



## English Summaries

### Symbol – The Psyche’s Work of Meaning

#### ESSAYS

##### **MARILYN CHARLES: Somatization and Symbolization**

Psychoanalysis had its origins in an era when feelings that could not be recognized by the mind were being manifested in the body. Psychoanalysis works towards resolving this type of split by recognizing the existence of a dual language structure that includes both body and mind as constituents of the fabric of embodied meanings. The field of psychosomatics helps to provide keys to this language, marking the essential, patterned truths that are recognized at very basic levels and increasingly organize our perceptions as we make sense of the world. In disrupting the integration of embodied meanings, trauma impedes identity development. For some patients, learning to make meaning from somatic symptoms is an important adjunct to coming to know their own embodied experience. Two cases will be offered in which somatic symptoms provided important information that was channeled through the analytic experience as a way of making sense of what otherwise remained unknown.

**Keywords:** psychosomatics, identity development, narcissism, reflective capacities

##### **JÚLIA GYIMESI: Herbert Silberer and the theory of functional symbols**

The Viennese psychoanalyst, Herbert Silberer is primarily known today for his innovative theories on symbol-formation. His theory of functional symbols continues to attract interest even now. As a prolific author and an enthusiastic member of Freud's inner circle, Silberer published numerous books and dozens of articles in prominent psychoanalytic journals. His work influenced notable figures in early psychology, including Carl Gustav Jung and Jean Piaget. However, Silberer's name is now most frequently mentioned in a different, specific context that focuses more on his tragic suicide than on his groundbreaking innovations. In this narrative, Silberer's suicide is attributed to Freud's rejection. The aim of this article is to provide a more balanced

and accurate account of Silberer's theories and innovations while highlighting the psychoanalytic and personal contexts that shaped his interests and work.

**Keywords:** Herbert Silberer, symbol formation, Western esoterism, functional symbols, Carl Gustav Jung

### **BERTALAN BALÁZS SÜTŐ: Symbols of the introspective self in Herbert Silberer**

Silberer's concept of symbol-formation should be evaluated in the light of its specificities. His theory is not only concerned with the interpretation of symbols, but also with the processes behind the creation of certain phenomena of symbolism. One of the significant aspects of his concept is the functional category of symbols, which some authors have put in parallel with Freud's notion of endopsychic perception, identifying common underlying mechanisms. Silberer's theories have not become part of the mainstream of psychoanalysis, but they have proved useful to some authors. In addition to presenting these concepts, this paper aims to illustrate various references by other thinkers.

**Keywords:** Herbert Silberer, Sigmund Freud, symbol, symbol-formation, autosymbolic phenomenon, functional symbol, endopsychic perception, myth

### **ZSÓFIA RÉVÉSZ: The Language of Dreams: Wilhelm Stekel's interpretation of symbols**

Wilhelm Stekel's *The Language of Dreams* (1911) offers a comprehensive approach to dream interpretation, emphasizing the practical application of dream symbolism based on the psychoanalytic theoretical framework. Stekel acknowledges Freud's immense contributions in his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), but diverges in his emphasis on the manifest content of dreams as – in some instances – he prioritized dream symbolism over free association technique. In his holistic interpretation of symbols, he considered them not solely expressions of repressed desires but also reflections of common cultural and, more importantly, individual experiences. He states that anxiety is not always a punishment for repressed desires manifested in dreams; it can also be a warning, a signal from the superego.

He proposes a multilayered approach, interpreting symbols across collective, cultural, and personal dimensions, with a significant focus on sexuality, criminal tendencies, and death imagery. While *The Language of Dreams* (1911) is praised for its rich illustrative examples and practical guidance, it has also been criticized for a lack of rigorous theoretical grounding and a potentially subjective interpretive approach. The significance of Stekel's work lies in its contribution to the practical guide of therapeutic dream analysis and its exploration of symbolism's multifaceted role in understanding the human psyche. His approach foreshadows aspects of modern existential psychotherapy, mainly focusing on the individual's experience of mortality and life's inherent anxieties.

**Keywords:** Wilhelm Stekel, psychoanalysis, dream interpretation, symbolism, unconscious

**JÓZSEF HAVASRÉTI: “Remembering: faith in the past...” Freud’s influence on the theorists of the European School (1945-1948)**

The art group called the European School was active in Budapest between 1945 and 1948. Their work was primarily linked to Hungarian Surrealist endeavours and, as in the case of international Surrealism, the influence of psychoanalysis played an important role. The group’s founding members and principal theorists, Imre Pán and Árpád Mezei, drew on Freud’s work to emphasise the role of unconscious processes in artistic creation. They stressed that the cognition of the unconscious is a process akin to mythological or existential anabasis. According to Imre Pán, the mythological figure of the Minotaur (human head, animal body) can be interpreted as a Freudian conscious-unconscious dichotomy, and from this he interpreted the history of Europe as a struggle between rationality and instinct, civilization and wildness. Pán and Mezei also interpreted the phenomena of contemporary art primitivism based on Freud’s views. They were also interested in the socio-psychological aspects of psychoanalysis, and argued that the position of subordinate social classes, strata and groups could be explained by the Freudian position of the unconscious. This concept links some of their contemporary writings to the tradition of Freudo-Marxist thought.

**Keywords:** reception of psychoanalysis, Hungarian Surrealism, automatic writing, cultural memory, relationship between elite and popular culture, Freudo-Marxism

**VIOLETTA TÓTH-VARGA: The cultural history of the couch in an environmental psychological perspective. An environmental psychological reading of Nathan Kravis’ *On the Couch: A Repressed History of the Analytic Couch from Plato to Freud***

The aim of the paper is to introduce the Hungarian readership to Nathan Kravis’s excellent book, which explores the history of the iconic object of psychoanalysis, the couch, by placing it in a broader context and thus exploring the cultural-historical aspects of the spatial-physical aspect of the “lying down speech” or analytic setting. On the other hand, going beyond the traditional genre of review, an important aim of this study is to draw attention to the environmental-psychological aspects of the work. Although these are not explicitly addressed in the volume, the author is thinking along the important principles of the people-environment transaction when he explores the ways in which the material world around the individual, with its social, historical and cultural context influences and affects human behaviour and thinking. The author of this paper highlights these environmental psychological patterns and places the content of the book in a people-environment transactional context.

**Keywords:** couch, psychoanalysis, environmental psychology

**IVETT ROZGONYI: James Henry Pullen – “The Genius of Earlswood Asylum”.  
The strange story of the savant syndrome**

Savant syndrome has been described as a condition resulting from neurodevelopmental disorder, mental retardation or brain damage, in which an individual has a special talent in one or more areas while his or her general abilities remain limited. Because of the work and widespread awareness of savants, there is also a growing general interest in the artistic work of people with autism. The spectrum of autism spectrum disorders is extremely diverse and savants are often found among people with autism. In my paper I will summarize the history of savant syndrome and present the life and work of a talented autistic artist, James Henry Pullen (1835–1916), who has been little discussed in the Hungarian literature. Pullen had exceptional drawing skills and mechanical aptitude and spent most of his life in the Earlswood Asylum for Idiots. His art and his life exemplify the link between savant syndrome and autism spectrum disorder, and the co-existence of talent and disability.

**Keywords:** savant syndrome, autism, James Henry Pullen, art

**CATHERINE GÉRY: Is the Silver Age of literature in Russia the Golden Age of psychoanalysis?**

According to some contemporary authors, such as Alexandr Etkind, Valery Leybin or Viktor Ovcharenko, the Silver Age of Russian literature is the Golden Age of psychoanalysis in two senses: as a clinical therapy and as a philosophical-anthropological way of thinking. Although in Russia we can speak of a reception of Freud and the translation of Freud’s writings from the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the question is: did psychoanalysis have a real impact on the thought and image systems of Russian writers in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? Did Freud really melt into the Russian culture of the Silver Age? And can we attribute any meaning to the notion of psychoanalysis as ‘denial’ in the work of Andrei Belij, for example?

**Keywords:** Silver Age, Russia, psychoanalysis, literature, Freud, reception, symbolism

**ILDIKÓ MÁRIA RÁCZ: Literature and psychoanalysis: the representation of the inner space of altered consciousness in Ivan Bunin’s prose**

The scientific theory of psychoanalysis had a significant influence on Russian literature in the early years of the last century. The translations of the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung and the establishment of the Russian Psychoanalytic Society and analytic school confirm this influence. Although the literary work of the Nobel Prize-winning Russian writer in exile, Ivan Bunin, was not directly influenced by Freudian theory, several of his works reflect contemporary psychoanalytic discourse. In his narratives, Bunin expands the boundaries of the lyric self by engaging with altered states of consciousness (drunkenness, seasickness, hallucination, dreaming, waking dreaming, remembering, delirium, grief, love, creation and imagination), giving increasing scope to the artistic representation of the

functioning mechanism of the unconscious mind. In examining his prose, the multidisciplinary approach allows for the interpretation of certain works in a broader context, further exploring the relationship between art and the unconscious, and adding a new aspect of inquiry to the study of Bunin's oeuvre.

**Keywords:** Ivan Bunin, Lev Vygotsky, Freud, Jung, Russian Psychoanalytic Society, altered states of consciousness, unconscious

## REVIEW

ORSOLYA SZABÓ's review on the exhibition catalogue *Freud's Antiquity: Object, Idea, Desire* (edited by Richard Armstrong, Miriam Leonard, Daniel Orrells, Tom DeRose and Karolina Heller, published by the Freud Museum, London in 2023) and about the possible connections of archaeology and psychoanalysis.