

CONTEMPORARY PSYCHOANALYTIC PRACTICE

André Green

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Introduction and notes to the English edition by

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*The first book in the French Psychoanalysis:
Contemporary Voices, Classical Texts Series*

Series Editor: Howard B. Levine

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Du signe au discours was first published in 2012 by Les Éditions d'Ithaque

This edition has been arranged by Red Rock Literary Agency Ltd.

First published in English in 2026 by

Karnac Books Limited

62 Bucknell Road

Bicester

Oxfordshire OX26 2DS

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A C.I.P. for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80013-368-6 (paperback)

ISBN: 978-1-80013-370-9 (e-book)

ISBN: 9-781-80013-369-3 (PDF)

Typeset by vPrompt eServices Pvt Ltd, India

Translated by Agnès Jacobs by a grant from the Boston Group for Psychoanalytic Studies, inc. (bgpsboston.org).



Translated with the support of the Centre national du livre—Ministry of Culture, France.



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About the author and contributors

André Green (1927–2012), French psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, member of the Paris Psychoanalytical Society (SPP), was one of the most pre-eminent figures of the contemporary psychoanalytic movement, both for his theoretical and clinical research and his role within institutions. In 1965, Green became a member of the SPP, of which he was President from 1986 to 1989. From 1975 to 1977 he was a Vice-President of the International Psychoanalytical Association and from 1979 to 1980 a Freud Memorial Professor at University College London. He was elected an Honorary Member of the British Psychoanalytical Society.

He attended Jacques Lacan's seminars between 1961 and 1967, when he definitively broke with him. He then directed a seminar at the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Paris where he invited the great philosophers and authors of his time, including Jean-Pierre Vernant, Michel Serres, Jacques Derrida, Marcel Detienne, and René Girard. A great reader of D. W. Winnicott and a friend of W. R. Bion, he constantly bridged the gap between British, American, and French psychoanalytical research in a spirit of international openness and turned toward the future of psychoanalysis. His theoretical contributions—the dead mother, private madness, the work of the negative, the analytic third, and the

analytic object—opened the way to psychoanalysis beyond neurosis, the hallmark of twenty-first-century psychoanalysis.

Many of his works, such as *Life Narcissism*, *Death Narcissism*, *On Private Madness*, and *The Work of the Negative*, are classics of psychoanalytic literature.

Litza Guttieres-Green, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, full member of the Paris Psychoanalytic Society and the Swiss Society of Psychoanalysis, is the author of a number of articles on hysteria, psychic pain, and the feminine.

Howard B. Levine, MD, is a member of APSA, PINE, the Contemporary Freudian Society, and Pulsion, on the faculty of the NYU Post-Doc Contemporary Freudian Track, on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* and *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, editor-in-chief of the Routledge Wilfred Bion Studies Book Series, and in private practice in Brookline, Massachusetts. He has authored many articles, book chapters, and reviews on psychoanalytic process and technique and the treatment of primitive personality disorders. His edited and coedited books include *Unrepresented States and the Construction of Meaning* (Karnac, 2013); *On Freud's Screen Memories* (Karnac, 2014); *The Wilfred Bion Tradition* (Karnac, 2016); *Bion in Brazil* (Karnac, 2017); *André Green Revisited: Representation and the Work of the Negative* (Karnac, 2018); *Autistic Phenomena and Unrepresented States* (Phoenix, 2023), and *The Freudian Matrix of André Green* (Routledge, 2023). He is the author of *Transformations de l'Irreprésentable* (Ithaque, 2019) and *Affect, Representation and Language: Between the Silence and the Cry* (Routledge, 2022).

Fernando Urribarri is a psychoanalyst and a member of the Argentine Psychoanalytic Association (APA), where he conducts the “André Green Research Seminar.” In 2005, he codirected the International Symposium at Cerisy dedicated to André Green (transcripts published by PUF).

Author's remarks to the French edition

The present volume brings together some selected texts written between 1997 and 2005, presented at conferences, published in various bulletins and journals, or as contributions to collective works, in order to make them accessible to a wider readership.

I thank the directors of the aforementioned publications for granting permission to reprint. My thanks also go to Ana de Staal and *Les Éditions d'Ithaque* for agreeing to publish this work.

André Green
Croagnes, July 2011

Editor's remarks to the French edition

The texts in the present volume were selected by André Green himself in the year prior to his death, with the help of Fernando Urribarri. He was able to authorize the publication of the book, but did not have time to revise it entirely.

As a result, I completed this work.

In fact, the book contains mainly oral presentations transcribed and published in journals, without any editing. I made some corrections I deemed necessary for ease of reading. For Freud's texts, and for convenience, I chose as reference the *Oeuvres complètes de Freud* (PUF).*

My thanks also go to John Jackson for reviewing all the texts and providing his unfailing help throughout the project.

I want to thank and acknowledge The Boston Group for Psychoanalytic Studies (BGPS) for supporting the translation of this volume.

I hope that this book will be of interest to its readers and meet with their approval.

Litza Gutierrez-Green
Paris, 2012

* Translator's note: The reference used for the English version of Freud's works is the Strachey translation in the *Standard Edition* (Hogarth).

Preface to the French edition

Fernando Urribarri

A history of contemporary clinical thought

This is the project on which I invite you to reflect. We must create passageways between the focus of analysis and the limits of the analyzable, must force reflection to move between contradictory polarities, to answer the current need to portray the full extent of analytic practice and the variety of situations which experience provides.

—André Green, *The Psychoanalytic Frame: Internalization by the Analyst and Its Application in Practice*

The simplicity of this title, *Contemporary Psychoanalytic Practice*, could suggest that this idiomatic formula does nothing more than refer to current psychoanalytic practice. But, in truth, this expression designates a historical and conceptual state of affairs. In fact, it provides an account of the “silent revolution” (Green, 2006b, p. 90) which inspired a new psychoanalytic paradigm that constitutes one of the major objectives of André Green’s work.

The author of *Les voies nouvelles de la thérapie psychanalytique* [*New Modalities of Psychoanalytic Therapy*] pointed out that

“psychoanalytic technique is doubtless the least examined aspect of psychoanalysis” (ibid., p. 99). Indeed, the present work (which had as a tentative title “Technique Revisited”) came into existence as an attempt to correct this failing.

While *Propédeutique: la métaphysique revisitée* [Propedeutics: Metaphysics Revisited] (Green, 1995b) was the first work to present an overview of André Green’s metapsychological thinking, the present volume brings together his key contributions to the renewal of psychoanalytic practice and technique. The texts included here have two distinctive characteristics. First, they delimit the field of psychoanalytic practice, expanded and radically altered by the predominance of work with non-neurotic structures. Second, they reinforce the underpinnings of the practice, to construct a contemporary clinical model. Thus, in the texts that follow, the author reconceptualizes the analytic frame and its variations by introducing the concept of “the internal framing structure of the analyst”; he distinguishes between myths and realities of the analytic process applied to neurotic and non-neurotic structures; he assesses the results of the extension of the post-Freudian notion of countertransference by proposing a new definition centered on the analyst’s psychic work; he reevaluates the technical connections between interpretation and construction in light of contemporary practice; finally, he reformulates, within the limits of analyzability, the relation between remembering, repeating, and working through.

In all his texts André Green adopts a historical posture, both in continuity with and in opposition to Freudian and post-Freudian models. He deconstructs the reductionisms and impasses encountered in these models, in order to better integrate his contributions into a new synthesis intended to create a contemporary paradigm: Freudian, pluralistic, expanded, open, and complex.

Three important essays complete this volume, presenting unprecedented developments regarding *psychic functioning at the limits of analyzability*. One essay sheds light on feelings of guilt and shame linked to the *paternal function*, and discusses thirdness (Ch. 6). Another essay explores *passivation* (not to be confused with passivity) as a key concept in borderline states (Ch. 5), and includes the only revised version of the “dead mother complex” (Green, 1980a) which extends the original version. Finally, we must mention the remarkable theoretico-clinical

study entitled “Sexuality in non-neurotic structures: Past and present perspectives” (Ch. 7). Although this text, unique in Green’s vast body of work, focuses primarily on the paradoxical singularity of *sexuality in borderline functioning*, it also reexamines its general theoretical significance from a contemporary perspective (which connects the intrapsychic with the intersubjective).

After working with me to select the articles to be included in this volume, André Green asked me to write the preface. Therefore, as I did in my previous contributions to *Du signe au discours* (Green, 2011; Urribarri, 2011) and to *Illusions et désillusions du travail psychanalytique* (Green, 2010; Urribarri, 2010), I intend to place this volume in the context of Green’s work by means of a brief history of Greenian clinical thought seen as his contribution to a contemporary clinical paradigm.

Conceptualizing the epistemology of the practice

André Green should be read in the same way that he read Freud and “his” post-Freudian authors (Lacan, Bion, and Winnicott). To use the definition given by another remarkable reader, Jean Laplanche, such a reading is necessarily critical, historical, and problematic (Laplanche, 1998), in conformity with what Green (1983b) calls the theoretical process (as distinct from the analytic process), which is largely latent and in the course of which certain problematic questions present themselves to the mind in a manner relatively independent of the author’s architectonic consciousness.

We must not forget that Green integrated into his reflection on technique and on practice, from the beginning, an epistemological concern: “A fundamental question for psychoanalysis has to do with the relation between theoretical models and clinical practice” (Green, 1979b, p. 376). Green’s essay “Surface analysis, deep analysis” (1974) starts with a question: Can we speak of a single analytic technique when we know that various techniques will be used in the course of one day? He answers by introducing the epistemological notion of an “implicit theoretical model of the practice” as a mediator underlying the model guiding all technical research. In “Penser l’épistémologie de la pratique” (1990a) Green concludes that given the impasses to which theoretical

models borrowed from other disciplines (biology, linguistics, etc.) have led, it would be judicious to explore the epistemological potential of the *analytic device itself*.

In order to perceive the underlying unity in the apparent dispersion and the thematic arborescence of André Green's work examined in chronological order, I have suggested that the question of the contemporary in psychoanalysis has been orienting his work since "L'inconscient freudien et la psychanalyse contemporaine" (1962), followed by *Key Ideas for a Contemporary Psychoanalysis* (2005a), and up to *La Clinique psychanalytique contemporaine* (2012).

The word "contemporary" has evolved throughout Green's work: from an adjective to a noun, from a difficulty to a conjecture, from description to concept, until it became a "guiding principle." More specifically, this word encapsulates the process of forging a new paradigm intended to overcome a perceived crisis in psychoanalysis. The "epistemological motor" of this crisis (Green, 1980b) is located in the "gap" between the Freudian foundations and the challenges to psychoanalytic practice posed by non-neurotic patients.

Greenian thought can best be described by identifying three stages¹ which, from an epistemological standpoint, prove to be decisive for bringing about what we shall consider a process of innovative research.

In 1975, in his London Congress paper, Green presented his contemporary psychoanalytic project which combined a research proposal on the "limits of analyzability" with a historical view of the crisis of psychoanalysis (Green's "theoretical framework"). Next, Green announced a "return to the fundamental model (Green, 1980b). Soon afterwards, in "Le langage dans la psychanalyse" (Green, 1983a), he constructed an original theoretical model to shed light on the foundations of the Freudian method (applied to neurosis). Finally, *Key Ideas ...* (2005a) discusses changes ushered in by the new millennium (Green, 2006c) and launches the contemporary project. In order to guide the development of a general model for analytic practice, Green proposes a synthesis of the two previous models offering a new dyadic

¹ See Urribarri (2010), where I had proposed the following division: an initial stage from 1960 to 1970, a stage where ideas reached maturity in the 1980s and '90s, and a late period after 2000.

model “based on the dream and on the act” (correlated to neurotic and non-neurotic functioning). This dyad makes it possible to reconstruct the foundations of analytic technique centered on the conceptual pair “external frame–internal frame.”

First stage: The emergence of the contemporary project

The emergence of the contemporary psychoanalytic project in André Green’s work can be said to correspond to his 1974 London Congress paper “The analyst, symbolization and absence in the analytic setting” (Green, 1975). This paper adopts as its initial “theoretical framework” a new historical and epistemological perspective, resolutely antidogmatic, set forth in two strong statements.

The first statement concerns the present and posits the existence of a *crisis of psychoanalysis* associated with external and internal factors. Among the latter, Green highlights the changes in analytic practice, which created a discrepancy between the technique and the theory (fragmentation into several post-Freudian schools). The second statement asserts that in order to understand and confront these problems, they must be *conceptualized historically*. Thus, Green suggests that the “parallel evolution of theory and psychoanalytic practice” unfolds in three stages corresponding to three models (Green, 1975, pp. 8–9). The *Freudian model* focuses on intrapsychic conflict from a theoretical point of view, and on transference in practice, in the context of neurosis. By contrast, in the *post-Freudian model*,² the theory focuses on the relational or intersubjective aspect (specifically on the object relation and the role of the Other), while technique is redefined around countertransference (or the desire of the analyst). Here, the paradigmatic cases are psychotic patients (and children). *Contemporary Psychoanalytic Practice* (this volume) takes mental functioning within the frame as its vantage point for describing borderline functioning. The book endeavors to recognize, place in

² Note to the English edition: The term, relational, in this context relates to two objects linked by an object relationship and should not be read as indicting the American Relational School. Similarly, the term, intersubjective, indicates the unconscious mutuality of the functioning of two unconscious minds, analyst and analysand, and should not be taken as a reference to the American Intersubjective School.

historical perspective, and surmount the theoretical and clinical impasses of the Freudian and post-Freudian models.

In the conclusion of his London Congress paper, Green asserts that “solving the crisis disrupting psychoanalysis [that is, its future] will depend on its ability to preserve its Freudian heritage and to integrate its subsequent acquisitions” (Green, 1975 p. 17).

Green focuses his research on borderline cases, considered the new problem cases. He defines them from a clinical point of view (psychoanalytic) as “states at the limit of the analyzable,” and no longer from a psychopathological standpoint as “borderline cases.” His approach is based on the study of the representational process (defined as the basic function of the psyche) in the analytic frame (whose status is both clinical and epistemological). This theoretical perspective describes representational functioning based on the theory of the heterogeneity of the psychoanalytic signifier, bringing together strength and meaning, as well as economic and symbolic considerations (Donnet & Green, 1973). By introducing and developing the concept of “frame” (elaborated by Bleger, Winnicott, Baranger, Donnet, Green ...) Green becomes an analyst of analyzability.

The study of the limits of analyzability requires these limits to be redefined. In 1975, Green introduced the crucial concept of “analytic object,” which is, in effect, the product of the meeting of the patient and the analyst. It is a third object, a discursive object (living discourse), produced in the encounter and exchange between the analysand and the analyst in the potential space of the setting.

Green (1975) asserts that the limits of analyzability can only be those of the analyst himself, the patient’s *alter ego*. What’s more, he states that these limits coincide with those of figurability.

From a metapsychological standpoint, analyzability is defined based on the presence (or absence) of the analytic object. This third object, to be seen as a transitional object of sorts, reflects the potential and intermediary nature of the analytic space: the frame itself being considered a third element with a thirdness-producing aspect. This object constitutes the methodological device enabling the production of analytic material, as well as the construction and study of the analytic object. This confers a new triadic structure to the analytic process: transference/countertransference/frame. In this sense, *contemporary*

clinical thought is born of the conceptualization of the frame and the redefinition of analyzability, through the construction of a new “logic of the analytic pair” (Green, 1979a).

The 1975 paper proposed an extension of the notion of a countertransference, differing from the post-Freudian version. Green pointed out the central role of the analyst’s tertiary processes: they can introduce play between primary and secondary processes. Here, Green presents an original conception of the figurability and imagination of the analyst.

The paper states that the current analytic field oscillates between two extremes: at one end lies social “normality” (McDougall), where the analyst’s situation is one of “object exclusion”; at the other end are states of fusional regression and object dependence. With this context in mind, Green describes the changes he considers necessary for the analyst’s listening. He reminds us that Freud’s implicit model of neurosis is based on perversion (neurosis as the inverse of perversion). But post-Freudian authors have gradually discarded perverse fantasies in favor of psychotic defense mechanisms. Green suggests that listening should be founded on a “double code” (of psychosexuality and the work of the negative). He introduces the notion of “private madness” which combines the two codes and is only revealed in the transference, in borderline cases.

How does the analyst work in these situations? “What is demanded of the analyst is more than his affective capacity and empathy” (Green, 1975, p. 6), that is, his well-meaning neutrality and his countertransference; it is, in fact, his entire mental functioning that is demanded. Thus,

The analyst’s psyche [...] is affected by the patient’s communication. The analyst will respond to the empty space with an intense effort of thought in order to try to think that which the patient cannot think [...]. The only solution is to give the patient the image of elaboration, by situating what he gives us in a space which is neither the empty one nor one filled to overflowing, but a ventilated space. [...] It is the space of potential and of absence for, as Freud was the first to see, it is in the absence of the object that representation of it is formed, the source of all thought. (Ibid., p. 7)

Green proposes other technical changes when working with borderline cases. He proposes shifting from the predominance of content analysis (representation) to that of container analysis (structure of the ego, borderline defense mechanisms). Beyond the interpretive function, Green insists on the analyst's *framing function*. Drawing extensively on Winnicott's technique, Green (*ibid.*, p. 16) suggests that the analyst try to overcome the dilemma between invasion and abandonment by transforming delusions into play and death into absence, by creating an intermediary field of potential space: "Perhaps the aim of analysis is only to enable the patient to be alone (in the presence of the analyst)" (*ibid.*, p. 17).

In *The Chains of Eros*, Green (1997) asserts the need for the analyst's mad thought in order to understand the peculiar thoughts of the patient's private madness.

To accept the madness of transference, even psychotic transference, means that the analyst must come to know the mechanisms of a logic that is more than the unconscious logic implicit in Freud's text [...]; it means discovering other forms of logic. Freud's logic is one of hope because it counts on realized desire. Borderline cases confront us with the logic of despair (negative therapeutic reaction) or negative investment (splitting). (Green, 1980b, pp. 206–227)

Thus, contemporary clinical thinking emerges and comes to constitute, above all, "a borderline concept."

Before closing this section, let us mention the main technical text André Green wrote prior to those included in this volume. In "Le silence du psychanalyste" [The silence of the psychoanalyst] (Green, 1979b), the author severely criticizes the "golden rule" of the analyst's silence invented by the French analytic orthodoxy. Silence is redefined as one of the elements of the frame and of the analyst's listening function within a complementary and dynamic relation with the patient's discourse. Green shows the radical unsuitability of silence when used as a "technique" with patients subject to severe pathologies. He proposes a mode of dialogue which, in the face of predominant de-linking, must strive to:

create shared speech in a single verbal strand in which the analysand's and analyst's discourse weave a fabric of cross-linked speech. [...]

Here, the analyst must resort to psychoanalytic imagination and, above all, must attempt, more than to translate content, to use the remnants of shreds of the patient's discourse [...] to put them together in a new potential space (Winnicott) whose form is often paradoxical. (Ibid., p. 386; author's emphasis)³

He concludes his text (ibid., p. 395) with the statement: "Symbolization is a two-part process: the first links the terms of the conscious, the second uses established links and connects them to the split unconscious. [...] This *surface* work, on a level with associations, is intended to constitute the preconscious [...]."

The double-limit model

Green's research on the limits of analyzability has led to the development of an initial theoretical model of borderline functioning, named the "double-limit" model (Green, 1982). This model makes it possible to connect the double conflict (of the ego with the id and with the object) with the double limit determining the frame (between the inside and the outside of the session, and between the analyst and the patient), in order to construct a "model based on the act," at the limits of analyzability.

The stages of development of this model can be reconstituted by going over a series of articles dating back to the early 1980s. One of them, "Passions and their vicissitudes" (Green, 1980b) conceptualizes private madness by placing it on the impulse–passion–madness axis, to go beyond the limits imposed by Freudian and post-Freudian perspectives.

The future of theory, clinical work and technique does not lie in the replacement of Freudian concepts centered around castration with a modern concept with other referents—fragmentation, disintegration, annihilation, etc.—but in the *articulation* of these two approaches. In order to build a bridge between [them], it seems

³ Note to the English edition: The original of this text appeared in the French journal *Topique*, 23: 5–26, 1979, and was reprinted in *La folie privée*, but was not included in the English version of the latter, *On Private Madness*, published by Karnac in 1997. A slightly different translation of "The silence of the analyst" may be found in Green, A. (2023). *The Freudian Matrix of André Green*, edited by Levine, H. B., pp. 53–74, published by Routledge.

to me essential to re-establish madness where it has always been recognized: at the heart of human desire. (p. 203)

The following year, Green (1981) published his well-known paper on the Oedipus complex, “Édipe, Freud et nous.” In it, he set forth his concept of “generalized triangularity with a substitutable third dimension.”

His text “The dead mother” (Green, 1983b), presents a “practical” application of the ideas presented in the elaboration of the dead mother complex, a concept that has since become paradigmatic in contemporary practice. We tend to forget that this text begins by setting out the “red sequence” of castration and the “white sequence” of primary narcissism (separation from the primary object). In the section “Metapsychological hypotheses” (ibid., p. 245), the author conceptualizes the notion of a framing structure, resulting from the interiorization of the relation to the primary object, which enables separation and the construction of narcissism. This framing structure results fundamentally from two types of work of the negative: on the one hand, that of the mechanisms of double drive reversal (turning against oneself and reversal to the opposite), which create a container-like space; on the other hand, the work of the mother’s negative hallucination mechanism, which abolishes the pole of perception created by potential space for representation (a blank screen for projecting the representation). In my view, the framing structure (platform of the objectalizing function, representational matrix, and locus of subjectivation) constitutes an “implicit theoretical model” of Greenian practice: it defines its conceptualization of the frame (external and internal), of transference and of the analytic process (Urribarri, 2004).

After proposing the concept of the limit itself, and describing the defense mechanisms as modes of thought (Green, 1976, 1979a), the author of “The double limit” (1982) presents a theoretical model of clinical thinking. Here, he draws freely on Bion, having acknowledged as early as *L'enfance de Ca* (Donnet & Green, 1973) Bion’s merit in introducing the question of thought in psychoanalysis. Green regards thinking as relevant in the double intersection of internal and external (of subject and object), and of conscious and unconscious. He asserts that in borderline states it is impossible to dissociate and connect satisfactorily

intrapsychic and intersubjective work. “The framing structure not only determines the conditions of the work space, but modifies the economy of limits” (Green, 1982, p. 344).

Borderline thought, dominated by concern with limits, becomes a narcissistic object.

We shall see that Green’s work remains faithful to the two stages announced in “Passions and their vicissitudes.” Thus, he recommends:

We must return to Freud’s basic model and rethink it from our new experience with borderline cases to rediscover what Freud excluded from neurosis—namely, madness. It is from this new starting point, from this new territory whose boundaries are indistinct, that we will be able to look in both directions at the same time: in the direction of the neurotic structures and in the direction of the psychotic structures. (Green, 1986, pp. 200–201)

Second stage: The return to Freudian fundamentals

With his paper on language in psychoanalysis (Green, 1983a), Green returns to the fundamentals of the Freudian method dedicated to the treatment of neurosis. He draws from it an original model for the functioning of analysis, centered on language.

Two main reasons for this return to basics are clear. The first is inherent to the development of the Greenian project; it stems from the study of typical borderline functioning within the setting. The new questions raised by Green’s research go beyond those posed by the double-limit theory. This makes it necessary to return to the basic theoretical model to uncover the relationship between the drive–subject (intrapsychic) axis, the transference (intersubjective), and the mediating (symbolizing) role of language in analysis. In Green’s view, the “model of the dream” is the implicit theoretical model in Freud’s clinical work. This view provides an original metapsychological elucidation of the analytic setting (the first in the history of psychoanalysis, as far as we know), founded on the theory of symbolization (defined by tertiary processes and representation).

The second reason is external to Green’s work. Its timing coincides with Lacan’s recent death and the invitation for Green to speak at a conference on language, on the thirtieth anniversary of the “Rome

Discourse.” Green declared that it was only when he prepared his contribution to the conference that he was able to surmount the division between his positive view of Lacanian theory and his negative view of the practice. This allowed him to understand their coherence, as well as their considerable limitations. By clarifying his own Lacanian filiation, Green was able to consolidate his post-Lacanian position concerning the theory and develop an initial personal model of the fundamentals and function of the analytic method. (We might recall that in 1973, in *Le Discours vivant* (published in English as *The Fabric of Affect in the Psychoanalytic Discourse*, 1999), Green based his general model of the analytic process on Lacan’s L-schema.)⁴

Henceforth, Green’s question is: “Why does psychoanalysis work?” Thus, he takes up Lacan’s own question, which the latter answered by asserting that the unconscious is structured like a language. To renew the foundations of the talking cure, Green defines the frame as a “psychoanalytic apparatus” (Green, 1983a, p. 119) serving to bring about the most extensive possible transformation of psychic productions into language through free association. In contrast with the homogeneity of the structuralist model, here language is defined as a triple system which includes double signification (of sign and sound), double representation (of thing and word), and double reference (of psychic reality and material reality). Thus, double transference occurs: at once onto the object (analyst) and onto speech (associative discourse). When language is over-invested in transference, it functions like a mediator and leads to what is not language, to the unconscious. This is why it can be said that “analytic speech takes the mourning out of language” (*ibid.*, p. 132). The frame, as a tertiary element (between analysand and analyst), is defined as a matrix of transitional tertiary symbolization:

[...] the function of the frame is to make possible a polysemic metaphorization. [...] The frame brings together three polarities: the dream (narcissism), maternal care (the mother in Winnicott) and the prohibition of incest (the father in Freud). The dream is thus the symbolization of the unconscious structure of the Oedipus complex, made manifest by the psychoanalytic apparatus

⁴ Note to the English edition: Lacan’s L-schema diagrams the dual relationship between the imaginary and symbolic registers.

(the frame). [...] The psychoanalytic apparatus makes possible the emergence of what we call the other of the object—based on a theory of generalized triangulation with a substitutable third. (Ibid., pp. 120–122)

In his discussion of symbolization, Green introduces the term “ego/subject,” a connecting agency in the conflictual relations between the ego and the subject (the two poles constituting the framing structure after primary repression). This structure is defined as the operator of productions representative of both transferential chains. The subject (seen as a “player subject” not reducible to the signifying combination) is essentially the agency of the work accomplished in the relations between the psychical apparatus and the language apparatus. The ego is the agency of the work taking place between the body, the world, and the psyche. It is plain, then, that the specificity of the psychoanalytic conception of language places the governance of speech at the center of the complex relations between the ego and the subject, both of which are dependent on the *movement* between the intrapsychic and the intersubjective (determined by drive–object polarities).

“The symbolic order is no longer founded on language, but rather on the three agencies of the psychical apparatus. The tertiary processes form a bridge between the language apparatus and the psychic apparatus” (ibid., p. 146).

Drawing on the epistemology of self-organization (Von Foerster, Varela, Atlan), analysis is seen as an autopoietic process with an organization–disorganization–reorganization sequence. To paraphrase a Greenian formula, we might say that the analytic process, like life, is a fertile disorder. The “player subject” has his equivalent in the “player analyst” who can work at the various levels of the representational field, in the interests of the process and of transformation. Henceforth, *clinical thinking* becomes a “logic of heterogeneity” (Green, 1996a).

From “fundamental practice” to renewed metapsychological foundations

It is not surprising that shortly after his “return to the fundamental model” Green wrote “The fundamental practice of psychoanalysis” (1988), in which the concept of “clinical thinking” appears for the first

time. This text attempts to formulate the consequences for clinical work of shedding light on the theoretical foundations of the Freudian method, as he did in his London paper (Green, 1975).

There, Green presented a new definition of the analytic process as the subject's "return to himself via the detour of the resembling other" (a formulation in which we recognize the double drive reversal model of the framing structure). "The analytic exchange always involves this retroactive reverberation."

The 1988 paper also discusses the mental functioning of the analyst.

If identification is considered to be the basis of the analyst's psychic work, the second factor corresponds to the figures that he produces. [...] From a general point of view, the psychic activity of the analyst mobilizes and favors the process of representation; that is, the plural exercise of the different types and modes of representation. To produce meaning is to induce representations in the other. (p. 587)

The implicit reference here is to Charles Peirce's concept of thirdness. The notion of the "resembling other" exerts a significant effect on both theory and practice (the contributions in "On thirdness" (Green, 1990b) are similar). For the subject, the function of recognition (and self-recognition) depends on the relation with the resembling other (similar enough to favor understanding through identification, and dissimilar enough to preserve alterity and allow difference). The text of a conference held around that time, "Object(s) and Subject" (1990), reads:

It is impossible to recognize what the subject is made of, or what he is trying to achieve, unless he is recognized by another subject [...]. The subject is willing to accept all the imperfections of his condition, his clumsy actions and his blunders if, and only if, he is recognized by another subject (similar and different). (Green, 2000d, p. 23)

The revision of the fundamentals⁵ of the Freudian method in 1983 led to the development of several conceptual axes during the next decade,

⁵ The need for new foundations followed from the criticism of existing models. "Previous psycho-analytic solutions, which were not satisfying enough and did not stand the test of time, show us

as well as to the definition of new metapsychological foundations. Green set forth these foundations in *Psychic Causality: Between Nature and Culture* and in *Propaedeutics: Metapsychology Revisited* (1995a and 1995b, concise and extensive versions respectively). They are constructed along five axes:

1. The drive-object pair, the psychic unit connecting the intrapsychic and the intersubjective.
2. The general theory of representation with its two dimensions (one widening Freudian theory to include the body, affect, and thought, and the other representing the framing structure as symbolization matrix).
3. The extended topography correlative to the aforementioned extension, based on the double limit (ego/id and ego-object/other).
4. Thirdness: metaconceptual, “semiotic” axis, extending from the theory of “generalized triangulation with a substitutable third” to tertiary processes.
5. The work of the negative (“dynamic/process” axis, metaconceptual, extending from the negative foundations of symbolization and ego structuring to representations of destructiveness, via primary defense mechanisms). These axes reinforce a rather complex view of the psyche: open, heterogenous, process-based, and poietic. Finally, these new metapsychological foundations constitute the theoretical support needed for the development of a new matrix for the field.

Third stage: The turn of the millennium and the future of psychoanalysis

It could be that historians of psychoanalysis mark the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the third millennium by designating in our discipline what I propose to call the turn of the millennium. Today, when some people are impatiently anticipating the demise of psychoanalysis, I see in this turn the sign of a revival [...].

—André Green (2006a)

the paths to avoid: Lacan’s signifying homogenization, ego psychology with its bio-sociological discourse, Melanie Klein’s generalized unconscious phantasy theory, the direct observation method adopted by her opponents (Mahler, then Stern), and finally the proponents of a self free from its drives (Kohut)” (Green, 1991, p. 218).

“The turn of the millennium” is an expression André Green used to describe the start of a new stage in the history of psychoanalysis, and to suggest the dawning of new horizons.

The term could rightfully be applied to Green’s work itself, given that in the early years of the twenty-first century his “implicit research project” became an explicit endeavor aimed at introducing a new paradigm serving to surmount the crisis in psychoanalysis (a crisis openly acknowledged at the time, even by the IPA). This shift in André Green’s work had two aspects: one individual, the other collective.

At the level of personal production, in *Le Temps Éclaté* [*The Shattered Time*] (2000c) Green proposed a synthesis of the two previous models through the dyad “dream model–action model,” for the purposes of a double investigation (defined around the representation/frame axis): for the continued study of the limits of the analyzable (especially in regard to so-called “radical” destructiveness); and for the renewal of the theory underlying contemporary practice. The “dream–act” diptych enables a reformulation of the fundamentals of analytic technique centered upon the conceptual pair “external frame–internal frame.” Clinical thinking is introduced as a concept.

Since the initial double-limit model (restricted to borderline functioning), the tendency has been to develop a general model: a dyad representing the heterogenous totality of *contemporary psychoanalytic practice*, including neurotic and non-neurotic states.

In his speech at The Future of a Disillusion Colloquium, Green stated:

Here is the program on which we should reflect. We should forge pathways between the foundations of psychoanalysis and the limits of the analyzable, forcing our thought to move between contradictory polarities, to respond to the need to represent what analytic practice is today, across the whole field and in the various situations offered by our experience. (Green, 2000a, p. 46)

This endeavor led to the publication of both personal books (*Key Ideas*, 2005a), as well as to conferences (*Unity and Diversity of the Psychoanalyst’s Practices*, 2006a), to the creation of research groups (national and international), and even a special international issue of the *Revue française de psychanalyse* in 2001, dedicated to “Currents of Contemporary Psychoanalysis.”

Green intended to conduct this research along four axes:

- A new reading of Freud, re-actualizing the metapsychology and the Freudian method as the foundation of psychoanalysis
- A critical and creative assessment of the main post-Freudian contributions (coupled with a dialogue with contemporary authors representing the different currents)
- A widening of the clinical psychoanalytic field to include “legitimately” (not only *de facto*) analytic work in framing structures specific to non-neurotic states
- Reciprocal interest in contemporary thought, and particularly complex epistemology (Morin, Castoriadis, Atlan).⁶

Dream and action: Two Freudian models for contemporary practice

The “dream model–action model” dyad is constructed through an extraction/elaboration process starting with Freud’s work. These two models are directly concerned with representation and the differences in its status and function in the first and second topography. These differences are correlated to neurotic and non-neurotic functioning, as well as to the frame and its variants.

In the 1983 paper (Green, 1983a), the question “Why does it work?” led Green to update the foundations of the Freudian method and develop the dream model. Henceforth, what was needed was to retain the paradigmatic status of the dream as a fundamental model, as contrasted with the action model. This duality is composed of a conceptual pair whose two constitutive elements are defined or redefined in relation to each other. Green considers the key question to be that of the Freudian turning point of the 1920s: “Why does it not work?” Freud’s answers fluctuated between the troubled waters of “Analysis terminable and interminable” (1937c) and the clarity of “Constructions in analysis” (1937d). Green’s answers have sometimes adopted the tone of the first essay (as in *Illusions and Disillusions ...*, 2010), but have generally opted for the tone of the second (as the present work testifies).

⁶ Interested readers can refer to Green, 2006c.

The dream model has been rendered more complex. Freud relies on the dream (just as in the metapsychology of the first topography) to create the frame. The narrative of the dream and the associations related to it constitute the ideal analytic material. In the theoretical model of the dream, representations are the basic data of the psyche: they create the “chains of Eros” by connecting drives, linking them to the representation process. The object of desire is variable, substitutable, and metaphorizable. The dream model focuses on sexual desire, shaped into phantasies and made up of representations. Clinical work is based on the compatibility between thing-presentations and word-presentations, expressed transferentially in free association. We have here the model of psychoneurotic functioning. It supposes that the containing function of the framing structure is established solidly enough to allow the analysis to focus on content, primarily in an intrapsychic mode. This brings into play transference and transformation relations between the infantile neurosis, defense psychoneurosis, and transference neurosis. Finally, according to Green, the analytic process takes place within a frame/dream (narration of the dream)/interpretation triptych.

The action model, associated with the second topography, where the unconscious was replaced by the id, focuses on drive-related⁷ impulses. These can be attached to representation or discharged in acts. Hence, representation becomes a possible result rather than being a given at the start. The act can take several forms (enacted or not), but it always bypasses symbolization. Deathly repetition compulsion replaces desire, and terror replaces the hallucinatory experience of satisfaction. Reference to the deficiencies of the relationship with the primary object and, in parallel, to the prevalence of death-giving narcissism plays a central role here. The framing structure, as a space of representation, is overwhelmed by an emptying out function. The overinvestment of the perception of “reality” acts as a counterinvestment in regard to

⁷ Note to the English edition: Both Urribarri and Green tend to use the French words, *pulsion* and *pulsionnelle*, which should be translated as drive and drive-related, rather than as instinct and instinctual. Strachey tended to translate Freud's term, *Trieb*, as instinct, thereby blurring the distinction between instinct and drive. In this volume, we have tried to maintain this distinction wherever possible. When quoting the Freud of the *Standard Edition*, we have retained Strachey's use of instinct and instinctual, but otherwise use drive and drive-related. For the difference between the two terms, drive and instinct, see Laplanche and Pontalis (1973).

representation. The unrepresentable bursts on the analytic scene and renders both free association and free-floating attention ineffectual.

In the action model, the interpretive function centered on the intrapsychic must intersect with—and to some extent move toward—the intersubjective. The role of the analyst as object takes precedence in the transference and at the level of technique, and sometimes even literally, as in face-to-face treatment. What is sought here is the possibility of interiorization in the present of the session. The creation of the psychic container and of the preconscious as an internal transitional space becomes a condition required by the analyst of content. Before making the unconscious conscious, what is manifest must be rendered thinkable again (whether it be acted or spoken). In this context, the dream (the interpretation of latent content), as a referent of the technique, is replaced by play (the joint construction of meaning in the intersubjective space, as a necessary condition for its introjection into the ego).

The goal of analytic play is interiorization in the present of the session. This means betting on a process of subjective appropriation. It means granting priority to “work at the limits” which also seeks to delimit/set internal limits (in other words, intermediary constructions between agencies) and external limits (between the ego and the object). In the analyst’s work, the representational function is combined with (and subordinated to) the framing function. I have suggested that in the action model the process takes place within the triptych “internal frame/act/interiorization” (Urribarri, 2004, p. 211).

The frame and clinical thinking

One of the first (and most crucial) developments arising from the dream/act diptych is a new way of conceptualizing the frame. For instance, in “The psychoanalytic framework” (Green, 2000a), force (motion) plays a central role: it serves to assess the concept of a frame when applied to the pair “representation/the unrepresentable.” This text emphasizes above all the epistemological dimension of the frame as a device making it possible to “dismember” the object of psychoanalysis; it sets out the manner of perceiving it and approaching it. Green then defines the frame as a “force field.”

“The frame makes it possible to become aware of the force that manifests itself first in the form of the transference” (ibid., p. 37). And he continues:

The frame provides a space whose relatively constant characteristics make it possible to observe the effects of an encounter or non-encounter [...]. The aim consists in impeding the lifting of the forces whose only destiny is to become representations psychically charged with affect. [...] Throughout this process, the force oscillates between its representation and its counter-investment [...]. We can then sense what is representable and what remains unrepresentable, and understand how applied knowledge is connected to the unknowable in the psyche through the relation to the Other. (Ibid., p. 40)

Thus, we can conclude that the frame provides a model which reveals these characteristics and inadequacies, that is, its limitations.

In *Psychoanalysis: A Paradigm for Clinical Thinking*, Green (2005b) revisits the frame and proposes to see it as a two-part structure, with one part constant and the other variable. The constant part constitutes an “active matrix” (or symbolic matrix) created by the patient’s free association, coupled with the analyst’s free-floating listening and well-meaning neutrality. This dialogic matrix constitutes the nucleus of the dialogic action, whose agent is the analytic couple benefiting from relative autonomy in choosing among possible forms of work. The variable part constitutes a kind of “protective sheath” for the active matrix, and corresponds to particular conditions of work such as the frequency of sessions, the patient’s position, and the various details of the analytic contract.

At the same time, in order to explain the particularity of psychoanalytic thinking, the author presents “clinical thinking” as a paradigm which combines an epistemological dimension with a clinical dimension. The first reflects the specificity of psychoanalytic conceptualization (“Clinical thinking is defined as the original and specific mode of rationality emerging from practical experience ... it creates concepts that reveal the reasons of the unconscious” (ibid., pp. 11–12). This epistemological dimension produces *tertiary thinking*, a psychoanalytic form of hypercomplex thinking. The second dimension, which is

clinical, corresponds to the work of thought set in motion in the relation of the psychoanalytic encounter (*ibid.*, p. 12). This involves a conceptualization of the analyst's psychic functioning, supported by new metapsychological foundations:

Clinical thinking is the result of mutual work of observation and self-observation of mental processes, using word associations [...]. When we consider clinical thinking an activity primarily characterized by relational processes between various aspects of the psychic components of the personality, we set forth two concepts. One of them is already familiar to us [the tertiary processes]; the new concept we wish to introduce here concerns the relation of these processes with the virtual. It elucidates the link between *tertiary processes* and *virtual thirdness*. [...] This brings us back to the theme we have referred to as the *work of the negative*, seen here in one of its forms. Clinical thinking which involves the flow of free association requires an element which was pointed out by Bion: *negative capability* [...]. This tolerance of negative states in the patient is also an attitude of the analyst at work. It is undoubtedly the most productive and creative form of the work of the negative. (*Ibid.*, pp. 29–31)

Thus, the analyst's psychic work becomes a conceptual orientation which involves listening, countertransference, and the analyst's imagination and thinking during the session. This thinking is dialogic (Batjin, Morin). Here, countertransference is no longer a core concept (as in the post-Freudian model), but becomes subordinated to and integrated into clinical thinking.

One of the important stages of the development of the "clinical thinking" concept is revealed in a debate with Robert Wallerstein (former president of the IPA) concerning the crisis in psychoanalysis and in research conducted by the IPA. In his 1996 article "What kind of research for psychoanalysis?" Green states:

After much reflection on the current crisis of psychoanalysis as it manifests itself in the congresses of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA), I came to the conclusion that "... the greater risk for the future of psychoanalysis is the decline and possible fall of the spirit of psychoanalysis, the specific mental state which inhabits

the psychoanalyst during his work and thinking. Our task is to keep alive that spirit.” (Green, 1996b, p. 14)

Continuing the same exchange, in his “Response to Robert S. Wallerstein,” Green wrote:

My insistence on the state of mind prevailing in the analytic session is not precise enough, so that a misunderstanding remains possible. In this discussion, I do not support the highly subjective approach of the analyst only to oppose it to the objective methods required by research. My purpose is to emphasize the particular—not to say unique—functioning of the psychoanalytic subject in the process of listening in that setting. I am speaking of the temporary constructions which oscillate, alternate and take place sometimes simultaneously and sometimes consecutively in the psychoanalytic work. The psychical work must be connected to similar well-known processes such as dream work, mourning, etc. (Green, 2000b, p. 33)

The analyst’s psychical work creates synergy between a whole series of heterogenous dimensions and operations; its optimal functioning is equivalent to that of the “tertiary processes” which underlie the analyst’s thinking and creativity. The polysemic nature of the frame is mirrored by the analyst’s multifold and variable position: it cannot be predetermined or fixed. The analyst does not appear as an oedipal father, a containing mother, etc. He must *play*, as much in the theatrical and musical sense as in the “amusement” sense of the word, depending on the scenario acted out in the singularity of the analytic field. Given that the unconscious “speaks in many dialects,” the analyst must be “multilingual.”

The study of the frame and its variations introduces the concept of “the analyst’s internal frame,” the foundation of clinical thinking. In “La crise de l’entendement psychanalytique,” Green states:

I consider it crucial to distinguish psychotherapies clearly far removed from the aims and procedures of the psychoanalytic method, *stricto sensu* [...] psycho-therapies whose aim is to come as close as possible to the conditions of analytic treatment (the frame as internalization of the analyst’s analysis, rather than a protocol to be applied). (Green, 2001, p. 346)

In *Unity and Diversity of Contemporary Psychoanalytic Treatments* (Green, 2006a), the author asserts that we are seeing “the end of an era,” the era of the classic frame. This change in the times could well coincide with a change of paradigm. Instead of regretting the past, Green advocates moving forward and granting psychoanalytic status to psychotherapies. He defends the psychoanalytic status of face-to-face therapies (or therapies in other settings), as long as the conceptual pairs “dialogic matrix/protective sheath” and “external frame/internal frame” are present.

The possibility of carrying out the various responsibilities of an analyst involves a back-and-forth between two parameters: the internalized frame and the present session of face-to-face psychotherapy, where a process leading to internalization takes place in the present. I propose the idea of a movement created by an alternation between recentering (analysis in the analytic situation) and decentering (analysis in a context where the analytic situation cannot be put in place). (Green, 2000a, p. 45)

In conclusion, in this book André Green attempts to bring together the key texts in which he reconsidered and revised the pillars of analytic technique, in response to the “silent revolution” occurring in contemporary psychoanalytic practice. It was our wish to contribute to his approach by showing its role in the development of his ideas, and in the project they were intended to serve. We also hoped to show that André Green’s passionate involvement in this adventure aimed at forging a *contemporary psychoanalytic practice* explains the fact that the work of its construction continues. One of the best ways for us to participate in this work individually and to collectively enrich this founding initiative is to consider it an ongoing matrix for the field, an open research project.

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