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## Traumatization and Its Remedy According to the Principle of Personalization

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### **ABSTRACT:**

This article provides a philosophical explanation of how personality is generated and then altered by society and traumatic experiences. However, the focus of the discussion is on traumatization and its remedy under the philosophical theory by comparing it with the theories of Freud and Jung. In brief, the philosophical theory that is elaborated in this article is the principle of personalization. This principle egress with Freud and Jung regarding the causes of traumatization. However, it presents a different point of view related to how traumatic neurosis determines human actions and perspectives. Personalization stated that traumatic neurosis affected the person within their conscious memory, not the unconscious mind as Freud and Jung perceived it. Thus, this article intended to introduce the personalization method to psychologists and psychiatrists. Of course, it can also be read by those concerned with the development of philosophy of mind discourses.

**Keywords:** Personalization, Psychoanalysis, Traumatization, Sensation, Personae, The Persona, The Altered, Freud, Jung.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This article delves into the complexities of consciousness and its associated challenges, examined through the philosophical framework of personalization. The principle of personalization asserts that consciousness encompasses the capacity to personalize the essence of reality, which initially presents itself as foreign symbols. As a result, human consciousness must personalize these symbols into comprehensible concepts, subsequently manifesting them in actions and perspectives. The process involves a specific neuronal mechanism in the brain that *translates* data from peripheral nerve functions into intelligible concepts. Consequently, human actions and perspectives are continuously shaped and influenced by both physiological mechanisms and the intrinsic nature of reality.

Under the principle of personalization, this article will focus on discussing traumatization and its impact on human actions and perspectives. Traumatization is explained as a disruption in the personalization process. It pertains to an experience, either physical or mental, that breaches the personalization mechanism. This experience is therefore embodied as sensations that directly influence human actions and perspectives. Since these sensations persist in memory, they can have

long-term effects on human personalities. Accordingly, this article advocates personalizing these sensations as a theory of healing.



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This article begins by explaining human personae as the embodiment of the personalization of the essence of reality. It then discusses the effects of traumatization on personae and concludes by outlining the pathway to healing.

## 2. *PERSONAE*

The structure of human consciousness is shaped by the ability to connect with and personalize the essence of reality. In this context, reality reveals itself to humans not only in its physical form but also in its essence, as described by Husserl's concepts of *noema* and *noesis*.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, an actual tree always reveals itself both physically and essentially. However, the neuronal mechanism must *translate* or transform the essence of the actual tree into sensible concepts so that the essence of the tree can manifest itself within human actions and perspectives. This means that a tree embodied in human actions and perspectives is, in fact, an understandable tree that has been transformed by human understanding.

Furthermore, the embodiment of the personalization of the essence of reality leads to interpersonal relationships. The purpose of these interpersonal relationships is to formalize the embodiment of the personalization of the essence of reality. This is because of the diversity within human body mechanisms, which results in various embodiments. Therefore, it becomes necessary to formalize human understanding of reality within a community. In other words, the embodiment of the personalization of the essence of the actual tree is now formalized as a "tree" by the community. Thus, the essence of the actual tree is personalized into an understandable tree and formalized into the "tree" that can be used universally.

However, the formalization or universalization by the social structure has repressed and altered personal actions and perspectives. Freud illustrated this repression and alteration with the Oedipal complex, where the ego ideal, symbolized by Oedipus' father, represses and alters Oedipus' desires.<sup>2</sup> This means that repression under formalization generates the altered-persona in human personalities. For example, the formal concept of a tree in a certain community has repressed and altered the embodiment of the "tree" in someone's personalization. Consequently, someone's actions and perspectives about the tree are influenced by the persona and the altered. This article uses the plural form "personae" for human persona to highlight the altered-persona generated by the repression of formalization.

Thus, personae refer to actions and perspectives shaped by the personalization of the essence of reality and the alterations generated by the repression of formalization in society. This explains the constant communication (soliloquy) within human personae between the persona and

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, Trans. Darion Cairns (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982), p. 36).

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and The Id*, Trans. Joan Riviere (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1960), p. 30.

the altered. This communication is not dialectical but rather a reflection aimed at revealing the *trace* of the essence of reality within the embodiment and formalization. It shows how personae evolved under the guidance of the *trace* carried by the embodiment and formalization. This means that formalization by society never directly changes personal actions and perspectives. Instead, societal repression offers alternative actions and perspectives. Personae are therefore not directly transformed by society but by personalizing the *trace* of the essence of reality within the society.

Differing from Freud's perspective, the principle of personalization does not differentiate between the persona and the altered. The altered is actually a part of the persona that cannot yet fully present due to the repression caused by formalization. This means the altered still influences human actions and perspectives by providing alternative ways, such as a sense of humor and artistic work. In brief, repression and alteration by society causes a fraction in human actions and perspectives. However, this fraction actually enriches human actions and perspectives. It indicates that the persona and the altered coexist within personae equally on a spectrum. Both the persona and the altered can be found in actions and perspectives, whether they align with formalization in society or not.

In summary, personae are the embodiment of the personalization of the essence of reality in the form of actions and perspectives. These actions and perspectives are altered by society's formalization of the embodiment. This implies that there is a fraction within human actions and perspectives that refers to both the persona and the altered. However, this fraction occurs within personae and explains the richness of human actions and perspectives. For example, the fraction enriches human lives with humor and creativity. At the same time, the fraction also demonstrates the sovereignty of personae over society, as repression merely offers alternatives actions and perspectives without directly changing them. This means that personae have the capacity to transform society rather than society changing personae.

### 3. TRAUMATIZATION

Trauma is a breach within the personalization mechanisms. It occurs when a phenomenon of reality fails to be personalized and instead manifests as sensations that determine human actions and perspectives. In brief, traumatization is embodiment of unknown experience, either physical or mental, in the form of facade sensation that determines personae. This sensation therefore acts as a repression for the conscious actions and perspectives. The mildest impact of this repression is anxiety, which can escalate to moderate levels such as phobia, depression, and addiction, or to the extreme level like hysteria and madness. Accordingly, anxiety is a common experience resulting from the alteration by facade sensations to personae. Meanwhile, the moderate and extreme levels of impact signify the domination of sensations over personae.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), in his book *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), used the concept of aetiology to explain traumatization. For Freud, trauma is a breach within neurosis mechanisms caused by bodily experiences or perceptions, commonly occurring in early childhood, between the ages of 0 and 5 years. Basically, traumatization is a forgotten experience that affects the human

<sup>3</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, Trans. Katherine Jones (London: The Hogarth Press, 1939), pp. 116–121.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.122.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 122–3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

persona either latently or blatantly.<sup>3</sup> Traumatization, therefore, is a failure in bodily mechanisms, specifically an injury in neurosis systems, which can affect the human persona in the long term. However, Freud highlighted that traumatization could influence the human persona in both positive and negative ways.

Freud suggested that trauma can have a positive impact when it leads a person to remember and embody the forgotten experience in real life. He stated: “These endeavours are summed up in the terms ‘fixation to the trauma’ and ‘repetition-compulsion.’ The effects can be incorporated into the so-called normal Ego and in the form of constant tendencies lend to it immutable character traits, although—or rather because—their real cause, their historical origin, has been forgotten.”<sup>4</sup> Freud indicated that trauma can drive a person to retrace the forgotten experience and manifest it within similar actual experiences. For example, if the trauma is related to interpersonal relationships, the person may revive it by forming a similar relationship with a different person. Thus, in Freud’s view, the damage within the neurosis systems can actually compel the person to engage in actual experiences.

Freud explains that the negative effects of trauma are the opposite of the positive ones. This means there is no effort from the person to remember or revive the forgotten experience. Instead, the person tends to avoid similar experiences.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the damage within the neurosis systems generates phobias, as the person seeks to escape from the cause of the trauma.

However, Freud also emphasized that traumatization manifests both positive and negative symptoms. Sometimes the symptom is positive and then turns negative at other times. These opposing symptoms lead to a conflict that the person themselves cannot resolve.<sup>6</sup> This means that the symptoms, whether positive or negative, are out of the person’s control. In other words, traumatization has determined human actions and perspectives in both positive and negative ways.

According to Freud, traumatization is an experience, whether physical or mental, that cannot be remembered. This experience remains unconscious and alters the conscious persona or subject. Freud therefore asserts that the authenticity of the persona is not found in consciousness but in the unconscious, as human consciousness is determined by the unconscious. This means that exploring or studying a person’s traumatization can lead to the discovery of the person’s authenticity. Thus, the conscious persona is only the tip of the iceberg, with much more to be explored from their forgotten experiences. In other words, the persona is merely the embodiment of the real cause within the unconscious mind.

In his other work, Freud elaborates that traumatic neurosis reveals itself in dreams, as he frequently found that a patient’s dreams often unveil their traumatic neurosis. Furthermore, from his analysis, he discovered that the meaning of a dream differs from one person to another because it is personal and related to their trauma.<sup>7</sup> This means that the forgotten experience reveals itself in the form of symbols in dreams. Interpreting a dream, therefore, is a pathway to heal the damage within the neurosis systems. In other words, the symbols in dreams actually repeat the traumatic experience. Thus, in Freud’s view, traumatic neurosis is a senseless repression that determines personal actions and perspectives. The way to understand it is by interpreting their dreams, as

implemented in psychoanalytic methods.

Carl Jung (1875–1961), similar to Freud, explained that dreams symbolically reproduce traumatic experiences. He stated that the correct interpretation of dreams is key to revealing the cause of trauma.<sup>8</sup> Jung emphasizes the role of analyst, as he found that not all symbols in dreams are related to traumatic neurosis; some may be linked to physical illness. That is why he highlighted the importance of professional judgement in identifying the relationship between symbols in dream and traumatic experiences. In this context, Jung and Freud shared common ground, as Jung agreed with Freud that traumatization is an injury that occurs within neurosis systems. However, Jung also emphasized that physical body illnesses, which are unrelated to traumatic neurosis, must be considered as manifesting in dreams. In short, he sought to distinguish between pain, which is related to trauma, and illness, which refers to periods of sickness affecting both body and mind.

The principle of personalization, on the other hand, perceives traumatization not as an unconscious mind process but as the embodiment of an alien phenomenon of reality in the form of facade sensation within personae. In this context, an object or an event causes an injury within the peripheral neural systems. This neurotic injury manifests as a sensation and stays in memory by breaching the personalization mechanisms. Furthermore, this sensation will revive and affect human actions and perspectives toward similar objects or events. This sensation, therefore, determines human actions and perspectives in both ways—either attracting or avoiding similar objects or events. Thus, through the lens of personalization, traumatization is characterized as sensations that determine how a person reacts to an object or event.

However, personalization distinguishes traumatic symptoms based on the level of obsession or fixation in attracting or avoiding the object or event. This means that attracting and avoiding could be negative or positive based on the fixation. As previously stated, traumatization indicates that personae are determined or suppressed by sensations that remain in their memory. Therefore, this facade sensation is an impulsiveness that needs to be personalized into understandable concepts. Nonetheless, personalizing the sensation means revealing the essence of the unknown experience carried by memory. This implies that personalization can only heal the memory, not the traumatic injury within the neurosis systems. In other words, the damage within the neurosis systems cannot be healed and remain there forever but personalization can heal the damage in the memory.

The pathway of remedy offered by personalization involves allowing the patient to discover the essence within the sensations in their memory. Whether the sensation reveals pleasure or fear toward the object or event, the patient needs to uncover its essence and personalize it into understandable concepts. The analyst can help the patient in this discovery by providing tools such as audio recording or stationaries. The patient must describe what is in their memory, either orally or writing, regarding their attraction to or avoidance of the object or event. The analyst will guide the process by asking questions like, “What do you feel?” and “What will happen if you are not with the object or event, or near the object or event?” The analyst will then assess the entire process

<sup>7</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dream and On Dreams: Volume IV–V*, Trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), p. 288.

<sup>8</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Dreams*, Trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 46–7.

with the patient while giving their perspectives toward the similar object or event. Finally, the analyst and the patient will design the next plan together in order to prepare the patient to have real experience with the object or event.

Of course, the method will be adapted to the condition of the patient. For patients who have been trapped by the sensations, the role of analyst will be significant in uncovering the essence of the sensations in the patient's memory, while assessing the progress if the patient can uncover it themselves. Basically, the method provided by the principle of personalization focuses solely on healing the memory. This method does not involve prescribing medication, as it is a philosophical approach. This means that this method needs to be integrated with clinical psychology or psychiatry when dealing with the highest levels of fixations on the sensation. However, the remedy of the damage in the memory caused by the embodiment of the traumatic neurosis is to discover the essence of the sensation and personalize it into understandable concepts.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The principle of personalization reveals how the persona is generated. The persona embodies the personalization of the essence of reality. Furthermore, this principle explains that the persona is altered by repression from the social structure. As a result, human actions and perspectives are related not only to the persona but also to the altered. In other words, both the persona and the altered are connected to actions and perspectives based on a spectrum. This is because the repression from the social structure never changes the persona directly. The repression can only alter the persona by offering alternative actions and perspectives. Therefore, under the principle of personalization, the persona and the altered, collectively referred to as “personae,” are always perceived as superior to society.

However, the persona is not only repressed and altered by societal influences but also determined by sensations that remain in memory. Sensations embody the traumatic neurosis caused by an object or event, whether physical or mental. These sensations will revive in memory when the person is near or far away from a certain object or event. Therefore, the sensations determine actions and perspectives toward an object or event. Since the sensations are still alien to understanding, the remedy is to uncover the essence within the sensations and personalize them. Nonetheless, this method is a philosophical construction that needs to be integrated into clinical psychology and psychiatry. In conclusion, the principle of personalization provides an explanation of the structure of personae and its challenges, such as traumatization.

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