**Abstract**

For the first time, this paper attempts to draw a connection between Rudolf Steiner’s philosophical and anthroposophical doctrines and psychoanalytic thinking. Although these two disciplines were conceived in the same cultural, chronological, and geographical contexts, a dialogue between them has yet to take place. The present study aims to show the importance of this type of dialogue for both disciplines, as well as the conceptual possibilities latent in the dialogue and its implications for the field of therapeutic practice.

On the one hand, the study examines different ways in which psychoanalytic thinking benefits from its encounter with Steiner’s theory. This theory is comprised of Steiner’s early philosophical thought and the anthroposophic doctrine, for which it provides the basis, and describes a unitive relation between man and nature. Steiner’s unitive method is distinguished from other monistic-unitive frameworks in part by its concept of the human “I.” This concept refers to the essential uniqueness of every human being, anchoring it in “thinking” – which the doctrine understands at once as a human activity and as a dimension present in all things, constituting their universal unity.

On the other hand, this study maintains the importance of a dialogue with psychoanalytic thinking for Steiner’s work. Steiner’s theory harshly criticizes the psychoanalytic thinking of his time and stresses the importance of attention to man’s spiritual dimensions; however, it itself does not relate to the various dimensions of experience or the emotional dynamic. A dialogue with psychoanalytic thinking is vital in order to fill this gap, as well as to create a therapeutic practice based on Steiner’s doctrine. Unlike other fields – such as education, agriculture, medicine, and other therapies – in which Steiner’s theory has been applied in the practical domain, its application in the field of psychotherapy has remained scant. This study aims to create a conceptual basis for this application and for psychodynamic-anthroposophic therapeutic thinking.

The **Introduction** reviews the principal contours of Steiner’s theory and its development, notes the scarcity of academic scholarship on the subject, and maintains the importance of such scholarship. Additionally, it defines the approach of the present study with regard to the relationship between the two parts of Steiner’s theory – philosophy and anthroposophy. The Introduction also describes the integration of methodological tools employed in this study for the creation of interdisciplinary dialogue. These include methodological tools proposed in Wittgenstein’s later thought on the philosophy of language, interpretive-hermeneutic tools based on the work of Gadamer and Dilthey, and a methodology for exploring conceptual systems based on the Steinerian understanding of the concept “worldview.”

**Chapter One** demonstrates a methodological application of the concept derived from Steiner’s theory in order to examine the development of psychoanalytic thinking. Using the way this theory defines the concept of “worldview,” the chapter traces the changes in the fundamental views held by various psychoanalytic schools regarding the relation between man and world. This examination shows that in its Freudian origin, psychoanalytic thinking is founded on a view of separateness and differentiation between man and his world and between man and other men; however, views that describe this relation in terms of convergence and unity become the foundation of psychoanalytic thinking in the later stages of its development. Therefore, the study proposes the unitive worldview present in Steiner’s theory as a philosophical underpinning for psychoanalytic views that – in practice, without any defined philosophical basis – subvert the idea of differentiation and separateness between human beings.

**Chapter Two** describes the fundamentals of Steiner’s philosophical approach. It then offers an alternative to Kantian thinking by proposing a theory of consciousness based on this approach referred to as “objective idealism.” Finally, it explores the uniqueness of the relationship between man and world constituted in “monism of thought” – the ontology derived from this theory of consciousness.

**Chapter Three** shows the fruitfulness of Steiner’s unitive perspective for psychoanalytic thinking, noting its uniqueness vis-à-vis other unitive theories. By way of four psychoanalytic concepts, this chapter explores the conceptual possibilities produced by the application of psychoanalytic conceptualization to the unitive ontology established by Steiner’s “monism of thought.”

**Chapter Four** examines the concept of “I” in Steiner’s theory, proposing its distinctive epistemology for the study of the human being as a tool for psychological thinking. An analysis of Steiner’s “I” points to the conceptual polarity it contains, the conceptual bridge it produces between numerous binary opposites, and the solutions it provides to various difficulties in thinking about human selfhood. The chapter elaborates on the origins and implications of Steiner’s call to define the human sciences as disciplines concerned with the study of individual “I” entities, and proposes that psychoanalysis similarly base itself on study of this kind.

**Chapter Five** brings the dialogue between psychoanalytic thinking and Steiner’s thought to the practical and ethical realms of psychotherapy. Following the examination of the concept of “I” in Chapter Four, this chapter examines the various dimensions of the concept of “soul” in Steiner’s theory, and addresses the concept’s implications for the developmental thinking described by Steiner. Based on these perceptions of the soul and its development, this chapter proposes to explore and understand psychodynamic psychotherapy from three vantage points: epistemological, ontological, and ethical. In this chapter, the image of the human presented in Steiner’s comprehensive doctrine – along with Steiner’s understanding of the human in terms of entity, consciousness, and liberty – is translated into a statement on the therapeutic act, and provides answers to a number of fundamental questions on psychotherapy.

From an epistemological perspective, this chapter attempts to answer the question of how change in the soul can take place by means of words and as a process of expansion of consciousness; further, it explores the possibility of linking the therapeutic process and the spiritual path. The ontological perspective describes the therapeutic process in terms of the possibility of the growing realization of the “I” in the soul, and answers questions regarding the role of encounter and interpersonal connection in this process. The ethical perspective, which describes the necessary connection between development and morality, creates a bridge between exploration of the “I” and the ethical-social commitment, and enables an approach to the therapeutic process in terms of moral development.

In generating an encounter between psychoanalytic thinking and Steiner’s doctrine, this study expresses a trend aiming at philosophical inquiry regarding the positions and perceptions upon which psychoanalytic thinking and practice are based. An additional trend presented in this study aims to apply the conceptualizations that operate in this theory and practice to a non-dualistic conceptual foundation and to discussion of the spiritual dimensions of man and world. The study shows that this type of approach has conceptual value for psychoanalytic thinking and theorization. Moreover, it has practical-clinical value for therapists and patients who want to pay heed to spiritual aspects in the framework of psychotherapy, as well as in a broader framework of self-knowledge and development.