



International Society for Psychology as the
Discipline of Interiority

ISPDI Newsletter Spring 2024

9th Conference of the International Society for Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority

“Where is Soul?” *Psychology in Modernity*



Registration & Information: ispdi.org

Letter from the Co-President

Dear Members and Colleagues,

Greetings to all in this time of transition from Winter to Spring in the North, Summer to Fall in the South. Regardless of whichever hemisphere you are located in, you should be mindful of the fact that the deadline for the special Early-Bird rate for registration for the Berlin conference, which we have extended to April 15, is almost upon us. (After this letter you will find a tentative schedule for the conference. While the order and titles may change a bit, it should give you a good idea of the variety of topics and approaches that await!) I do hope you are planning to join us in August for what is shaping up to be an interesting and important event with an excellent group of presenters.

The dates for the conference are August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, with a pre-conference gathering and registration in the lounge, just to the left of the main hotel desk, on Thursday, August 1st from 6:30pm to 8:00pm.

The theme of the conference, “Where is Soul? Psychology in Modernity” is in my view an outstanding one. It is indeed a good question: Where IS soul today? And: What IS psychology in our modern world?” These questions are so foundational to the ISPDI that they could be considered its original and perennial theme. We are, it seems, always in one way or another driven by not only the question “Where is Soul?” (and *What* is Soul? but at least here we have the book by Wolfgang Giegerich to help us), but also the difficult task of how to look for soul!

But what better city to think about these questions than Berlin, a location where so much important social, political, and cultural history has taken place. Where, for example, the words, “Tear down this wall!” were uttered and then accomplished. Where within a 10-minute ride from the Crowne Plaza Hotel is the famous Brandenburg Gate (the image on our conference poster), and just down the way from that is Humboldt University where Einstein, Schelling, Schopenhauer, and Hegel all lectured.

To help get more of a feeling for this unique and amazing city, and to assist with relaxation and integration from attending the lectures of the day, we are planning extra activities such as a visit to a Biergarten on Friday evening and a Saturday evening boat ride through historic sights on the river Spree. More details on these activities to come.

Information and registration details about the conference can be found on our website.

Thinking more on our conference theme, one could say that the fact that we are asking the question, “Where is soul?” indicates that we are in the modern world. The modern soul is “departed” (Giegerich) and “unconscious” (Jung) and has to be found, i.e., first “hunted”, as Artemis was by Actaeon, or created or made conscious. Other psychologies that don’t

have a notion of soul at their centre, don't have this problem nor do they have the question: "Where is soul?"

There are, of course, various kinds of psychologies today and they all have their particular focus, whether it be people, their behaviour, or their neurons (all important endeavours, of course, in their own right). The ISPDI however, following in the tradition of later (alchemically inspired) Jung and the work of Wolfgang Giegerich, works strictly with the notion of a psychology with soul, especially an objective soul. No positivities. From this perspective, a *psychologist* that studies brain chemistry would be like a biologist wanting to study the biology of plants but always falling for the beauty of flowers and then continually making bouquets. The biological life forces at work "behind the scenes" that allow flowers to exist, are not observed at all.

From the perspective of psychology, it is the living, thinking, soul that allows the world to come into focus in the first place, and this soul, not the actual world, that is the focus. The object of study for psychology, wrote Jung, is always the soul, even when reflected in a positivity. But then Jung also took it all the way with the claim that psychology is, finally, the *soul studying the soul*. This is the astonishing insight that may very well have remained dormant, esoteric, or under-appreciated had Giegerich not recognized its foundational importance. He has since repeated and developed it over and over in various ways, in his many writings allowing the living thought within it continue to unfold toward a psychology that would truly be psychological.

But this ouroboric understanding of soul is notoriously difficult to grasp (no wonder "psychology" understood in its more broad egoic sense, found more obvious paths to follow!). We can find in the alchemical images of Mercurius a way to help conceive of it. Mercurius, Jung noted, is an evasive trickster, a fugitive, always slipping through your fingers. He is both the devil and God's reflection in physical nature. He is a duality and unity at the same time. He is the process by which the lower and material is transformed into the higher and spiritual, and vice versa, and so on.

So the question of "where is the soul?" is a difficult one indeed and it requires a psychology that is up to the task of taking it on, a disciplined, modern, and critical psychology. The ISPDI has been attempting to support and develop such a psychology since our first conference in Berlin in 2012. We hope to continue to do this in Berlin in August and would be delighted to have you join us!

A few words about the newsletter.....

We have a richly packed issue. We want to especially call your attention to our featured article by our colleague Nicholas Balais, which cogently outlines the rootedness of psychology as the discipline of interiority in the understanding and commitment to the centrality of *negativity* and its application to psychotherapy and clinical practice.

You will also find descriptions and links for a cornucopia of new and recent publications involving PDI. (This is perhaps the best indication that this field is continuing to mature and proliferate.) These include books from our friends at Dusk Owl Books as well as Routledge.

As usual, we also provide updates on our Topos presentation series and Open Inquiry book discussions. (Remember that Zoom links for these are available to members on our website ispdi.org.)

John Hoedl, ISPDI Co-President

Also, just a friendly reminder to everyone to make sure your membership is up to date. (On each page of our website you will find a button for renewing your membership.) Remember that your memberships are tax deductible, and we have a student rate as well as provisions for anyone dealing with financial issues. You can access the membership page at <https://www.ispdi.org/become-an-ispdi-member>



Crowne Plaza, Berlin City Centre – Our Conference Venue



The International Society for Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority

2024 Conference - Crowne Plaza Berlin

“Where is Soul? Psychology in Modernity”

Thursday August 1, 2024 6:30pm-8:30pm	Registration and pre-conference gathering - Hotel Lobby Lounge. To the left of the hotel registration desk, attendees can register, pick up their conference package and meet other participants.
Friday August 2, 2024	
8:00 am - 8.30 am	Registration - Berlin Room
8:30 am - 9:00 am	President’s Welcome — Pamela Power and John Hoedl ISPDI Chronicle — Greg Mogenson
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Interiority and Accomplished Modernity — Wolfgang Giegerich
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Coffee Break
10:30 pm - 11:15 pm	Where is Human Dignity in Modernity? — Peter White
11:30 pm - 12:15 pm	Heinrich Schütz, The Sky Ladder, and Searching for the Arcane Substance — Pamela Power
12:15 pm -1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm - 2:15 pm	Modern Technology as Antichrist — John Hoedl
2:30 pm - 3:15 pm	The Decimated Church: A Psychological Perspective — Kurtz Katzmar
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm	Coffee Break
3:45 pm - 4:30 pm	The State of Psychology in Japan: The Historical Transition of the Soul as Seen in Love Suicide — Tsuyoshi Inomata
4:30 - 5:30 pm	Panel Discussion
6:30pm	Dinner at Alt-Berliner Biersalon (Beer Garden)



Saturday August 3, 2024	
8:45 am - 9:00 am	Announcements
9:00 am - 10:00 am	TBA — Harald Atmanspacher
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Coffee Break
10:30 am - 11:15 am	TBA — Phillip Kime
11:30 am -12:15 am	Where is the Love (with a capital 'L')? — Carmen Kobor
12:15 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm - 2:15 pm	The Creation of Outer Space and the Birth of Man in Japan — Kenji Kaneshiro
2:30 pm - 3:15 pm	Post-Truth Lies: Language from Fall to Revelation — Michael R. Caplan
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm	Coffee Break
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm	Panel Discussion
5:45 pm	Bus to boat launch, pick up in front of hotel
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Boat Excursion on the River Spree
9:30 pm	Return to hotel



Sunday August 4, 2024	
8:45 am - 9:00am	Announcements
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Where is Soul? A 'Spiritual Problem' for Jung's Time and Our Own — Paul Bishop
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Coffee Break
10:30 am - 11:15 pm	Simulation and Misapplication of Alchemy in Jung's Psychology — Michael Whan
11:30 am - 12:15 pm	A Journey to Infinity: Bridging Consciousness Across Traditions — Josep M. Moreno Alavedra
12:15 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm - 2:15 pm	Emotional, Imaginal, and Somatic Components of the Soul's "Logical Life" — Tanor Bonin
2:30 pm - 3:15 pm	Facing the Truth and Animus Psychology: Minamata Disease and the Life of Dr. Hajime Hosokawa — Jun Kitayama
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm	Coffee Break
3:45 pm - 4:30 pm	Panel Discussion
4:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks
5:30 pm - 6:30pm	Farewell Prosecco

To Create, Perform, Produce Psychology from Scratch

Negativity in the Work of Wolfgang Giegerich

Nicholas Balaisis

Introduction

In a recent book on psychology that draws on Jung, Wolfgang Giegerich, and the novelist Joseph Conrad, Greg Mogenson (2019) argues that while modern psychology is significantly versed in the positive and empirical, it does not have much to offer in terms of the *negative*. He states that academic and clinical psychology “knows a tremendous amount” about “memory, perception . . . sexuality, and attachment behavior” but doesn’t much address what Conrad describes as “that glimpse of truth which we forgot to ask for” (p. 9). Much of psychotherapy works in the realm of the *positive* – treatment goals, acute symptoms, scaling assessments – but more rarely attends to the *negative* in the patient. This is reinforced by many patients themselves, who are increasingly armed with psycho ed. and are well-versed in their knowledge of psychological terms like attachment styles and come with specific treatment plans, goals and even notions of what qualifies as successful therapy. As Mogenson suggests, however, the therapeutic process often elicits that which we didn’t ask for, or as Jung frequently asserts: the other picture that looms up in the background behind the analysand. It is this *negativity* that often matters most in psychotherapeutic practice.

In making this claim, Mogenson draws on the notion of the negative in psychotherapy advanced at length by Wolfgang Giegerich. For Giegerich, the negative identifies the non-empirical heart of psychology – psychology’s true object of focus, and a focus which stands at odds with much contemporary psychotherapy, Jungian analysis and clinical psychology. In stressing the negative in psychotherapy (and recovering the negative in Jung’s work itself), Giegerich pushes against contemporary goal-oriented psychotherapy. This focus has implications for many aspects of psychotherapeutic practice such as its temporal orientation (its tense) as well as the stance and role of the therapist. Working in the space or tense of the negative, he argues, is to be backward- looking and performative; it is an ephemeral labor produced and reproduced by both analyst and patient, effecting not results or goals, but temporary “glimpses” of psychological truth.

The Negative in Fairy Tales: Integrating Hegel

Giegerich's use of negativity draws greatly from Hegel and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In Volume 3 of his Collected Writing in English, *Soul-Violence*, Giegerich uses a fairy tale to exemplify the work of negation or negativity in psychology. He recounts the tale of the *Robber Bridegroom*, a folk tale about a miller's daughter who is promised to a rich suitor. In the tale, the daughter sets off to visit the suitor in a forest and comes upon the den of an ancient woman, who warns the daughter that she is in a murderer's den and so conceals the daughter behind a barrel. The daughter then witnesses the robbers violently dismembering another girl who they have led into the house thinking it to be the promised bride. The girl remains behind the barrel and ultimately escapes and marries the suitor, producing the ring finger of the chopped-up girl as proof of her ordeal. For Giegerich, this fairy tale and, in particular, the girl's stance toward the event, exemplifies the role of negativity in psychology, and most significantly, the successful engagement *with* the negative on the part of the girl in the tale. What stands out most for Giegerich is that the girl in the fairy tale is able to witness and withstand the horror of the dismemberment without fleeing.

She is obviously up to the horror that takes place before her eyes. She is able to bear the "unbearable" sight. She does not experience the horror as absolute trauma. She demonstrates quite literally what it means "to look the negative in the face and to tarry with it." (Giegerich, 2020b, p. 148)

For Giegerich, the negative figures importantly in psychotherapy as something that must be lingered within or tarried with. In invoking tarrying with the negative, of course, he draws upon Hegel's famous sentence in the *Phenomenology*, a passage that Giegerich returns to frequently in his work. In this same passage, Hegel (1977) describes the life of Spirit as that which does not "shrink from death and keep itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it" (p. 19). This "maintaining" itself in the face of the negative is what Giegerich (2020b) identifies in the fairy tale, as a dialectical "integration" in psychological work, often experienced or expressed through violence: "the witnessing of the dismemberment of another always implies one's own annihilation namely through the narcissistic insult, indeed the killing of one's own ideal inherent in this *sight*" (p. 149). Tarrying with the negative in psychology involves a dialectical devastation that has been "withstood, been received by consciousness" and which consciousness "has grown in the experience" (p. 149). Giegerich's work stresses the violence or cut implied in Hegel's description of "devastation," and places it at the center of psychological work. To think or experience something psychologically for Giegerich is precisely to be "touched" by devastation in the way that the girl does in the fairy tale.

Tarrying with the Negative in the Perfect Tense

This cut of devastation for Giegerich assumes a particular tense in the psychological scene, a tense that puts his argument about psychology in opposition to contemporary models of psychology. Giegerich frequently speaks against the developmental – or future-oriented – model of therapy so prevalent in modern modes of clinical practice. The developmental model is rooted in positivism and empiricism, which for him are not the work of psychotherapy.

What I conceive, by contrast, is a “psychotherapy of the perfect tense.” No ideal. No wishing and hoping. No Sollen and striving. Because there is nothing to strive for, no goal set for us. Any developmental goal envisioned by psychology can be seen through as an ego program, our own agenda. What is needed instead of all this is merely our “catching up with” what has already become real (2020a, p. 416).

The negative inhabits the space of “the catching up.” Psychotherapy in the perfect tense means to catch up and tarry with that which *already happened* but which the ego has not yet realized, or from which it often flees. Psychotherapy thus always looks backward, a tense that puts it at odds with many applications of contemporary therapy and many clients’ wishes and plans for betterment, improvement or even more “meaningful” or purposive forms of existence. Giegerich sees the desire for “meaning” or purpose as a neurotic formation precisely because it is *positively* conceived.

Meaning in the contemporary psychological scene is largely *positivized* as some external Other based on a lack.

This is true of clinical practice that promises evidence-based metrics or SMART goals that seem to provide empirical proof of psychic improvement. We achieve meaning as a result or effect of satisfying a series of psychological goals. Here we can think of common prescriptions or treatment for depression as existing empirically *in front* of the client – if only they walk or exercise more they will find greater meaning and purpose out there in the world. Positive psychology is one that presents the cure on the horizon in front of the client rather than as something more immanent and, in Giegerich’s terms, already embedded in the client’s logical negativity. In speaking directly on the question of “meaning” as a clinical goal, Giegerich argues that it is always only *immanent* rather than *transcendent* (or logically negative). “Is it really so terrible to live without a higher meaning? Is it really the void that yawns before us when we are without it? After all, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe . . . etc. etc. Are they not enough? More than enough? (2020a, pp. 230–231). In other words, we do not *make* meaning through psychotherapy as a kind of positive empirical enterprise.

Psychotherapy in the *perfect tense* mirrors in some ways the Freudian arc of analysis as gaining recognition of one's false or outgrown childhood illusions and aspirations (recognition of one's castration). Giegerich often cites a parallel quote from Roland Barthes where he states that being modern "is to know what is no longer possible" (2020c, p. 179). We might say the same thing in the work of psychotherapy, an insight that echoes the Freudian view that therapy leaves us sadder, but wiser. For Giegerich, this knowledge is also the work of psychological thinking, but with the additional cut of violent recognition. For Giegerich, *knowing* what is no longer possible represents a negation, or a killing which initiates a new mode of knowing (and a letting go of ego-illusions). Greg Mogensson (2005) describes it this way: "Psychological reflection above all knows itself, even if the reflective moment of that knowing changes it, [kills it] requiring yet other reflective acts *ad infinitum*" (p. 12).

The distinction that Giegerich draws between the developmental modes of psychotherapy and "psychology with soul" is akin to the distinction that Hegel draws between his dialectical method and the insights drawn through science, positivism or Schelling. Dialectical insight for Hegel (1977) cannot be achieved "like a shot from a pistol" as immediately graspable (p. 16). Rather, "true thoughts and scientific insight are only to be won through the labor of the Notion" (p. 43). In other parts of the dialectic Hegel speaks about truth being "ripened to its properly matured form so as to be capable of being the property of all self-consciousness Reason" (p. 43). For Hegel, philosophy enters after the fact, looking backward, following the Owl of Minerva. For Giegerich, similarly, psychology happens as a catching up after the fact and a truth borne through a labor with the negative, a *coming home* to that which *already is* (or has become true).

Recovering the Negative in Jung

In making the case for a psychotherapy in the perfect tense Giegerich recovers an orientation towards the negative that he sees and underlines in Jung. Giegerich frequently returns to a passage in Jung where he describes psychology as something which happens in the background of the clinical scene: "behind the impressions of daily life – behind the scenes – another picture looms up, covered by a thin veil of facts" (1997, p. 8). Giegerich conceives the "other picture" that looms up as what he calls the *psychological difference*, mapping the space between the empirical/factual presentations of the patient (their statements, their symptoms) and what Jungians often refer to as the *objective psyche*. Drawing on a line from Joseph Conrad, Greg Mogensson refers to this looming picture (always negative) as "that glimpse of truth for which you had forgotten to ask" (p. 9). Psychology always has an ear for this other picture that looms up, between the lines, or even against the grain of what the patient *positively* identifies as the therapeutic goal or presenting problem. The art of therapy

often consists of drawing attention to this other picture or forgotten question that can frequently break the alliance and create the appearance that the therapist isn't listening to the client's real (*positive*) concerns.

Attending to that which occurs in the background distinguishes this kind of psychology from what Giegerich describes as the technician approach in much of clinical psychology. He speaks of hatching or circumambulating as verbs to describe therapeutic work, actions that seek not to isolate the symptom and its direct resolution but rather to encourage the patient to *think psychologically*. Here again he draws upon particular passages in Jung where he sees attention to the negative. He often reiterates a central claim by Jung that the therapist meets the patient not as a technician or even physician but empty-handed like an attendant, nurse or servant: "*Therapon* means first of all servant, caretaker, attendant, nurse. Only that! Nothing heroic or magnificent" (Giegerich, *Dreams*, p. 38). The dangers of the current psychological modality (or psychological epistle), for Giegerich, is to reify the symptom – to limit the symptom as a *positivity* or a *thing* – a thing that can be categorized and to which one can apply the treatment systematically. As he argues, "soul" or Geist "does not have a permanent (thing-like) existence" (*Geist*, p. 33). It is not empirically given.

Psychology and psychological thinking must therefore also be ephemeral and performative. Giegerich hangs on a particular line from where he notes that psychological interpretation involves a retelling of the symptom in the analytical space – to "say it again, as well as you can". This *retelling* is where the negative *glimpse* of psychology resides. Psychology is thus linguistic, performative, ephemeral and of course always approximate. In speaking about dreams as psychological phenomena, for instance, he challenges the often-used symbology that Jungian analysts use as guides to interpreting client dreams. Against this, he argues that dreams are not in themselves psychologically important (as positive matter); they become psychologically meaningful only in what Jung described as their interpretive retelling. He compares this to works of art like poetry or painting, noting that they are not empirically given things. Works of art come into being or into existence through their being thought by the viewer: it "needs to be re-created afresh by the viewer. And it exists only in this act of re-creation and only as long as it lasts and maintained, kept alive" (*Geist*, p. 33).

Psychology's Lack of Archimedean Point

In stressing the ephemeral and performative/linguistic notion of psychology, Giegerich refines another subtle but crucial aspect of Jung's psychology: psychology's lack of an Archimedean point. Giegerich (following Jung) troubles psychology's self-embrace as a positivistic science, adopting the Archimedean point of observation and knowledge similar to other sciences like biology. Distinguishing psychology from the other

sciences, Giegerich (2020a) argues that it is not a discipline constituted “through a structural difference between subject and object” (p. 570). In science, he continues, the object of study is irrevocably outside of itself. In depth psychology there is no Archimedean point outside of itself: “This means that psychology is logically so constituted that it operates within a fundamental identity. It is structurally not different from itself. Symbolically expressed: it is uroboric. It bites its own tail” (p. 570). Greg Mogenson (2017) describes this notion in Giegerich using the figure of total immersion in the sea without a boat:

In contrast to other sciences which theorize from a position that is supposedly outside the phenomena that they are concerned with (for which they may be called “dry land” or “ship’s deck” sciences), psychology is immersed in itself as in an infinite sea inasmuch as everything it says about its subject matter, the psyche, is but a further phenomenal expression of the psyche, strokes of the swimming it must learn in order to build itself at sea. (*Psychology as Discipline*, p. 200)

Psychology, as Sheldon Cashdan argues (1988) must start from scratch in every instant and build itself up from the bath of the patient’s content (p. 152). This is co-constructed by the patient as well, and psychology *happens only* in the fleeting instances where this co-construction occurs. It is not made visible through diagnostic or assessment – it is not positively *there* in the patient for the therapist to identify or discover. Psychology only happens when the patient is touched by that which is logically negative. It is performative and linguistic. As Giegerich (2021) argues “it is only in my and the patient’s or any person’s actual achieving here and now a *psychological understanding* of something” (p. 62). It is a happening, a momentary event and not something empirically given.

Thought as Mediation of the Empirically Given

Thought occupies a central place in Giegerich’s notion of psychology’s “happening,” and is what he interprets Jung to mean in his notes to analysts on how to interpret patient symptoms such as dreams: “[w]hat the dream, which is not manufactured by us, says is *just so*. Say it again, as well as you can” (p. 591). Giegerich highlights the last part of Jung’s passage to stress Jung’s notion of “thinking *again*” that is the work of psychology: a production that always occurs after the fact of the symptom. “Thinking is the art to allow the matter that we are dealing with to speak for itself” (Giegerich, 2020a, p. 16). One way we might think about this is in terms of clinical psychology accounts of disorders or pathologies and their seemingly factual existence. For instance, in the PHQ9 assessment for depression, we explore whether or not a client *has* certain symptoms like sleep issues, lack of motivation or appetite. A greater quantity of these indicates the likelihood that the patient *has* depression or *is* depressed.

Giegerich's point is that this is not yet psychology. Psychology, citing Hegel (2020a), "only begins its flight at dusk, when the day is over. Thinking thinks what has already happened and now is" (p. 17). It is the *thinking again* of the symptoms that allows the psychological phenomena to "be released into their truth" (p. 17). This again involves the patient and the therapist in a different relation than in modern clinical psychology. The symptom is not identified and discovered in the patient but is produced and mediated *after the fact*. Assessment may be useful in mapping some of the terrain, but it is not yet psychology in Giegerich's sense.

Patients know this intuitively as well since there is rarely an experience of decisive satisfaction as a result of assessment or diagnosis – knowing what it is they *have*. We may even offer that there is little satisfaction to be gained from causality theory such as may be found in attachment history or family of origin work. Knowing that one may be predisposed to relational anxiety does not necessarily produce satisfaction. Satisfaction, if it is to arrive, comes not from identifying and quantifying the symptoms but, in another Hegelian allusion – in letting that empirical knowledge *come home to itself*.

Here Giegerich's notion of psychology closely resembles Hegel's notion of speculation, which he distinguishes from reflection. Reflection, for Hegel, is categorical and scientific, producing "in thought, a world that is dead" (Verene, 2007, p. 2). We could argue that much of clinical psychology operates in this mode, where "psycho education" operates as a kind of scientific schema where all psychological "objects are fully categorized and rendered lifeless, labeled, like parts of a skeleton, or pigeon-holed, like boxes in a grocer's stall" (Verene, 2007, p. 2). This for Giegerich keeps the symptoms at bay, as empirical objects outside the subject. *Coming home to oneself* mirrors more closely what Hegel means in speculative thinking where we know something as a subject through thought's reflection *into itself*. It is this dialectical or "circular" speculative knowing that Giegerich casts as psychology or psychological work. In Hegel, speculative truth exists uroborically, it "is the process of its own becoming, the circle that presupposes its end as its goal, having its end also as its beginning" (Verene, 2007, p. 18). Giegerich names this process in psychology as *absolute negative interiorization*, which like Hegel's dialectic, moves in the direction of sublation and the restored position.

Looking at this phenomenon clinically, this dialectic can be seen as a series of negations in the patient that work in the direction of sublation – "a negation which maintains the key dimension of the negated phenomenon and elevates it into a higher level" (Žižek, 2020, p. 61). In this process, what matters is that the *externality* – the thingness – of the symptom is dissolved and negated (as something that has inflicted and befallen me like an illness). The symptom is allowed to come home to itself,

integrated into the life world of the patient and de-literalized and dispersed into larger narratives of the self. The patient begins to see depression, in one example, as an expression of a life trajectory, an affective expression of a combination of regrets, sadness, feelings of shame, guilt and built-up resentments. This work involves the tracing, mapping and *thinking* of these thoughts in the presence of the affects associated with depression – and building it afresh in each session. Tarrying with the negative, psychologically, for Giegerich, is thus to build psychology *from scratch* in each session. It is not a process that is fixed or finite, but because it is logically negative, remains an ongoing production performed anew in each session. It is a labor that begins with the empirical situation – the presenting problem – but labors always in that which looms up behind the analytical scene.

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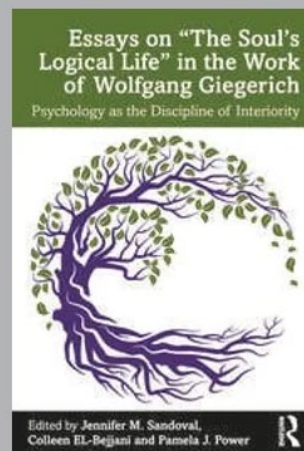
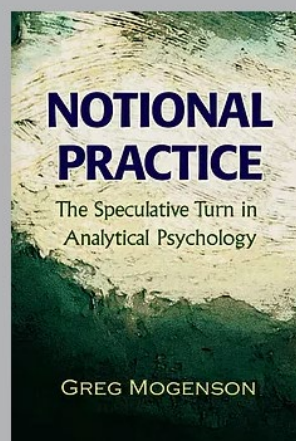
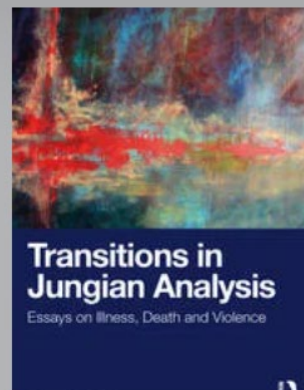
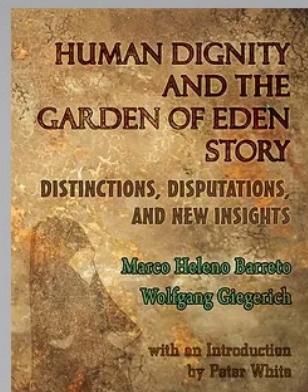
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Nicholas Balaisis has worked in academia for the last two decades before retraining as a Psychotherapist through a Master's program in Theology and Psychotherapy. He maintains a private practice west of Toronto, Canada, but continues to teach at the University of Waterloo in Communication Arts. While he holds a PhD in Communication and Culture, he has recently developed courses more aligned with psychology, such as a new course on the discursive history of mental health. He also writes a blog for Psychology Today, focusing on a broad range of issues such as attachment theory, relational dynamics, gender, and technology and the psyche. Prior to this, he published broadly on media studies, film and global culture, which culminated in a 2016 book on Cuban cinema entitled *Imperfect Aesthetics*. He is presently animated by Hegel, Giegerich, Hillman and PDI, and envisions more future research and writing in this area.

Recent Titles!





Dusk Owl Books

A New Direction in Analytical Psychology

Our friends at [Dusk Owl books](#) have recently published:

Human Dignity and the Garden of Eden Story: Distinctions, Disputations, and New Insights

by [Wolfgang Giegerich](#) (Author), [Marco Heleno Barreto](#)

(edited by Greg Mogenson with an introduction by Peter White)

Consciousness, according to Jung, cannot exist without a discrimination of differences, nor the soul without the subject matters and opposing viewpoints that it meets itself in and as. In this book, “the soul” as *psychological consciousness* establishes itself by means of a high-level dispute over the meaning and provenance of the human dignity concept in Modernity. Whereas traditionally, this concept had been quietly backed up by man’s firm conviction of having been created in the image and likeness of God, it is remarkable to observe the ubiquity of undignified, entitled, and narcissistic appeals to human dignity and human rights in our secular times. Into this contradiction the authors of the essays in this volume provide deep insights, even while disputing one another’s interpretations of such symbolical touchstones as the *imago dei*, the *coniunctio*, and the Garden of Eden story. With rigour and brilliance, clarifications are offered, all along the way, with respect to the question of how interpretations are to be structured if they are to be truly *psychological* in the spirit of Jung’s “psychology with soul.”

Notional Practice: The Speculative Turn in Analytical Psychology

by [Greg Mogenson](#)

This book brings together in one place a selection of its author's many contributions to psychology as the discipline of interiority. Beginning with an "Introductory Chronicle," the author provides a lively account of his long collaboration with Wolfgang Giegerich as editor of the latter's *Collected English Papers*. Included in this chronicle are accounts of the negations his own understanding of Jungian psychology had to go through during this period, as well as insights into the problem of the transference as this plays out within schools of thought that are rooted in the concepts and insights of master representatives dating back to Freud and Jung.

New from Routledge, from our own Co-president and Executive Committee member, Pamela Power, comes:

Transitions in Jungian Analysis

By Pamela Power

This deeply personal book contains essays and articles that portray the evolution of the author as a practicing Jungian analyst. Themes of illness, death, and violence are inherent within the chapters of this book. She uses metaphors from music to describe transitions, some involve literal death, and others are metaphorical.

The chapters of this book provide an engaging and readable review of life from one Jungian psychoanalyst, featuring essays on topics such as physical illness, film, music, video games, and her dog. The author covers problematic psychological and physical conditions, each of which, through exploration and inquiry, provides a transition to a new depth of understanding and a renewed sense of self.

Topos

Our next presenter will be Michael Caplan.
April 28, 2024, at 2 PM Eastern time.

Dialectical Thinking and Psychology (“that in itself moves in opposite directions”)

Are we understanding our own words dialectically enough? How should we think the binaries that are key to this approach: folk-language (real, soul) and technical terminology (the absolute-negative); logic and image; activity and passivity (“speaking” versus “letting the phenomenon speak”); magnum and parvum; soul as “general” and “specific”; truth and “hobby status”? What about “psychology as the discipline of interiority” itself, and the acronym “PDI” – what do they stand for and what might they obscure?

Michael Caplan has presented at gatherings of the ISPDI since 2012, having followed the work of Giegerich and Hillman for over 30 years. A writer, editor, designer, and director, he is the founder of House of ShAkE, a publishing and production company. And he sings down-home music – classic country, folk, blues, and porch-song standards.

(ISPDI members can obtain the Zoom link at <https://www.ispdi.org/topos>.)

Open Inquiry

A reminder that the next Open Inquiry is scheduled for April 14, 2024, at 2 PM Eastern time. Our focus will be on *Coniunctio* by Wolfgang Giegerich, p. 55-65. Note that we have adopted a more systematic process where a participant prepares and presents a summary of each section, which is followed by discussion.

Please note: The Zoom link and information to the Open Inquiry can now be found on the ISPDI website. After signing in to the website: ispdi.org go to the drop-down menu under the "Newsletter and Events" tab and click on "Open Inquiry". Here you can also register for the next meeting if you wish although it is not necessary.