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## Book Review

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## BOOK REVIEW

**Cognitive-Affective Processes: New Ways of Psychoanalytic Modeling.** Ulrich Moser and Ilka von Zepelin (Eds.) (1991) Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

Of the ten chapters in this volume, two are apparently first published here and eight are reprints of former publications dating from 1969 to 1987 (three from the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*; one each from the *British Journal of Medical Psychology* and *Behavioral Science*; and three from books). It's hard to imagine who would be the appropriate audiences for this work. It is therefore also hard to write an appropriate summary of the contents. If I fail it will not be for lack of thinking about the task.

Two central problems are highlighted in the title: *Cognitive-Affective Processes: New Ways of Psychoanalytic Modeling*. First, the title seems to suggest that, at a minimum, the reader will come away with a clear idea of what the authors mean by cognitive and affective processes. This is simply not the case. A glossary which offers definitions of 36 terms provides four relevant definitions (pp. 128–130) that are typical in their imprecision:

**Affect (syn. emotion)**—a type of information which is transmitted as a result of the monitoring activity of a regulation context. *Occurrent affects* (on-line) are information which is part of the regulatory activity. *Stored*

*affects* (off-line) are a type of “short coding” in the pattern of a cognitive-element. Feelings are affects experienced by means of the self-reflexive functions of the ext. *modification*.

**Cognitive element**—a model with declarative and or procedural information. It contains procedures for self-generation (e.g., for instantiation) as well as a pattern (verbal, affective, perceptive), which enables the cognitive element to be identified and accessed.

**Instantiation**—the process whereby the model structure in the activated element is made explicit and incorporated in the regulatory activity. This process follows the activation of a cognitive-element.

**Regulation context**—cognitive-affective functions grouped for special tasks, divided in monitor and control functions. It defines a control and task area with a coherent structure. The inner structure of contexts is not formulated explicitly, but could be viewed as “multiple-body interrupts,” see Clippinger (1977). Regulation contexts are connected with each other in the form of a “multi-processing” system, which uses different types of information (affective, cognitive).

Earlier, less formal definitions (p. 11) claimed that “. . . affective information is distinguished from cogni-

tive information. Affect is defined as information that is transmitted as a consequence of the monitoring activity of a regulating unit. It can be read very quickly as a simple pattern... but it merely imparts the global information that something has happened and where. Cognitive information, in contrast, transfers complex patterns of elements that are recognized and responded to much more slowly." Unfortunately these distinctions rarely get any clearer or more precise except in intuitively understood but sparse clinical examples, particularly in the two dream chapters.

The second problem lies in the "new ways of psychoanalytic modeling," since these are centered on the goal of computer simulations of analytic processes. Although the book is apparently intended for a psychoanalytic audience, chapter 3.3, the "Technical Part" of a computer simulation model of neurotic defense processes, presents a flow chart of a simulation program which is defined by probability density functions expressed in calculus notation. If there are more than a half dozen psychoanalysts in the world who can evaluate these expressions I have not heard of or met them. To make my point: the only output of the simulation procedure was run on an ancient CDC 3600 mainframe computer to illustrate that "one of the basic defenses mechanisms is cathexis displacement." A  $\beta$ -matrix table is described as showing that twice as much displacement is "coming from the phallic object representation as from the phallic self representation. Clinically this would be interpreted as a regression accompanied by identification and projective processes, where identification processes are dominating with respect to the phallic component drive" (p. 63). The model, as subsequently de-

scribed in words, "concentrates on defence processes applied whenever a neurotic conflict is reactivated and released by a certain drive state" (p. 65). But, lest the reader succumb to hope, the next section on Social Drop-Outs and Hippies, though of clinical interest, sheds no light on the application of the simulation model.

For those who might be interested in the simulation model it is only fair to mention that chapter 3.1 (dating from 1969) is a description of the model in English using traditional psychoanalytic concepts such as: anxiety; defense; cathexis; drives, including oral, anal, phallic and genital components; "pleasure-gain functions"; etc. But this reader did not find it particularly helpful in understanding the simulation.

Perhaps the most innovative chapter, but also the most difficult and newly published in the volume, is "The Regulation of Cognitive-Affective Processes: A New Psychoanalytic Model (With a Glossary)." It is followed by Ilka von Zeppelin's "Outline of a Process Model of Psychoanalytic Therapy." Psychoanalytic theory is completely reformulated in terms more congenial to the computer simulation tasks. Instead of the terms used above, or those of the tripartite structural model, are *contexts*, by which are meant modules that have specific functions that interact in such a way as to permit satisfaction of wishes, maintain a stable personality, resolve conflicts, etc. The modules have intuitively meaningful names such as *planner*, *rule*, *anticipation*, *stabilization*, *relation*, etc. The problem with all these is that the language of their descriptions, functions, and interactions is often unclear, obscure, arcane, or just plain baffling. For instance, in a section on "the role of emotions in an imaginary relation" one finds the following language:

. . . The affective evaluation of situations does not take place by means of perception, but by means of simulated cognitive-affective feedback. . . . The probability of actualization of a wish element is thus generally increased, given that only the long-term experience of the ext. *anticipation* and the negative emotions (Negems) in the wish element must be taken into consideration, not actual experience. . . .

In imaginary relations the principle of the stabilization of self-regulation has higher priority than the principle of the actualization of a wish element in the relation. In the case of a neurotic conflict simple "wish-fulfillment in phantasy" is not possible. The conflictual nature of the wish element actualization process unfolds in the imaginary relation. (p. 118)

The last two chapters are on dreams: a computer simulation and a question, Do We Dream Affects? These are more satisfying in that in the first a "Manure Wagon Dream" is roughly simulated by a computer program. In answer to the question, there are many examples of fantasies expressed in dreams. But, as before, the clarification of cognitive and affective

processes is missing. And one reason finally becomes clear when, on page 163, Moser, Pfeifer, Schneider, and von Zeppelin (1983) claim that "very little is known on the regulation of mental processes. Equally little is known of the role played by the affects in this regulation." This may have seemed true in 1983, but it is not true today. For example, Dahl recently (1995) summarized his 18-year-old functional theory of emotions, for whose classification system Dahl & Stengel (1978) had provided strong empirical support.

The hope that successful computer simulation models of psychoanalytic processes provide is to test the predictions that would follow from different theoretical commitments. As these talented authors make clear, this is a task beyond our past and even our present grasp. Even for an expanded audience of psychotherapy researchers this book will be more of a cautionary than a hopeful guide.

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