and thus of locating itself *in* the world ... its recognition of itself as a (potential) totality is correlative with its recognition that the world as a whole is not *its* own ... The 'fullness', the completeness that the child experiences through the maternal supplementation of its needs is interrupted by lack ... From this time on, lack, gap, splitting will be its mode of being. It will attempt to fill its (impossible, unfillable) lack. Its recognition of lack signals an ontological rift with nature or the Real. This gap will propel it into seeking an identificatory image of its own stability and permanence (the imaginary), and eventually language (the symbolic) by which it hopes to fill the lack. The child loses the 'pure plenitude' of the Real and is now constituted within the

imaginary (i.e. the order of images, representations, doubles and others) in its specular identifications (Grosz 35).

This initial sundering of the primal syncretic unity with the mother is the prelude to a whole range of conceptual oppositions that will henceforth characterize the child's perception of the world through to adulthood, such as the separation of inside and outside, and the distinction between self and other. For Freudian analyst James Grotstein (1998), Lacan's *Real* equates with the ineffable nature of the Tao, because "psychologically [they] represent that incomprehensible, inconceivable, unimaginable and unsymbolizable experience which can only be understood as numinous" (48). In relation to Lacan's Register of the Real, Grotstein states that "Real is a domain without an object ... It is what Freud did not realize that the unconscious consisted of when he chose the drives to be its privileged signified elements in lieu of being merely signifiers of the ineffable and infinity of the unconscious" (Grotstein 49, italics mine).

Yet the Real is absolute plenitude, and thus lacks nothing; and because it so infinitely full and over-determined, it resembles an absolutely sterile void. For life, movement and individuated consciousness to exist, a 'space', 'void', or 'gap' needs to be breached in the Real. In this sense, the Real resembles 'the uncarved block' mentioned in the *Tao Te Ching*, in its ineffable and unfathomable nature, which only becomes useful when 'voids', 'gaps' or 'spaces' are hewn out of it: "The Way is for ever nameless. Though the uncarved block is small, no one in the world dare claim its allegiance. Only when it is cut are there names. As soon as there are names, one ought to know that is time to stop" (Lau 91).

I contend that Bergman's cinematic articulation of the Jungian *Symbolic* effectively performs this task of 'hewing' out gaps or voids. On the more mundane level of personal consciousness, I suggest that hypnosis likewise seeks to create a clearing or space among the overgrown thickets of mental constructs

and neurotic attachments that constitute a 'false', over determined plenitude or sense of 'self'.

Why Hypnosis?

I choose to focus on hypnosis because, for psychoanalysis, hypnotic trance represents a 'dark family secret'. Indeed, had it not been for Freud's acquaintance with Charcot's use of hypnosis as a method for investigating hysteria, psychoanalysis as we know it might not have evolved. The Freud who entered the service of neurologist Jean Martin Charcot (1835-1893) at the Salpêtrière Institute in 1885 was convinced that all mental illness had a neuro-physiological cause, that all pathology could be attributed to cerebral or neurological lesions. The Freud who returned to Vienna in 1886 had witnessed Charcot's use of hypnosis to induce and reverse paralysis, and was therefore compelled to search for the psychological rather than physiological factors driving such phenomena.

In this respect, Freud's case represents an uncanny repetition of the outcome of the 1784 French Royal Commission aimed at investigating Mesmer's animal magnetism, in that psychological explanations (Mesmer's manipulation of his subjects' imagination) came to displace physiological ones. Though initially a providential find for Freud, hypnosis yielded varied and uneven responses from patients, while the results produced by symptom removal and abreaction proved to be short-lived. Alternative methods devised by Freud, such as free-association and transference, soon displaced hypnosis as the preferred modes of therapeutic intervention with various psychoanalytic schools. However, by 1937 Freud acknowledged that the therapeutic efficacy of the psychoanalytic cure was neither reliable nor predictable, and that analytical methods confronted the same difficulties as those hypnotic techniques he abandoned forty years previously. In particular, Freud deemed transference insufficient for the task of

breaking down the patient's resistance to the insights elicited by analysis. Sandor Ferenczi, Freud's anointed successor, who was long regarded as the official interpretative authority on Freud's theories, even went as far as suggesting that Freud's cherished method of free-association was itself a powerful tool for inducing hypnotic states. Moreover, Ferenczi publicly acknowledged that as an analyst, he accepted and even encouraged trance states among his patients.

Hypnosis thus haunts psychoanalysis as its shadow, the receptacle of those unacceptable, repressed or unacknowledged aspects of its constitution that are at odds with its self-image as a rational, 'scientific' method aimed at promoting insight and consciousness of the hidden forces that drive human behaviour (Chertok, 1979; Chertok & Stengers, 1989). On this account, hypnosis comes to inhabit the realm of the numinous and unknowable that is the focal point of the Jungian *Symbolic*. For many orthodox strands of psychoanalysis, hypnosis embodies a kind of menacing, 'irrational' placebo effect, the unintended, 'parasitical' phenomenon that accompanies the genuine explanation for clinical efficacy (Chertok & Stengers, 1989). As such, hypnosis is viewed as a throwback to an earlier, pre-Enlightenment era of obscurantism, of divine or demonic possession, in which individual human reason and conscience becomes infantilized in its slavish devotion to charismatic religious authorities. Kovel's dismissive attitude towards hypnosis is typical: "...the hypnotic subject is being directed to assume a state of mind in which mature discriminations are excluded and childish dependence upon the hypnotist is encouraged" (Kovel 273).

Heart of Glass

A cursory glance at *Heart of Glass* seems to confirm this prejudice. Depicting a society's catastrophic inability to negotiate the treacherous transition from the pre-modern and pre-industrial to the Enlightenment values of instrumental rationality and technology, the film takes place in an eighteenth-century

Bavarian village dependent on, and famous for its production of ruby-red glass. The chief manufacturer of this glass dies, taking the secret of its production with him to the grave. The industrialist, terrified at the village's imminent economic collapse, searches desperately for a solution, turning the glassmaker's home upside down and enlisting the help of clairvoyant shepherd Hias, who only proffers disturbing, allegorical visions. As a last, desperate measure, the industrialist sacrifices his maidservant, Ludmilla, in the hope of divining the secret of the ruby-red glass through the addition of human blood. When this fails, he sets fire to the glassworks.

Herzog's decision to hypnotize most of the cast has led critics, such as Wickham (1989), to describe the atmosphere of *Heart of Glass* as one of "brooding inevitability, enhanced by a monotony of ponderous action, slow speech and slow-tempo music" (Wickham 116). Aufderheide (1978), whose perspective on the film reflects a conventional view of hypnosis, contends that the zombie-like state of the cast "deepen[s] the notion that immobilization and passivity are inevitable, that we cannot avoid our fate" (McCormick and Aufderheide 34). She notes further that:

Advertisers and supermarket managers are already well aware of the advantages of hypnotic suggestion ... Herzog's hypnotic magic, as impressive certainly as any seductive Christmas display, offers no critique of its subject ... in fact, Herzog's new film participates in the problem.

Although Herzog appears to elicit a mode of reception in which the spectator is 'mesmerized' to the extent that rational engagement is precluded, critics such as Theobaldy (1979) assert that Herzog's work moves us closer to the realm of primordial images, of myth and dream, thereby highlighting the discrepancy between the real and the ideal. Indeed, it is the film's very irrationality – the unresolved mysteries, the unanswered questions and its implicit critique of

Enlightenment rationalism – that appears to give rise to a whole host of rational responses.

McCormick (1978) echoes Theobaldy's perspective when seeking to underline the film's divide between rationalism and mysticism as a key to its title. To begin with, the industrialist has a 'heart of glass', which is no longer 'human' or 'organic', but rather an embodiment of the village's chief source of capital. McCormick states that "the owner represents instrumental rationality, technology gone mad in the service of profit and privilege, despite the fact that he equates his survival with the common good" (McCormick 33).

As regards the dialectic of mysticism and rationalism, it is worth noting that coloured glass plays a prominent metaphorical role in German Romanticism (particularly in the works of Franz Brentano and Heinrich von Kleist) as the subjective lens, or the habitual mental apparatus through which we perceive the world and which prevents us from seeing reality as it truly is. Indeed, in *The Beggarwoman of Locarno* (Kleist, 1988), Kleist speculates on the status and nature of human perception if green glass were substituted for human eyes. He concludes that humans would be incapable of determining whether their 'eyes' were conveying reality as it truly is, or if they were merely expressing properties inherent in the 'eyes' themselves.

A similar conundrum seems to bedevil the ontological status of hypnotic trance, and this may account for its 'pariah' status within the realm of 'orthodox' psychoanalysis. There appears to be no dependable protocol for determining whether a given hypnotic phenomenon is a genuine manifestation of hypnosis, or simply a product of skilful simulation. Indeed, any protocol designed specifically for the purpose of isolating, objectifying and measuring hypnotic phenomena invariably contributes an unpredictable, random element to the production of such phenomena. The hypnotized subject realizes that he or she is

the object of an experiment, and this realization inevitably influences his or her behaviour (Chertok & Stengers, 1989).

In recent times, French psychoanalyst François Roustang (1994) has characterized hypnotic trance as 'paradoxical wakefulness' (*veille paradoxale*), which serves as a springboard into an overarching concept of *veille généralisée* ('general' or 'broad' wakefulness), a kind of expanded, non-discriminatory mindful state in contrast to the *veille restreinte* ('limited wakefulness') of our habitual consciousness.

By utilizing mental habits such as absorption, fantasy proneness and dissociation, hypnosis effects a process of 'defamiliarization' or 'alienation' aimed at revealing the inherent strangeness or uncanny nature of those aspects of our thinking regarded as commonplace fixtures of our everyday mental furniture. The meanings and interpretations assigned to both external and internal stimuli are set adrift from their conventional moorings, and rigid binary oppositions may give way to an appreciation and inclusion of paradox.

To this end, hypnosis may also be said to enact an important process of deconstruction in its ability to challenge, reframe and transform entrenched, outmoded, rigid and dogmatic belief systems or behavioural patterns. Paradoxically, the villagers' collective, zombie-like hypnotic trance may serve as a parody of their unhealthy, pathological attachment to such behaviours and beliefs, as their habitual responses to the existential crisis that besets them rely on largely unconscious, automated patterns and protocols.

In this connection, it is apposite to note that the film's seer, Hias, possesses a heart of glass, by virtue of his clear visions. At the beginning of the film, a crazed villager tells Hias that he has had a vision of a giant, with eyes like millstones. Paradoxically (or perhaps not), Hias as the mystical seer provides a rational explanation: there are no giants – the giant was merely the shadow of a

dwarf. For Herzog, the trope of the seer bears a certain kinship with the clarity of expression exhibited by the actors under hypnosis. According to Herzog:

I wanted actors with fluid, almost floating movements, which means the film would seem to depart from known behaviour and gestures and would have an atmosphere of hallucination, prophecy and collective delirium that intensifies towards the end ... Maybe the title *Heart of Glass* makes more sense in this light. It seems to mean for me an extremely sensitive and fragile inner state, with a kind of transparent glacial quality to it (qtd. in Cronin 127).

Persona

Fluidity, movement and floating, or drifting qualities are also of key significance to the narrative progression and message of Bergman's *Persona*. Elisabet (Liv Ullmann) is a famous actress suddenly rendered mute by what appears to be a psychosomatic illness. During her convalescence she is cared for by nurse Alma (Bibi Andersson), who does most of the talking for both of them. Over the course of time, an insidious blurring of the boundaries of the two women's identities occurs and their personalities eventually merge. According to philosopher and Bergman's intellectual biographer, Irving Singer, "the dynamic core of the film resides in the concept of merging, and its manifestation in the fusion of the faces of Alma and Elisabet" (Singer 163-164). He adds:

Before they merge at the climax of the film, they are both systematically divided into black and white segments as if in a carnival mask that hides as much as it shows. Or, better yet, as if there were in each of the women an inner region that is not available to observation as the illuminated portion is ... But [the merging] cannot reveal the persona of a human being, particularly the complex personality of either Alma or Elisabet. Remaining separate in their personhood, they are inherently different ... and the totality that now appears consists only of jumbled components (Singer 163-164).

Thus, the incomplete process of merging possesses a fluid, elusive and indeterminate quality that mirrors the complex, constantly shifting dialectic of 'figure' and 'ground' found in Gestalt psychology. On this account, it is impossible to discern a discrete cut-off point between the person as a psychological entity and the physical and social world they inhabit. As such, the individual always exists in relation, as one pole within a constantly shifting 'field' encompassing both the individual and the wider determinants of their existence. According to Gestalt psychology, whenever a novel need or demand emerges, the entire perceptual field undergoes reorganization, with the matter at hand becoming more *figural*, and other competing concerns receding into the background as dimmer, vaguer features of the *ground*.²

For Roustang (2004), hypnotic trance shares with Gestalt sensibilities precisely this shifting, ambiguous and, more importantly, indeterminate property. Indeed, he asserts that when the method of fixation on a particular object is employed to induce trance, the "object itself eventually recedes from perception: the process of concentration continues, but it floats in a state of indeterminacy [*il flotte dans l'indétermination*]" (Roustang 70 – translation mine). Hypnotic trance is an indeterminate state, precisely because it causes the subject to dwell at the liminal, interstitial midpoint, as well as to float between the figure and background. As a consequence, the hypnotic trance state potentially enables the subject to engage fully and mindfully in the fluidity and vividness of moment-to-moment lived experience.

This floating indeterminacy also informs Bergman's cinematographic articulation of the Jungian Symbolic, to the extent that potentially over determined symbolic meanings attributed to certain key images are effectively 'evacuated', 'voided' to ensure the movement and momentum of the narrative. Thus, according to:

Bergman's cinematography in *Persona* is arresting ... because it is usually *a component of the narrative* rather than a mere vehicle to it. Without the use of symbols or hidden meanings, whether Freudian or Jungian or any other, his effort as a filmmaker thereby focuses our imagination on some development in the plot that he has devised. [Consider] the moment just before the end when Elisabet walks out of the cottage ... She passes a primitive-looking statuette on a pedestal ... [a] work of art [that] consists of an upward-oriented human head, abstract and very dramatic, the interior hollow, the front somewhat fragmented, the mouth open as if in a declamation of pain or agony. The next shot shows Elisabet's face heavily made up for the role in *Electra* that walked out of at the beginning ... Neither the statue nor the movie camera nor the actress's histrionic facial appearance has symbolic meaning. Instead they each function as active and transitional elements in the presentation of the story (*italics in the original*) (Singer 169-170).

This evacuation of over determined symbolic meaning is of greater importance when applied to the film's core theme of 'merging', a trope that resonates with both Jungian conceptions of the 'archetype' and Lacan's 'register of the Real'. According to Singer, Bergman demonstrates that 'merging' - whether with another human being, or with the 'cosmos', 'divine' or 'numinous' - is "an impossible goal ... [and] that is the principal thrust of Bergman's mythic work" (Singer 171).

Likewise, for Jung, while individuation is directed towards the complex wholeness of the individual through the assimilation of elements from the personal and collective unconscious, this process may encourage the individual to become fused with the Mana³-like properties of these elements, resulting in pathological ego inflation. In this condition, the individuated psyche is indistinguishable from the hypertrophied ego defence of extreme introversion, in which narcissism and self-aggrandizement conspire to keep the individual aloof from interpersonal relations. Jarrett (1988) cites Jung's analysis of Nietzsche's identification with the Mana personality in the form of the semi-legendary

Persian prophet Zarathustra as a fitting example of the kind of misguided individuation that perhaps contributed to Nietzsche's eventual insanity.

Similarly, for Lacan, once the subject is inscribed in the symbolic order, access to the Register of the Real is effectively barred. As I mentioned at the start of this essay, 'spaces', 'voids', or 'gaps' need to be breached in the Real for life, movement and individuated consciousness to exist. The most pragmatic attempt at addressing the transformative potential of 'voids', 'gaps' and 'interstices' yet to emerge in Western psychotherapy is the Gestalt notion of *withdrawal*: a state that represents the *interstice, gap or liminal space* between Gestalt destruction and formation. For Clarkson (1989), *withdrawal* signifies

... a pause and a pulling away of psychic energy from a previous preoccupation to a state of void or nothingness from which a new need/figure can emerge... It is very important for the counsellor to support and encourage the acceptance and exploration of the withdrawal and isolation which is a necessary part of the transition process ... Frequently people want to short-circuit or flee the uncomfortable process of being 'in between'. Yet the quality, attention and intentional awareness functional at this time can make the difference between whether this void or emptiness is experienced as futile or fertile (Clarkson 133).

In both Gestalt terms, and in the hypnotherapeutic cultivation of mindfulness, familiarity with voids or empty spaces allows "sensation to emerge as a figure from a ground which is at the same time both empty and overflowing with possibilities and potentials" (Clarkson 132).

Once this insight is applied to Lacan's notion that our psychic life resembles a constantly shifting chain of signifiers, we see that opening up 'voids' or 'gaps' is necessary for the continuous evacuation of meaning that allows this chain to keep moving. According to Grosz (1990), this opening up of a 'void', 'gap' or 'space' occurs each time "the signifier moves out of its concrete relations, its

syntagmatic bonds in a given speech act, back into the signifying chain” (Grosz 95). Grosz further states that:

This signals a constitutive lack at the core of language, a lack which marks the absence of a fixed anchoring point, the absence of a solid core of meaning for any term – its necessarily open, ambiguous potential. This sliding of the signifier over the signified is only momentarily arrested in specific contexts. This lack of a founding sign – a signifier tied firmly to a given signified – means that if each term is founded on pure difference and thus already requires another term to be understood, all terms can only be understood relative to language as a whole (Grosz 95, italics in original).

However, the continuous and indefinite sliding and ‘voiding’ of meaning, which enables the life of the psyche to maintain its movement and momentum, is arrested, once psychic disturbance becomes manifested as a symptom. In common with the notion of frozen or fixed *Gestalten* (which, in Gestalt therapy, often represent obsolete, limiting and maladaptive ways of responding gracefully and creatively to the ever-changing demands of the present), disturbance in Lacanian terms produces ‘stuck’ or ‘congealed’ signs, which hinder signifiers from forming other connections or meanings (Lacan 1966/1977).

In a similar vein, hypno-psychotherapy, with its ability to suspend and deactivate incessant ruminative patterns, as well as its capacity for revealing the inherent ‘emptiness’ and ‘indeterminacy’ of symbolic meaning and mental concepts, perhaps provides the key for effecting the continuous evacuation of meaning necessary for the psyche to maintain its grace and fluidity.

Notes

¹ “[The child] has no experience of corporeal or psychical unity or of occupying a stable position within a corporeally delimited space. Sensory/perceptual impingements, which may animate certain organs and bodily parts, cannot be attributed to a continuous, homogenous subjectivity” (Grosz 34).

² Stressing the integrity of the personality and couching healthy ego consciousness in here-and-now awareness, Gestalt therapy rejects the traditional psychoanalytic notion of the unconscious as a permanently inaccessible domain in favour of the shifting figure/ground found in the concept of awareness: "And, therefore, rather than talking of the unconscious, we prefer to talk about the at-this-moment-unaware. This term is much broader and wider than the term 'unconscious'. This unawareness contains not only repressed material, but material which never came into awareness, and material which had faded or has been assimilated or has been built into larger gestalts. The unaware includes skills, patterns of behaviour, motoric and verbal habits, blind spots, etc." (Perls 54).

³ Derived from animistic practices in Melanesia and Polynesia, the term *Mana* refers to impersonal forces or properties existing in both animate and inanimate entities, and is analogous to the concept of magic in various cultures. As a concept, *Mana* is widely used in anthropology and archetypal/transpersonal psychology. See Casement (2001) and Keesing (1984).

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