Revolution of the Concept of 'the Unconscious' in Deleuze and Guattari¹⁾

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Abstract: Freud and psychoanalysis regard the unconscious as a complementary set of consciousness in the psyche. But Deleuze & Guattari criticize such a conception of the unconscious and argue that the unconscious is the whole complementary set of consciousness, so includes the whole universe. Such kinds of conception of the unconscious are already elaborated both as Nature in Spinoza and as Duration in Bergson. In the present paper, I mainly focus on the materiality of the unconscious in Deleuze & Guattari; though many scholars are well aware of their assertion of the differences between the psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious and that of them, their material conception of the unconscious are often neglected or

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misunderstood. It might be helpful in constructing an ontology conforming with contemporary natural sciences and suggesting a practical philosophy (ethics and political theory) founded on reality to interpret the unconscious as "inseparably physical and noological", as Deleuze & Guattari express.

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^{***} Abbreviations of works of Gilles Deleuze (and Félix Guattari) are in References of this paper.

"L'inconscient n'est pas pyschique, il est inséparablement physique et noologique."

- G. Deleuze & F. Guattari, "La synthèse disjonctive" (1970)

1. Double breaking away both from *Logic of Sense* and from psychoanalysis

It is very interesting that before having met Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze still had some affections to psychoanalysis. Deleuze confessed his "naïve and culpable" attitudes in "Author's Note for the Italian Edition of Logic of Sense" (1976)²⁾ where appeared his self-criticism. He said that Logic of Sense "apparently still reflected a naïve and culpable complaisance with respect to psychoanalysis" and that "I had been then trying, very timidly, to render psychoanalysis inoffensive, presenting as a surface art" (DRF 60). From his confession, one can find two points. First, Deleuze himself made a kind of break (rupture) with Logic of Sense. He even said that "a benevolent reader is necessary" in order to give that book its relevance (actualité) (DRF 58). Second, he made a break not only with Logic of Sense but more importantly also with psychoanalysis. "Now", in 1976, he was deeply changed, so he was "nearly incapable of speaking for himself" (DRF 60). What happened on earth? The very meeting with Guattari just after the publication of Logic of Sense in 1969. If the reason Deleuze

2) Gilles Deleuze (1976), "Note pour L'édition italienne de LOGIQUE DU SENS" in DRF, pp. 58-60. All translations are modified or my own. Italics in citations are of original author, but italics outside citations and underlines in citations are mine. left *Logic of Sense* alone was his "naïve and culpable complaisance with respect to psychoanalysis", Guattari forced him to break absolutely away from *psychoanalysis*. Let's listen to Deleuze's voice a little more.

"I believe Félix and I sought out other directions because we had desire doing so. *Anti-Oedipus* no longer has height nor depth, nor surface. In this book everything happens, is done, the intensities, the multiplicities, the events, upon a sort of spherical body or scroll painting: *body without organs*. [...] I believe also that this change of mode implies a change of subject matters, or, inversely, that a certain politics takes place of psychoanalysis. Such a method would be a politics (a micro-politics) and an analysis (a schizoanalysis) and would propose the study of multiplicities upon the different types of body with organs. A *rhizome*, instead of series, says Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus* is a good beginning, provided we can break away from series." (DRF 60)

With Guattari, Deleuze sought out other directions than "traditional philosophy" (DRF 58) and even than psychoanalysis by breaking away from "series" or *Logic of Sense* (DRF 60). What is the meaning of this double break both with *Logic of Sense* and with psychoanalysis? What is the significance of co-work of Deleuze and Guattari? What is the "true lightnings"³⁾ of Guattari to Deleuze? And what did Deleuze & Guattari make concerning the unconscious. I deal

Gilles Deleuze (1984), "Lettre à Uno: Comment nous avons travaillé à deux", in DRF 220.

with these questions more deeply.

2. From the *Psychic* to the *Material* Unconscious

The first and most evident direction through which Deleuze & Guattari broke is to invent a certain politics and analysis (a *micro-politics* & a *schozoanalysis*) which replaces psychoanalysis. As is well known, Deleuze & Guattari's first co-work is "The disjunctive synthesis" (1970) which is published in *L'Arc 43* dedicated to Pierre Klossowski.⁴) They introduce this article as "an extraction of a book, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, which will be published" (ARC 54). But it contains some interesting sentences which in fact disappears in *Anti-Oedipus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972).⁵) For example, the body of this article begins: "The nature of syntheses operated by the unconscious, in the unconscious, rests the big problem of psychoanalysis." (ARC 54) Actually, Deleuze & Guattari radically criticize the psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious. What's wrong with it?

Before discussing the problem, I want to point out that the original title of the book they will publish is not *Anti-Oedipus* but *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* which is in fact a subtitle of *Anti-Oedipus*. It reveals the hidden purpose of the book, which is probably to analyze and criticize Capitalism and to suggest an alternative politics to fight against it. In this sense, Deleuze said that "*Anti-Oedipus* was from

4) Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari (1970), "La synthèse disjonctive", in ARC 54-62.

beginning to end a book of political philosophy." (PP 230)6) For this political task, the first thing Deleuze & Guattari had to do is to revolutionize the concept of the unconscious. At that time, the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious prevails in France, so the critique of it by Deleuze & Guattari would be necessary. In late 1980s, Deleuze summarized his and Guattari's concept of the unconscious and differences from that of psychoanalysis.

"Anti-Oedipus, it's a break (rupture) that is made all alone, directly from two themes: the unconscious isn't a theater but a factory, a productive machine; the unconscious does not become delirious (délire) upon mummy-daddy but upon races, tribes, continents, history and geography, always a social field (champ). We tried to find an immanent conception, an immanent usage of syntheses of the unconscious, a productivism or constructivism of the unconscious. [...] We tried to put on a same plane (sur même plan) a production that was at once social and desiring, according to a logic of flows. Delirium (délire) operated in the real (le réel), we did not know other element than the real, the imaginary and the symbolic seemed to us false categories. / Anti-Oedipus, it was the univocity of the real, a sort of spinozism of the unconscious. [...] If Anti-Oedipus seeks to criticize psychoanalysis, it's in terms of a conception of the unconscious that, whether right or wrong, is elaborated out in the book." (PP 197-198, conversed in 1988)⁷⁾

Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari (1972), L'Anti-Œdipe. Capitalisme et Schizophrène, Paris: Les éditions de Minuit.

Gilles Deleuze (1990), Pourparlers 1972-1990, Paris: Les éditions de Minuit.

7) Again, in another interview with Claire Parnet called Abécédére de Gilles Deleuze, avec Clair Parnet (1996, interviewed in 1988), Deleuze said about Anti-Oedipus that "it's a beautiful book, because it has a conception of the unconscious, in my opinion, the only case in which there was this kind of conception of the unconscious. I mean, with the two points, or the three points: 1) of multiplicities of the unconscious, 2) of delirium as world delirium, and not the family delirium, [but] the cosmic delirium, the

delirium of races, the delirium of tribes, that's good; and 3) and the unconscious as a machine and a factory, not as a theater. I have nothing to change in these points, and in my opinion, it remains absolutely new since all of psychographysis has been reconstituted." (ABC "D comme

since all of psychoanalysis has been reconstituted." (ABC "D comme Désir")

And in the same interview Deleuze also said that "What did we try to do in Anti-Oedipus? I think there are three main points directly opposed to psychoanalysis. These three points are — well, for me and I think for Félix as well, we would change none of them at all. The three points are: 1) We are persuaded that the unconscious is not a theater, [...] but a factory, it's production... The unconscious produces there, incessantly produces... It functions like a factory, it's the very opposite of the psychoanalytical vision of the unconscious as a theater [...]. 2) The second theme is that delirium, which is very closely linked to desire — to desire is to become delirious (délirer) to some extent... If you look at delirium whatever it might be about, any delirium whatsoever, it is exactly the contrary of what psychoanalysis has latched onto about it, that is, we don't go into delirium about the father or mother. Rather, one délires about something completely different; this is the great secret of delirium, we délire about the whole world. That is, one délires about history, geography, tribes, deserts, peoples, races, climates, that's what we délire about. [...] Delirium is geographical-political, [whereas] psychoanalysis links it always to familial determinants. Even after so many years since Anti-Oedipus, I maintain that psychoanalysis never understood anything at all about a phenomenon of delirium. [...] 3) The third point, it returns to desire: desire always constructs assemblages (agencements) there and establishes itself in an assemblage, always putting several factors into play, and psychoanalysis ceaselessly reduces us to a single factor, always the same, sometimes the father, sometimes the mother, sometimes the phallus, etc. It is completely ignorant of what the multiple is, completely ignorant of constructivism, that is, of assemblages." (ABC "D comme Désir")

2.1 Materiality of the Unconscious

Deleuze & Guattari do believe that their conception of the unconscious is "the only case" in the world, and that theirs is radically different from that of psychoanalysis. This belief is famous among scholars. But I argue that they insidiously maintain the Freudian conception of the unconscious in that they still think of the unconscious as psychic or psychological one. Freud, for example, says in chapter 1 of *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* as follows:

"The psychic processes (seelischen Vorgänge) are in and for themselves unconscious and those which are conscious are merely isolated acts and parts of the total psychic life. [...] Psychoanalysis cannot accept the identity of the conscious with the psychic. Its definition of the psychic affirms that they are processes of the kind of feeling, thinking, willing; and it must assert that there is such a thing as unconscious thinking and unconscious willing. [...] By the acceptance of unconscious processes you have paved the way for a decisively new orientation in the world and in science."8)

Freud divides "the psychic" (das Psychische, das Seeliche,

⁸⁾ Sigmund Freud (1915~1917), Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse. in Sigmund Freud Studienausgabe in Zehn Bänden mit einem Ergänzungsband I, S. Fischer, 1969, p. 47.

Seelenleben, seelischen Vorgänge, Seelenvorgänge) into two parts, that is, into "consciousness" (das Bewußte, Bewußtsein) and "the unconscious" (das Unbewußte). The unconscious is a complementary set of consciousness in the psychic which is a universal set. In other words, the psychic (a universal set) is composed of two subsets (consciousness and the unconscious). Brief, Freudian conception of the unconscious is strictly confined to the psychic.

In contrast, Deleuze & Guattari stress that "the unconscious is not psychic, it is inseparably physical and noological." (ARC 54) This inseparability of physical and noological attributes of the unconscious is also expressed as "a sort of spinozism of the unconscious". Hence "a materialist psychiatry" (AO 29ff.). I will not here discuss the relation of the parallelism of Spinoza with the Deleuzo-Guattarian conception of the unconscious.⁹⁾ I just want to focus on the latter, especially on the physical aspect of the unconscious, because many

Gilles Deleuze (1981, 2nd ed.), *Spinoza. Philosophie pratique*, p. 29. "It is a matter of showing that the body surpasses the knowledge that we have of it, and that thought likewise surpasses the consciousness that we have of it. There are no fewer things in the mind that exceed our consciousness than there are things in the body that exceed our knowledge. So it is by one and the same movement that we shall manage, if possible, to capture the power of the body beyond the given conditions of our knowledge, and to capture the power of the mind beyond the given conditions of our consciousness. One seeks to acquire a knowledge of the powers of the body in order to discover, in a parallel fashion, the powers of the mind that elude consciousness, and thus to be able to compare the powers. In short, the model of the body, according to Spinoza, does not imply any devaluation of thought in relation to extension, but, much more important, a devaluation of consciousness in relation to thought: a discovery of the unconscious, of an unconscious of

9) Actually, natura of Spinoza is the unconscious of Deleuze & Guattari. Cf.

scholars did not yet fully develop the scope and implication of it.¹⁰) Deleuze & Guattari say in Section 2 of Chapter 4 of *Anti-Oedipus* titled "The Molecular Unconscious" that "in reality, the unconscious is of the physics" (AO 336). We must keep in mind that in describing the characteristics of the unconscious, Deleuze & Guattari always use the terms like "physical", "physics", "nature" and "material" etc. I argue that *the materiality of the unconscious* has not yet been fully focussed on nor discussed. The materialiy of the unconscious is the very difference between psychoanalysis and Deleuze & Guattari. The unconscious of Deleuze & Guattari includes the whole complementary set of consciousness, so whole universe.

2.2 Oedipus Complex vs. Multiplicities of the Unconscious, or Freud vs. Bergson

From the materiality of the unconscious stems the distinction between "Oedipus complex" and "multiplicities of the unconscious". The former refers only to psychic phenomena, but the latter to the whole universe. At least from *Bergsonism* (1966), Deleuze has developed the Bergsonian concept of multiplicity, 11) which originally

published in 1970.

thought just as profound as the unknown of the body." These were first

¹⁰⁾ I am not here in a position to deal with the noological aspects of the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of the unconscious. It needs more pages to do it. And it should be noticed that noology is one of the main themes in Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari (1980), Mille Plateaux. Capitalisme et schizophrénie t. 2, Paris: Les éditions de Minuit.

¹¹⁾ There once appears the term "multiplicity" in Gilles Deleuze (1956), "La conception de différence chez Bergson", in ID, p. 59, but the usage is not the same as in Le Bergsonisme (1966). And even if Deleuze used the term "multiplicity" in Nietzsche et la philosophie (1962), its meaning was different from that in Bergsonism.

derives from Bernhard Riemann and has "physico-mathematical" meaning. Being conscious of its original meaning, said Deleuze, "Bergson intends to give multiplicities the metaphysics which their scientific treatment demands." Bergson already developed a concept of the unconscious which is "duration" (durée), i.e. "an immemorial or ontological Memory" (B 52) or "a cosmic Memory" (B 117). Duration or Memory is ultimately extended to "the ensemble of the universe" (B 76). It is a question of going beyond psychological or human memory. 13)

"We will have to compare the Freudian unconscious with the Bergsonian unconscious, since Bergson himself made the comparison. We must nevertheless comprehend from now on that Bergson does not employ the word "unconscious" to designate a psychological reality outside consciousness, but to designate a non-psychological reality — being as it is in itself (l'être tel qu'il est en soi)." (B 50)

This ontology beyond psychology constitutes also an "ontological "naturalism""(B 95)¹⁴⁾ in Bergson. Bergsonian conception of the unconscious is a kind of ontology or ontological naturalism, which is against the Freudian one. Freud never stops imprisoning the

12) Gilles Deleuze (1991), "Afterword. A Return to Bergson", in English Translation of *Bergsonism*, p. 117; "Postface pour L'édition américane: Un retour à Bergson", in DRF 314-315. Originally type-written in 1988. unconscious inside "a psychological reality".

In his two articles on Bergson, as early as in 1956, Deleuze already analyzed the multiple aspects of duration. "Being is alteration, alteration is substance. And that is what Bergson calls duration. [...] Duration is that which differs or that which changes in nature, quality, heterogeneity, that which differs from itself." (ID 33-34)15) In addition, duration is "the virtual or the subjective" (ID 37-38). In other words, "the duration, the tendency is the difference of itself with itself; and that which differs from itself is immediately the unity of substance and of subject." (ID 52) From the identity of being, alteration, substance, subject and duration derive quite surprising consequences. Duration has two aspects: one is expressed in terms of being and substance; another in terms of alteration and subject. The former is a produced or passive aspect while the latter a productive or active one. Deleuze often makes an assimilation of Bergson to Spinoza and vice versa. For the produced or passive aspect of Duration is like *Natura naturata*; the productive or active aspect is like Natura naturans; Duration and Nature have two aspects in their turns. Hence "process of production" or "syntheses of production" of Deleuze & Guattari in Anti-Oedipus.

2.3 Auto-production of the Unconscious or the Unconscious as an Orphan¹⁶)

^{13) &}quot;But this first aspect of the Bergsonian theory would lose all sense if its extra-psychological range were not emphasized. What Bergson calls "pure recollection" has no psychological existence." (B 50)

¹⁴⁾ Deleuze compare this ontological naturalism of Bergson with Spionzian concept of "Natura naturans and Natura naturata". cf. B 95, note 1.

¹⁵⁾ Gilles Deleuze (1956), "Bergson, 1859-1941", in ID 28-42. cf. ID 51-21, B 23, 29, 42-43, 94 etc.

¹⁶⁾ This is a summary of section 3 of Jae-Yin Kim (2013), "Deleuze, Marx and Non-human Sex: An Immanent Ontology Shared between Anti-Oedipus and Manuscripts from 1844", in Theory & Event, Volume 16, Issue 3, 2013, Online Journal published by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Now I consider some Deleuzian concepts closely related with the unconscious as non-human production of the universe. First of all, one must look at some enigmatic phrases from Deleuze, which can only be understood in the context of immanent ontology. Here is a schizophrenic's claim: "Yes, I have been my father and I have been my son. 'I, Antonin Artaud, am my son, my father, my mother, and myself'" (AO 21). But is it only a madman's delirium, because I cannot be my father and my son and me at the same time? This claim of Artaud's is in reality a voice of the universe present in the person as a schizophrenic. According to Deleuze, a schizophrenic is no more a patient in a hospital but a man in its natural state, a generic being; schizophrenia is not a mental disease but a process of production of the universe. A schizophrenic is in "a time before the man-nature dichotomy [...] has been laid down. He does not live nature as nature, but as a process of production" (AO 8).

For Deleuze, the unconscious is an orphan and acts as an auto-production. "Within the order of production [...] everything is [...] with [...] uses of syntheses that feed the auto-production of the unconscious — the unconscious-as-orphan" (AO 120/100e).¹⁷⁾ In this phrase one can notice at least three points: (1) the unconscious is an orphan, and therefore has no parents; (2) it produces itself as an auto-production, so it is in a circular movement; and most importantly, (3) it is within the order of production, or within the ontological order of the universe, not within the psychological order. "[A schizophrenic] has attained those regions of an auto-production of

17) And also cf. AO 57, 64, 93, 97, 345, 356 etc.

the unconscious where the unconscious is no less atheist than orphan" (AO 68).

In the following splendid summary, there is nothing psychological and humanist, but only an immanent ontology of the unconscious:

"A circular movement by which the unconscious, always remaining subject, produces and reproduces itself. The unconscious does not follow the paths of a generation progressing (or regressing) from one body to another: your father, your father's father, and so on. The organized body is the object of reproduction by generation; it is not its subject. The sole subject of reproduction is the unconscious itself, which holds to the circular form of production. Sexuality is not a means in the service of generation; rather, the generation of bodies is in the service of sexuality as an auto-production of the unconscious. (…) The unconscious has always been an orphan." (AO 128)18)

¹⁸⁾ Cf. "The point of view of the cycle alone is categorical and absolute, because it attains production as the subject of reproduction, which is to say it attains the process of auto-production of the unconscious. (···) It is certainly not sexuality that is in the service of generation, but progressive or regressive generation that is in the service of sexuality as a cyclical movement by which the unconscious, always remaining "subject", reproduces itself." (AO 327-8) "The unconscious is an orphan, and produces itself within the identity of nature and man. The auto-production of the unconscious suddenly became evident [...] when the socialist thinker [i.e. Marx] discovered the unity of man and nature within the process of production, and when the cycle discovers its independence from an indefinite parental regression. To quote Artaud once again: 'I got no / papa-mummy'." (AO 57)

Without a circular point of view, transcendence must be introduced; therefore only the circular movement, the auto-production, is categorical and absolute. To put it another way: "There is only one kind of production, the production of the real. And doubtless we can express this identity in two different ways, even though these two ways together constitute the auto-production of the unconscious as a cycle" (AO 40/32-3). To affirm that there is *only one kind* of production is also to prevent the intervention of transcendence. If we double the reality, if we abandon the univocity of being, then the transcendent world beyond this world must be settled and immanence be got rid of.

2.4 The Unconscious and Desire

What is meant by desire? The term "desire" first appears in the following: "Production as process [...] forms a cycle which is related to desire qua immanent principle" (AO 10-11). Desire should be understood as an immanent principle of the cycle of production of the unconscious. That is, desire is an energy of auto-production of the unconscious as Libido, Numen and Voluptas which are energies of connective, disjunctive and conjunctive syntheses of production of the unconscious. For Deleuze & Guattari, a verb "to desire" (désirer) means "to produce" (produire) or "to construct" (construire). 19) Hence

19) Cf. "There is no desire that does not flow — I mean this precisely — flow into an assemblage (agencement). Such that desire [...] has always been constructivism. To desire is to construct an assemblage, to construct an aggregate (ensemble)." (ABC "D comme désir) Similarly an adjective "desiring" means "productive"; cf. "des machines productrices ou désirantes" (AO 8).

productivism, constructivism or assemblage of the unconscious. Desire must be understood in relation to its verbal usage. Moreover the desire "is part of (fait partie de) the infrastructure" (AO 124, 413, 484) and "is of the infrastructure, not of the ideology" (AO 416). Here one should be careful not to consider these assertions as "desire is the infrastructure", since Deleuze & Guattari use the term "part of" or article partitif. In fact, the infrastructure refers to the real or reality itself. Desire takes part in the infrastructure in such a way to produce the real or reality, which Deleuze & Guattari beautifully resume as follows:

"If desire produces, it produces the real. If desire is producer, it can be so only in reality, and of reality. Desire is this set (ensemble) of passive syntheses that engineer (machinent) partial objects, flows and bodies, and that function as unities (unités) of production. The real is the end product (en découle), it is the result of the passive syntheses of desire as auto-production of the unconscious. [...] Desire does not lack its object. [...] Desire and its object are one and the same, it is the machine, qua machine of machine. Desire is a machine, and the object of desire is still machine connected to it. [...] The objective being of desire is the Real in itself." (AO 34)

3. Remaining Question: Deliruim

I did not yet deal with the question of delirium. I briefly sketch about it. Delirium is on a bridge between physics and noology. As Deleuze & Guattari repeatedly stress, delirium is an object of desire,

and always concerns with the real (races, tribes, continents, deserts, peoples, climates, history and geography, always a social field). So it is like a factory, not a theater. This is the physical aspect of delirium as an object of desire, of the unconscious. And in another perspective, delirium is always a "group fantasy" which appear and disappear collectively in the mind of people.²⁰⁾ This constitutes the noological aspect. Deleuzo-Guattarian theory of subject which is elaborated in Section 3 of Chapter 1 of *Anti-Oedipus* titled "The Subject and the Enjoyment" is closely related with and extended to delirium as a group fantasy. So one can find easily the relationship with the parallelism of body and mind of Nature in Spinoza and with matter and mind as two tendencies of Duration in Bergson.

I would like to conclude that Deleuze & Guattari's concept of the Unconscious is like a Nature of Spinoza and like a Duration of Bergson, contrary to that of psychoanalysis which is just a complementary set of consciousness in the psychic.

20) Cf. AO 37-8, 72-76, 167, 323.

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국문초록

들뢰즈와 과라티에서 '무의식' 개념의 혁명

프로이트와 정신분석은 무의식을 정신 안에서의 의식의 여집합으로 본다. 이와 달리 들뢰즈와 과타리는 정신분석의 그런 발상을 비판하 며, 무의식이란 의식의 여집합 전체라고, 따라서 전 우주를 포함한 다고 주장한다. 들뢰즈의 초기 작업에 따르면, 이런 식의 무의식 개 념은 이미 스피노자의 '자연' 개념과 베르그손의 '지속' 개념에서 정 교하게 가공된 바 있다. 본 논문에서 나는 주로 '무의식의 물질성' 에 초점을 맞추었다. 사실 많은 학자들은 들뢰즈와 과타리의 무의식 개념과 정신분석의 무의식 개념의 차이에 대한 주장을 잘 알고 있 기는 하지만, 바로 무의식의 물질성에 대해서는 정작 몰랐거나 오해 하고 있다. 나는 들뢰즈와 과타리의 텍스트에 '무의식의 물질성' 또 는 '물질적 무의식' 개념이 산재하며, 이것이 정신분석의 무의식 개 념을 혁명적으로 비판하고 있음을 밝혔다. 들뢰즈 과타리가 말하듯, 무의식을 "불가분 물리적이며 사고(思考)적"인 것이라고 해석하는 것은, 현대 자연과학과 부합하는 존재론을 구성하고 현실에 기초를 둔 실천철학(윤리학과 정치이론)을 제안하는 데 도움이 될 것으로 기대한다.

주제어: 무의식, 정신분석, 심리적 무의식, 물질적 무의식, 프로이트, 베르그손, 스피노자