

genocide, such as the Nazi Holocaust; and, finally, Donna Orange reflects from the perspective of the philosopher Levinas, reviewing the different meanings of the experience of dying.

In the conclusion, Laura Barnett and Greg Madison finalize this journey promoting greater dialogue between the different perspectives and inviting us to continue generating and experiencing the phenomenological attention that leads us to focus on the real relationship between the client and the therapist, emphasizing the stress in the acknowledgement of the singularity of each person and each therapeutic situation.

This text offers an overview that separates itself from the perspective of a diagnostic or technical manual on psychotherapy and encourages us to reflect actively on our existential tradition and how to apply it today in our specific contexts.

One complaint we might have about this book is that it was so long in coming, since the tapestry it reveals promotes not only inclusiveness but also the generation of further dialogues and new perspectives.

Hopefully soon new texts such as this will appear that also include the Latin American perspectives on existential psychotherapy, as well as those from Eastern Europe, Asia, the Balkans, Australia and other parts of the world.

This book undoubtedly will have to be translated to many languages. I know the Latin American community that is engaged with existential psychotherapy would celebrate its appearance even more.

Yaqui Andrés Martínez Robles

Stranger From Abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, Friendship And Forgiveness

Daniel Maier-Katkin. (2010). New York: Norton.

To say that a thing endures means that there is something in the end that is the same as it was in beginning

(Arendt to Heidegger, quoting Goethe, circa 1966: p 13)

Daniel Maier-Katkin is a professor of criminology and criminal justice and a Fellow of the Centre for the Advancement of Human Rights at Florida State University. Through an informative and enjoyable read he explores the story of Arendt's relationship with Heidegger in the context of the rise and fall of Nazi Germany, the establishment of the Jewish state in Israel and her reporting of the trial of Eichmann.

It is however principally Arendt's story: her two marriages and her enduring friendships with Jaspers, Mary McCarthy and W H Auden amongst others, and the development of her ideas about power, politics and totalitarianism. He traces, through her writing and correspondence with

friends, her struggles to make sense of what had happened and to understand the meaning and possibilities for reconciliation and forgiveness. It was Jaspers' insight that great evil can come from banal circumstances that found a home in Arendt's report on Eichmann years later.

Arendt was born in 1906 into a prosperous respected family and what were to be the final years of a brief golden age of Jewish assimilation within mainstream society when the circumstances in Germany were, the author says, as good as they ever had been anywhere in the Diaspora. He notes that forty years earlier a Jewish woman could not have been educated in Latin, Greek and philosophy as Arendt was. Forty years later her birth city Königsberg was in ruins 'cleansed of Jews' (p 15).

Arendt arrived at university in Marburg in 1924 where Heidegger, 17 years her senior and married with two children, became her tutor. She had chosen Marburg because of Heidegger's reputation as an important fresh mind and gifted teacher. Friends had told her that from Heidegger she would learn the art of thinking. Maier-Katkin describes the philosophical world into which Heidegger made his appearance and seemed 'a breath of fresh air to his students' (p 73). With Heidegger they 'did not simply absorb lessons formulated by philosophers of earlier generations but learned to interrogate and challenge the great thinkers of the past' (p 303). He describes Heidegger's influence on Arendt and where they differed, especially later on as she developed her own voice as a respected writer and thinker in the US.

Much of what has been written ... about Arendt and Heidegger is the work of their detractors ... I have tried to tell their story differently, more accurately and with greater sensitivity to the complexity of their thinking and feelings

(p 9)

He says the attraction between them was immediate and intense. A year later Heidegger had backed off the affair but he asserts she did not pass the years pining for her old lover as some have suggested. After a failed first marriage Arendt's second marriage in 1940 to Heinrich Blücher was lifelong, supportive and happy. He suggests their eventual reconciliation, even though she came to know Heidegger as an unreliable and disloyal person, arose from a life lasting affection for a first love, admiration of his genius and gratitude for his influence on her intellectual development.

He relates Heidegger's affiliation (and eventual falling out) with the Nazis noting it was so influential because of his standing and reputation. His suggestion that Heidegger's faults were more to do with vanity, ambition and weakness of character than a strong belief in Nazi ideology while controversial does fit with other aspects of his life such as his affairs and his later betrayal of Jewish friends and colleagues (including Husserl and Jaspers) and his refusal to admit

he was wrong. But the importance of his work is made clear throughout and Maier-Katkin notes Heidegger's commitment to his wife in accepting as his son, their second child, the progeny of another man.

Arendt left Germany alone for Paris in autumn 1933. In early 1941 she set off again with her mother and Blücher to the US escaping the Nazi threat with the help of supporters just in time. A gifted linguist, she quickly learned English and established herself as a teacher and later a distinguished 'editor, author and public intellectual' (p 159). She returned to Europe 18 years later when invited to help with the return of stolen property to the rightful owners and this marked her first efforts to make a reconciliation with Heidegger.

After WW2 Heidegger was ostracised, banned from teaching, had lost the once high regard of people he esteemed, suffered a breakdown and depression before eventually being allowed to teach again. Arendt's attempts to facilitate reconciliation between Heidegger and Jaspers failed because the latter felt his apology 'was not genuine and contained no real understanding' (p 190). Jaspers nonetheless had supported the reinstatement of his right to teach in 1950. Maier-Katkin says Arendt 'saw in Heidegger's "turn" [towards "willing not to will"] as an expression of regret ... for the harm done by the Nazi will to power and his part in it' (p 338).

It seems that friendships were very important to Arendt, she worked for others to reconcile with Heidegger and was reluctant to let go herself. Maier-Katkin says Arendt was able to reconcile with Heidegger because she believed in the power of new beginnings and in the 'necessity, especially after a disaster, to pick up the pieces and build a better world' (p 288). I can understand this optimism and desire to try again with someone who has been held dear in spite of their betrayals and knowing it may not work out.

When the devil comes to negotiate for our souls, he brings attractive gifts and rationalisations, and is more likely to be wearing a business suit or uniform of national pride than a fiery cape'

(p 267)

Invited to attend and report on the Eichmann trial in 1961 Arendt concluded that he was a shockingly normal man with ordinary motives and no apparent ideology, who was unable to articulate complex thoughts and spoke mostly in stock phrases and clichés. She concluded he did not think 'very deeply or well' (p 262) and never from the perspective of others but had become someone with 'something important to do' (p 266). Her assessment that sometimes monstrous deeds are done by people who are quite ordinary, neither demonic nor monstrous, without malicious motives and whose notable attribute is thoughtlessness which she characterised as the 'banality of evil'

was then as now very controversial. She similarly courted controversy with her prescient observations and concerns about Zionism, Israel and the treatment of Palestinians. In both cases she was vilified from many quarters.

A friendship was gradually restored between Arendt and Heidegger, with many long gaps between meetings and with the support of her husband and Jaspers, each taking their own line on things as shown in their letters. Maier-Katkin concludes that she did not believe in an obligation to forgive but ‘only that forgiveness is a perpetual possibility so long as one can see the betrayer as a person who is something more than the act of betrayal’ (p 346). He suggests she was very aware of Heidegger’s flaws and doubts that information since unearthed about his Nazi past would have made any difference to her position.

She supervised the translation of *Being and Time* into English and did much to promote his work which helped his financial position greatly. They met again in 1967 in her 60th year and in 1969 when she returned to Europe for Jasper’s funeral. On Heidegger’s 80th birthday she gave a speech, broadcast in New York and on Bavarian radio when she said she saw him as ‘the secret king in the empire of thinking’ (p 303) whose influence derived less from particular ideas than from the fact and style of his thinking, most especially his example of ‘passionate thinking in which thinking and being alive become one’ (ibid). Their final meeting was in 1975. Arendt died suddenly of a heart attack in December that year, a year after Blücher’s death. Heidegger died in May 1976.

In telling the life stories and existential struggles of these people, whom I previously knew only through their work, as fully imperfectly human Maier-Katkin has breathed life into his subjects and created a thoughtful, emotionally engaging and rewarding read. In particular, I enjoyed the contextualising of Heidegger’s work, that it arose from a particular time and place in history, and from both his eminence and downfall as well as from his genius. Seeing the flawed person takes nothing away for me, rather it makes him more human. It also cast a new light on Heidegger’s concept of *aletheia* or un-concealment – a dynamic moving between concealment and disclosure that yields insights and awareness – which is a constant theme in his work. As a therapist, I find this aspect fascinating, a man with much to conceal and a profound interest in un-concealment. Revelations of his own concealments may not be what *aletheia* was intended to be about yet it is intriguingly relevant to his life and it is how we use the concept in existential analysis.

Maier-Katkin’s affectionate portrayal of Arendt as an extraordinary person, highly intelligent, compassionate, courageous, independent and fair minded left me wanting to explore her writing, particularly ‘The life of the mind’ published posthumously. The title page of the third section ‘Judging’ was in her typewriter the night she died.

The manifestation of the wind of thought is not knowledge; it is the ability to tell right from wrong, beautiful from ugly. And this indeed may prevent catastrophes... in the rare moments when the chips are down

(Arendt, p 310)

Diana Pringle

The Bitterest Pills – The Troubling Story Of Antipsychotic Drugs

Joanna Moncrieff. (2013). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dr Moncrieff embodies a calm yet forceful passion for her beliefs. A few years ago, I was fortunate to have attended a forum discussion of the Society for Existential Analysis conducted by Dr Moncrieff and found her to be immensely well-informed and patient in her manner. This book reflects the same approach throughout, successfully negotiating the tricky task of being both meticulously researched, not shying away from the detail of scientific studies, and maintaining an accessible style. I cannot recommend it highly enough to anyone working with people confronted with the possibility of psychiatric medication.

Many existential psychotherapists may start from a position similar to that espoused by R.D. Laing, (1967) positing that schizophrenia could be described as a ‘sane response to an insane world’ and would not be surprised that recent research has revealed ‘high levels of previous physical and sexual abuse and victimisation in people diagnosed with psychotic disorders, (Read et al., 2003; Gracie et al., 2007).’ Mainstream views within the field of mental health however, seem to be more readily aligned with a biologically deterministic view of schizophrenia, and a disease centred understanding of psychosis maintains a strong grip on both medical and political policy, as well as permeating across wider society.

Whilst acknowledging the existence of such polarised positions in the understanding of so-called ‘psychotic symptoms’ Moncrieff cleverly avoids entering this debate directly, and instead constructs a narrative in which the reader is forced to adopt a critical way of thinking to all arguments presented, in which self-reflection and scepticism become the watchword. No doubt this will be a familiar and comfortable position for existentially trained practitioners. By carefully recounting a history of the birth, growth and now widespread use of antipsychotic drugs, Moncrieff allows the constant twists and turns of the story to reveal their own truths. This proves also to be an adept way for the illumination of the history of ‘psychotic illness’ to reveal itself too, and subsequently challenges the reader to dismantle and question many popular beliefs held about the effectiveness