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THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS TO PHILOSOPHY:

THE VIEW OF MORRIS LAZEROWITZ

Grell Vestus Grant

A Thesis  
in  
The Department  
of  
Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS TO PHILOSOPHY;

THE VIEW OF MORRIS LAZEROWITZ

Grell Vestus Grant

This thesis attempts to clarify and assess Morris Lazerowitz's claim that psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy.

Chapter 1 provides an analysis and elucidation of Lazerowitz's claim, centering in turn upon the three expressions comprising the claim, namely: 'psychoanalysis', 'is relevant to' and 'philosophy'.

Chapter 2 delineates the logical features of the argument Lazerowitz advances in support of his claim, isolating the main and supporting arguments for the claim, and exhibiting their logical connection.

Chapter 3 deals both with the logical and epistemic status of the grounds offered as substantiating the claim and with the epistemic status of the claim: It enquires into the validity and soundness of the claim's backing, and subsequently, into the veracity of the claim itself.

...criticism may be either of an internal or an external kind. In other words, one may show the need to adopt another standpoint by exposing the inadequacy of a philosophical position in terms of the position itself. Or, one may criticize a position in a completely external and mechanical way, condemning it simply because it does not measure up to one's own criteria. This latter type of criticism ... is very satisfying to the critic but unfortunately convinces no one else.

Maxwell John Charlesworth  
(Philosophy and Linguistic  
Analysis, Preface,  
pp. xi-xii)

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Needless to say, neither Dr. French nor Dr. O'Connor is to be held in any way responsible for any of the inadequacies or errors that may appear in this thesis.

Cheryl, my woman of valour, assumed the responsibility for the typing of this thesis, and assisted me in the proof-reading. To her I dedicate the thesis.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- PI: Philosophy and Illusion by Morris Lazerowitz  
(London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968)
- SIM: Studies in Metaphilosophy by Morris Lazerowitz  
(New York: The Humanities Press, 1964)
- SM: The Structure of Metaphysics by Morris Lazerowitz  
(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955)

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#### DEDICATION

Affectionately dedicated to my wife, Cheryl,  
without whose patience and understanding  
this thesis would not have been possible.

## PREFACE

Philosophers have turned their attention, after the fashion of psychoanalysts, to the debunking or unmasking of philosophy. Underlying this development is the sense that

...there exist reasons for thinking that philosophy has the substance of a verbally contrived intellectual mirage and that it is a subject which only in outward appearance seeks to discover truths about things. (PI, 99)

Here, the reasons alluded to are inescapably psychoanalytic. They are yielded by the application of psychoanalysis to philosophy.

Exemplifications of this application abound in, inter alia, Hanly and Lazerowitz's anthology, Psychoanalysis and Philosophy. Herein, in his "Lawless Sensations and Categorical Defenses: The Unconscious Sources of Kant's Philosophy," we find Lewis S. Feuer proceeding thus:

What type of person is inclined, on emotional grounds, to denigrate the role of sensation? It is the kind of person who, in various ways, is at odds with his own sensuality or sexuality, who seeks to repress or contain his sexuality with various defense mechanisms. It is, above all, the kind of person in whom sensory reception evokes an experience of guilt. It is characteristic of persons engaged in such intense repression of sensation that the world of things in themselves recedes for them as something which has been shorn of its reality. Thus Kant developed an intense dislike for all varieties of sensations, proportionate to the degree that they evoked some sort of sexual association.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, he observes:

With the repression of sexuality, Kant's sense of the reality of the external world diminished. The world which was sexually unknowable became truly unknowable. Indeed, the unknowable world of things in themselves, the abyss in which categories and science foundered,

had the aspect for Kant of the "abyss" of sexuality. The mystery of sexuality was a principal example of the unknowable reality from which he drew back in literal fear.<sup>2</sup>

Herein too, in their "The Need to Philosophize," Scharfstein and Ostow psychoanalyze philosophers in light of theories these philosophers advance. Thus we are told:

Merleau-Ponty's philosophy... perpetuates his symbiosis with his mother and also expresses the impossibility of doing so.<sup>3</sup>

and,

Kant's closeness to and distance from his thing-in-itself can now be understood as his sadomasochistic repulsion of the dangerous object.<sup>4</sup>

These psychoanalytic explanations issue from a movement the chief architect of which is Morris Lazerowitz. His claim and the movement's motto is: "psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy".

Surely, Lazerowitz's claim, in point of its execution, poses a threat to the traditional understanding of philosophy as comprising a quest either for ontological truth or for conceptual clarification. The psychoanalytic explanations that this claim generates further vilifies and defames the philosophic enterprise.

Contra this claim, as exemplified in its execution, and on behalf of the philosophic enterprise, as traditionally understood, one may say a priori: 'such a claim is absurd and certainly false; thus, it merits no serious consideration'. But, in this study, I shall take seriously Lazerowitz's claim.

This decision and the line I take in carrying it out are not dissociated from G.E. Moore's approach to matters philosophical.

Moore wrote that, in his approach to philosophy, he was concerned with two sorts of problem:

First, the problem of trying to get really clear as to what on earth a given philosopher meant by something which he said, and, secondly, the problem of discovering what really satisfactory reasons there are for supposing that what he meant was true, or alternatively, false.<sup>5</sup>

In this study, I shall be concerned with problems comparable to the two that exercised Moore, in my approach to the particular claim of Lazerowitz which posits the relevancy of psychoanalysis to philosophy. I shall designate this claim as Lazerowitz's "R-claim", where "R" is an abbreviation for relevancy.

Moore's impetus in selecting the queer philosophical specimens that gave rise to the two problems which exercised him may well have been his sense

that no philosophic opinion which is actually held by anybody whatever, however absurd it may appear and however certainly false, is wholly beneath notice. The mere fact that it is held - that somebody is seriously convinced of its truth - seems to me to entitle it to some consideration.<sup>6</sup>

If this is not the sentiment behind Moore's decision to consider seriously the admittedly odd philosophical specimen, it is the sentiment behind mine. However, although I should grant, initially, and perhaps, even ultimately, that Lazerowitz's philosophical opinion may "appear absurd", I shall not allow ab initio that it is "certainly false".

Before passing to the matter of clarifying and appraising Lazerowitz's "R-claim", it remains to make the following point. A not insignificant by-product of my efforts to understand and assess this claim should be a deepened awareness of both:

- i) the force of the Lazerowitzian threat to the traditional understanding of philosophy,  
and
- ii) the thrust of possible procedures for removing this sort of threat.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE CLAIM

#### 1.0 Aim of the Chapter

Here, in Chapter 1, I shall try to "get really clear as to what on earth is meant" by Lazerowitz's "R-claim".<sup>1</sup>

Now, Lazerowitz tells us:

...psychoanalysis is relevant... to philosophical utterances... (SIM, 256)

This is Lazerowitz's "R-claim". But what does he mean to assert? What is the import of his claim? We may, I think, get clear as to the force of Lazerowitz's claim, if we consider what Lazerowitz is doing with the language of his claim: what meaning he assigns to the expressions 'psychoanalysis', 'is relevant to' and 'philosophy'.

#### 1.1 The Term 'Philosophy'

We can gain access to the meaning Lazerowitz attaches to the term 'philosophy', by considering statements of his which exhibit this meaning. In these remarks he specifies both the intention (sense) and the extension (reference) of the term 'philosophy'.

First, the intention of the term. Lazerowitz tells us:

...a philosophical [utterance] is a three layer structure composed of the illusion of science, an unconscious group of ideas, and an altered piece of language which creates the first and expresses

the second... (SIM, 239-40)

Here, Lazerowitz proffers, what in his view, are the necessary and sufficient conditions for something's being a philosophical utterance. On this view, 'U' is a philosophical utterance, if and only if 'U' satisfies these conditions: 1) 'U' is a linguistic proposal; 2) 'U', qua linguistic proposal, creates the illusion of science; and 3) 'U', qua linguistic proposal, functions to express a group of unconscious thoughts, which are important for our mental life, and the import of which is grasped unconsciously.

Second, the extension of the term. In this connection, Lazerowitz asserts:

Some philosophers have had, and perhaps still have, the idea that an entire part of philosophy is spurious and should be given up and that other parts are genuine disciplines from which knowledge is to be gained. But this idea springs more from a wish than from insight. Reasoned, technical philosophy, including ethics, aesthetics, epistemology, as well as metaphysics, is all of a piece, and what is true about the nature of one of its main divisions is also true about its other divisions. If one of these is devoid of literal intelligibility, the others are also; or if one of its divisions is no more than linguistically contrived intellectual illusions, so are the others. (SIM, ix)

Here, Lazerowitz indicates that utterances expressed in all "reasoned, technical philosophy", satisfy the conditions - (1), (2) and (3) - above, and are members of the class of philosophical utterances. On this view: utterance 'U' is a member of the class of philosophical utterances, if and only if 'U' is expressed in a division

of "reasoned, technical philosophy", be it "metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of science, etc." (PI, 13) And, paradigm cases of 'U' are inter alia:

- I. Those statements, which come under the heading 'Aesthetics', such as (a) "beauty is an attribute or quality"; (b) "the analysis of the concept 'beauty' is 'such and such an attribute or quality'"; and (c) "statements of the form 'x is beautiful' can be translated without loss of meaning into statements of the form 'I like x'". (SIM, 77-121, passim.)
- II. Those statements, which come under the heading 'Philosophical Psychology', such as (d) "material objects are not perceived directly"; (e) "the analysis of the concept 'material object' is 'a complex of actual and possible sense data'"; and (f) "statements about material objects are translatable without loss of meaning into statements about actual and possible sense data". (PI, 190-215, passim.)

The above remarks of Lazerowitz exhibit the meaning he attaches to the term 'philosophy'. Given these remarks, we may say that, in the Lazerowitzian idiom:

Philosophy = the class of theories which find expression in the whole of reasoned, technical philosophy; each member of which class possesses a three layer structure comprised of 1) the illusion of science, 2) a group of unconscious ideas, and 3) a linguistic proposal.

It is noteworthy that 'philosophy' as understood by Lazerowitz, cuts across the process/product distinction in philosophy, since 'philosophy' includes within its scope both philosophy as a first-order activity (supposedly yielding knowledge of the world and of reality) and philosophy as a second-order activity (supposedly yielding a clarification of concepts and of statements expressing these concepts). Thus, for Lazerowitz, statements (b),



(c), (e) and (f) no less than statements (a) and (d), fulfill the necessary and sufficient conditions (1, 2 and 3, above) for something's being a philosophical statement. For him, pronouncements of Moore and Ayer no less than those of Spinoza and Bradley satisfy these conditions.

### 1.2. The Expression 'Is Relevant To'

In saying that psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy, Lazerowitz means that psychoanalysis alone can be made to yield an account of certain features of philosophic pronouncements. In his words:

It [psychoanalysis] alone can discover for us what they [philosophical utterances] really say, as against what they delusively appear to say... and it explains the durability of the illusions [produced by philosophical utterance]. (SIM, 256)

But how can psychoanalysis be made to effect this?

Lazerowitz gives us various examples, with this caveat:

...it is not part of my purpose... to try to defend psychoanalysis against its critics nor to try to explain any of its fundamental concepts. I shall take it for granted that the unconscious is ubiquitous in our thought and behaviour, that it surrounds us everywhere, and I shall assume as substantially correct the basic psychoanalytical tenets as to its constitution and modes of operation. (SIM, 239)

Here, we shall consider a healthy sampling of Lazerowitz's examples, with a view to further clarifying the force of 'is relevant to' as expressed in his "R-claim" - to throwing into greater relief the sense in which psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy. Let us turn to the examples.

Example 1. Lazerowitz tells us:

...[the] absorbing and enduring interest [of philosophical words] lies in the unconsciously grasped propositions they are made to express, one of which it would seem is related to a [sexual] curiosity that went unsatisfied in the infancy of our life.  
(SIM, 254)

Here Lazerowitz employs Freud's theory of infantile sexuality. The theory that from birth children are capable of erotic activities, that

...it is an untenable fallacy to suppose that the child has no sexual life and to assume that sexuality first makes its appearance at puberty, when the genital organs come to maturity. On the contrary he has from the very beginning a sexual life rich in content....

This theory points backward toward Freud's theory of libido, which explains the libido as a "force, by means of which the sexual instinct achieves expression."<sup>4</sup> And it - the theory of infantile sexuality - points forward toward Freud's theory of psychosexual development, which theory charts the complex development of the libido.<sup>5</sup>

Lazerowitz employs this theory, with an eye to giving an account of Spinoza's philosophical utterance that

a) There cannot be an event without a cause. (SIM, 256)

Lazerowitz's account is as follows: (a) "expresses a proposition which quieted, although it never satisfied, [Spinoza's] childhood desire for [sexual] knowledge." (SIM, 256) It expresses the proposition that

b) ...an event, the child [Spinoza], is somehow brought into being by his parent. (SIM, 256)

Lazerowitz appeals to Freud, who tells us: "the sexual interest of children is primarily directed to the problem of birth.... But the child is not able to solve this problem on his own account." (SIM, 254) Subsequently, Lazerowitz observes:

Freud's description of the character of a person whose childhood curiosity has gone unsatisfied applies perfectly to Spinoza, and we should not be surprised if Spinoza's curiosity also had remained unsatisfied and that unconsciously he was still seeking for an answer. His own words, 'that all things are in God, and so depend on Him, that without Him they could neither exist nor be conceived', give us reason to think this. For in almost undisguised language they express a theory about childhood dependence and procreation. (SIM, 255)

Example 2. Lazerowitz advances the view that:

The substratum philosopher... tries to cope with his uncanny perception... that part of his mind is shut off from his conscious awareness (that dreams and strange, unaccountable thoughts which invade his mind come from unknown parts of himself), by projecting his perception on to things. (SIM, 235)

In this instance, Lazerowitz employs Freud's theory of projection. This theory states that projection is an unconscious process of removing threats to the ego by means of externalizing unacceptable impulses, thoughts or feelings, because of their anxiety-producing potential.<sup>6</sup>

Lazerowitz employs this theory, to the end of explaining the claim of substratum metaphysicians<sup>7</sup> - e.g. Locke and Kant - that

- c) ...things, as against the experienceable attributes they possess, are unknowable. (SIM, 231)

Lazerowitz's explanation takes this form: (c) expresses a

proposition which eases the metaphysician's tension, arising from his frustration about his having to live with an unknowable in himself. It expresses (via projection) the proposition that

- d) the unknowable is not within the metaphysician but in the world, albeit the noumenal world. (SIM, 231)

In Lazerowitz's words: "He [the substratum metaphysician] finds it easier to live in a world of unknowables than to live with an unknowable within himself." (SIM, 235)

Example 3. Lazerowitz maintains that:

- ...the philosophical theories that physical things cannot be seen and that they can be seen only indirectly are bound up with a frightening perception which had to be mastered by the defensive mechanism of denial. (PI, 215)

Lazerowitz applies Freud's theory of denial. This theory states that denial is the unconscious process of removing threats to the ego by means of refusing to face an unpleasant reality, because of its anxiety-producing potential.<sup>8</sup>

Lazerowitz applies this theory, to the effect of explicating the pronouncement of philosophers of perception - e.g. Russell, Moore and Ayer - that

- e) ...physical things cannot be seen [or] that they can be seen only indirectly.... (PI, 215)

Lazerowitz's explication runs thus: (e) expresses a proposition that suffices as a reassurance formula, which frees the philosopher from anxiety attaching to a frightening perception he underwent. It expresses (via denial)<sup>9</sup> the proposition that

- f) a frightening perception, engendering fear and anxiety, did not occur. (PI, 215)

As Lazerowitz puts it: "The psychological implication of the theories [generating (e)] would seem to be that... perception-terminology has acquired a frightening subjective meaning." Such theories "would appear to function as reassurance formulas in which the mechanism of denial plays a conspicuous role." (PI, 215)

The above examples (1-3) should suffice, in this context, to clarify the force of 'is relevant to' as expressed in Lazerowitz's "R-claim". Its force, as exemplified in (1-3), comes to this: to say that psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy is to say that psychoanalysis alone can unearth the hidden propositions that philosophical statements are made to express and elucidate the importance of these propositions for our mental life, the sense in which they constitute the concealed fulfillment of repressed wishes.

### 1.3 The Term 'Psychoanalysis'

The question remains: what does Lazerowitz have in mind by 'psychoanalysis'? Examples (1-3) above provide us with exhibitions of his use of the term. In (1) and its attendant analysis of (a) into (b) Lazerowitz appeals to Freud's theory of infantile sexuality. And, in (2) and (3) and in their respective ancillary analyses of (c) into (d) and (e) into (f), he invokes Freud's theory of defense

mechanisms. The theory that "defense mechanisms are employed by the ego to protect the person from anxiety."<sup>10</sup> This theory states that defense mechanisms are "adjustive reactions"<sup>11</sup> which "involve falsifications of actual conditions and [which] operate unconsciously,"<sup>12</sup> Lazerowitz in each example, interprets and uses a theory of Freud's to elucidate pronouncements of philosophers qua philosophers. He, in the words of John Hospers, "makes an attempt to apply Freudian principles to the philosophers he chooses as examples."<sup>13</sup>

Further examples of Lazerowitz's interpretation and use of "Freudian principles" may be adduced.<sup>14</sup> Here is a sampling.

Example 4. Lazerowitz tells us:

- 1) ...there does exist a science of the unconscious. The unconscious is no longer an unknowable, a Ding-an-sich. (SM, 69)
- 2) A philosophical theory... is a structure with one leg in the adult part of our mind, the educated intellect, and another leg in the archaic part of our mind, the unconscious. (SIM, 180)
- 3) ...with his philosophical words the philosopher works through a feared condition that unconsciously haunts his mind. (SIM, 231)
- 4) ...the [philosophical] pronouncement... expresses thoughts which are unconsciously grasped. (SIM, 163)

These observations (1-4) indicate Lazerowitz's acceptance and use of the Freudian theory of the unconscious.<sup>15</sup>

This theory states that there are "...psychic processes which are active and yet at the same time do not come through into

the consciousness of the person concerned...."<sup>16</sup> Now, (1) signals Lazerowitz's acquiescence in Freud's theory of the unconscious; whereas (2), (3) and (4) mark his application of this theory, in order to throw light upon philosophy.

Example 5. Lazerowitz maintains that:

- 5) [The philosophical utterance] gives expression to unconscious fantasies. As is well known, an unconscious fantasy, like a dream, functions as the substitutive gratification of a wish.... (PI, 109)
- 6) [A philosophical theory] is a creation of the mind and must, we are compelled to think, serve a psychical need. Like a dream, a painting, and a poem it undoubtedly caters to an unconscious wish. (PI, 113)
- 7) There can no longer be any serious doubt that philosophical questions and theories have unconscious determinants, that they have meanings which are hidden from the philosophers themselves and are not available to their conscious reasoning processes. (PI, 99)

These remarks (5-7) indicate Lazerowitz's acceptance of the Freudian theory of dreams. The theory that "the dream is the hidden fulfillment of a repressed wish,"<sup>17</sup> that the dream is "brought about by a wish... expresses this wish... and represents this wish as fulfilled."<sup>18</sup> This theory "contrasts the dreams' 'manifest content' with its 'latent content',"<sup>19</sup> which is reached by the "method of psychoanalysis."<sup>20</sup> Its manifest content is the dream as verbalized, "as directly related."<sup>21</sup> Its latent content "represents nothing else than the imaginary fulfillment of an ungratified wish";<sup>22</sup> it constitutes "the underlying meaning of the dream"<sup>23</sup> and, the "method of psychoanalysis"

whereby the dreams' latent content is reached is "the process of free association" as to its manifest content.<sup>24</sup> Now (5) and (6) attest to Lazerowitz's use of this theory to exhibit philosophical statements as the disguised fulfillment of frustrated yearnings or repressed wishes. And, (7) bespeaks his use of this theory to reveal the sense in which philosophical statements are comprised of a manifest content (the statement as advanced) and a latent content (the underlying meaning of the statement, the repressed wish it contains or expresses).

These additional examples (4-5) further indicate that Lazerowitz is wont, as he puts it, "to improve our understanding of philosophy by looking at it through the eyes of... Freud." (PI, 76) Thus, we may say, that in the Lazerowitzian idiom:

Psychoanalysis = the set of Freudian theories, members of which are: the theory of the unconscious, the theory of dreams, the theory of infantile sexuality, the theory of defense mechanisms.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, Lazerowitz's "application of Freudian principles" simply to exhibit the unconscious import of philosophical utterances and to explicate their importance for philosophers, indicates that 'psychoanalysis' in Lazerowitz's usage does not cut across the theory/therapy distinction in psychoanalysis. For, here, the term includes only Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which is introduced not as a medium for effecting therapy - psychoanalytic or philosophical<sup>26</sup> - but "as", in Lazerowitz's words, "an



explanatory hypothesis." (SIM, 239)

We are now in a position to indicate what Lazerowitz's "R-claim" involves. It comes to this, that the set of Freudian theories exclusively: i) can uncover the unconscious significance implicit in philosophical statements as expressed in all reasoned, technical philosophy; and ii) can elucidate the jobs these statements perform for the philosophers advancing them.

#### 1.4 Recapitulation

To sum up, then:

We started by trying to find an analysis of Lazerowitz's "R-claim", according to which psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy.

To this end, we examined the components of Lazerowitz's "R-claim" and found that in his idiom:

- 1) 'psychoanalysis' means 'the theories and principles of Freud'.
- 2) 'is relevant to' means 'can alone explain certain features of'.
- 3) 'philosophy' means 'the class of three-layered statements expressed in all of reasoned, technical philosophy'.

And, we noted that, given Lazerowitz's definition and use of the terms 'philosophy' and 'psychoanalysis', respectively, 'philosophy' cuts across the process/product distinction in philosophy and 'psychoanalysis' does not cut across the theory/therapy distinction in psychoanalysis,

but includes only Freud's psychoanalytic theories.

Finally, in light of the complex of considerations above, we advanced, as a preliminary analysis of Lazerowitz's "R-claim" something paralleling the following: Freud's theories or principles alone can reveal the hidden proposition expressed by the philosophers' pronouncement and explicate this proposition's significance for the philosophers' mental life.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE BACKING

2.0 Aim of the Chapter

In this chapter, I shall attempt to describe the logical features of the argument which Lazerowitz advances in support of his "R-claim". To this end, I shall consider his procedure in treating a certain philosophical theory; and, subsequently, I shall exhibit the structure of the main and supporting arguments underlying this procedure.

2.1 An Illustration of the Argument

Does Lazerowitz afford us an argument which qualifies as a proof of his "R-claim", an argument which enables us to see that psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy? He does. And, I shall attempt to spell out in an explicit and systematic way the logical progression of this argument, by considering Lazerowitz's procedure in treating a philosophical statement 'S': by considering the series of argumentative steps he takes as entailing that psychoanalysis is relevant to 'S' and the results of his invocation of psychoanalysis to explain certain features of 'S'. Here, let 'S' designate the philosophical statement "everything remains unchanged", or any of its cognates, including "nothing changes" or "change is unreal".

Let us set out explicitly the background against

which Lazerowitz initially approaches 'S'. This backdrop is comprised of the two received views as to the nature of 'S'. On the first view, 'S' is taken as an empirical claim - a proposition about the nature of the world or of reality - open to confirmation or disconfirmation by reference to the pertinent facts. On the second view, 'S' is taken as a verbal claim - a proposition about the actual meaning of an expression - open to confirmation or disconfirmation by reference to ordinary, established usage. Lazerowitz initially approaches 'S' by showing that both these views as to the nature of 'S' are mistaken.

Stage 1: Lazerowitz sets out to show that 'S' does not express a proposition: a truth-value claim. For 'S' is descriptive neither of a fact in the world nor of a fact about the language in which 'S' is expressed, since 'S' is neither empirical nor verbal. Lazerowitz takes the following three considerations as indicating that 'S' is not an empirical claim. The first consideration is:

- i) 'S' is not established or disestablished by reference to the facts.

Lazerowitz sees (i) as following from the fact that, if we take 'S' seriously and apply tests to it, what the tests show will not in the slightest degree influence the philosopher who advances 'S'. Thus, if we point out that ice melts, fire burns, seasons recur, violets bloom, red roses blanch in direct sunlight, and men age and die - if we call

attention to any such fact, we shall make no advance in moving the philosopher who holds 'S'. For he does not allow "that melting ice and burning paper show that what he maintains [viz. 'S'] is false." (SM, 59) Rather, taking "refuge in the baffling metaphysical distinction between appearance and reality," he protects 'S' thus:

I grant you that things seem to change, but their seeming to change is just an illusion of the senses. In reality, behind the appearance of their changing, they remain the same and unchanged. (SM, 59)

Thus, no evidence, however strong or conclusive it may seem to us, is conceded in any way as discrediting 'S'.

The second consideration is:

- ii) Disputes bound up with 'S' are not resolvable by recourse to the facts:

Lazerowitz sees (ii) as entailed by the following consideration: that here the facts are not in question, since the philosopher advancing 'S' does so while (and in spite of) knowing facts of the sort which by 'S' he seems plainly to deny. That the philosopher knows such facts is revealed by his behaviour. For his behaviour is inconsistent with 'S', while it is consistent with the behaviour of men who know facts concerning change, facts of the kind ostensibly denied by 'S'. Despite his advancing 'S', on the plane of ordinary behaviour, he anticipates the advent of summer, mourns the demise of friends and relatives, utilizes cars, trains and other conveyances, and makes use of his political franchise. Whereas, on the plane of academic behaviour, he shifts his

arguments and views, attempts to alter the beliefs of his students and colleagues, and travels from one university to another in order to give talks and attend symposia. The philosopher holding 'S' is in full possession of the facts apropos of change. When we call attention to such facts we are presenting him with no new evidence, the lack of which may be considered a reason for his holding 'S', and the presence of which may suffice to resolve disputes bound up with 'S'. (SM, Chapter 1)

The third consideration is:

iii) 'S' is theoretically irrefutable.

In Lazerowitz's view, (iii) is entailed by the consideration that no imaginable facts could count against 'S', since there is no possible state of affairs which the philosopher advancing 'S' will accept as a refuting instance of 'S'. Thus:

...if we take seriously his distinction between appearance and reality, between appearing to change and really remaining unchanged, and point out the obvious fact that what visually appears to be a state of affairs could, if only as an outside theoretical possibility, actually be a state of affairs, we meet in [him] a peculiar reaction. (SM, 59)

For "he cannot describe anything over and above and in addition to such phenomena as coal burning and changing into ash and wax melting." That is, "he cannot describe anything which would be an instance of a thing really changing, such that if it existed, his view ['S'] would be false." Here, manifestly, there is no theoretically possible state of affairs which could constitute a falsification of 'S'. (SM, 60-1)

Lazerowitz takes (i), (ii) and (iii) as indicating that 'S' is not an empirical claim. Furthermore, he takes the following two considerations as indicating that 'S' is not a verbal claim. The first is:

- iv) 'S' is not established or disestablished by reference to actual linguistic usage.

Lazerowitz takes (iv) as following from the fact that facing the philosopher advancing 'S' with established linguistic usage does not have the effect of making him relinquish 'S'. Taken as verbal,<sup>1</sup> as describing actual linguistic usage, 'S' implies that change-indicating expressions have no descriptive use and that such expressions are self-contradictory. Yet, 'S' will not be upset, if we inform the philosopher advancing 'S' that such sentences as 'a volcano has erupted', 'the azaleas have wilted', and 'the fire has burnt out', all have an application and make descriptive sense; and that such sentences as 'Plato died in 348 B.C.', 'Caesar crossed the Rubicon', and 'Napoleon was exiled to Elba' are not self-contradictory. Here, the philosopher advancing 'S' remains adamant in the face of actual linguistic usage.

The second consideration is:

- v) Disputes bound up with 'S' are not resolvable by recourse to actual linguistic usage.

Lazerowitz sees (v) as entailed by the consideration that, here, established linguistic usage is not in question, since the philosopher advancing 'S' does so while (and in spite of) knowing facts of the kind which by 'S' he ostensibly

gainsays. That the philosopher knows such facts is again revealed by his behaviour. He uses and responds to the use of change-indicating expressions in the same way in which people who do know their use commonly respond. Thus, he knows how to ask for and give the time of day, how to request and give directions, and so on. The philosopher holding 'S' knows that change-indicating expressions have a descriptive use and he knows what their use is. In calling attention to such facts of ordinary linguistic usage, we are presenting him with no new linguistic evidence, the lack of which may be considered as a reason for his holding 'S', and the presence of which will serve to resolve disputes bound up with 'S'.

In brief: Lazerowitz takes considerations (iv) and (v) as indicating that 'S' is not a verbal claim. Now, for Lazerowitz, considerations (i-v), together, indicate that 'S' is neither empirical nor verbal; and, herewith it follows, in his view, that:

vi) 'S' does not express a proposition.<sup>2</sup>

Stage 2. Lazerowitz takes (vi) together with

vii) 'S' appears to be about matters of fact as entailing:

viii) 'S' is a linguistic proposal which creates the illusion of science.

Lazerowitz's latter proposition (viii) is a compound proposition, the components of which are: viiia) 'S' is a linguistic proposal,<sup>3</sup> and viiib) 'S' creates the illusion of science.



Here, two points are noteworthy. Firstly, in saying that 'S' is a linguistic proposal, Lazerowitz means that the philosopher advancing 'S' re-edits ordinary language, altering the actual use of 'remains unchanged'. By linguistic fiat, the philosopher advancing 'S' renders 'remains unchanged' applicable to whatever 'material things' applies to. But,

if the phrase 'remains unchanged' is made to apply to whatever the word 'material things' applies to, [then] the use of 'remains unchanged' has been altered and no longer has its ordinary use. (SM, 63)

Second, in saying that 'S' creates the illusion of science, Lazerowitz means that 'S' effects the deception that a truth-value statement is being made, which statement parallels either a) "human beings cannot hear sounds of high pitch readily audible to dogs," in being about the world; or, b) "'erse' is not a nonsense syllable like 'brillig'," in being about language. (SM, 1, 48) 'S', qua linguistic innovation, is (misleadingly) expressed in the language of assertion (proper to (a) and (b)) rather than in the language of proposal. (SM, 20, 57-66) Thus, the philosopher introducing 'S' says in the language of assertion "everything remains unchanged" instead of, more properly, saying in the language of proposal "let 'remains unchanged' apply to phenomena to which 'man', 'seasons' and so on apply"; or, "let the propositions expressed by change-indicating sentences have no descriptive use and be self-contradictory". (SM, 79)

'S' thus creates the illusion of science, by virtue of being a concealed linguistic proposal.

Stage 3. Lazerowitz takes (viii) together with

ix). 'S' does not function to reform language<sup>4</sup>

as entailing:

x) 'S' creates the illusion of science while functioning to express a group of unconscious thoughts,

Two points are noteworthy, here. Firstly, Lazerowitz sees (ix) as following from these considerations: 1) that 'S' qua linguistic proposal is not bound up with a desire on the part of the philosopher holding 'S' to free ordinary language from vagueness and ambiguity, since the terms comprising 'S' - 'change' and 'unchanged' - do their assigned everyday jobs well enough and retain their everyday use, even for the philosopher advancing 'S'. (PI, 89) And 2) that 'S' qua linguistic proposal is left intentionally incomplete, since, on the strength of 'S', the philosopher banishes the entire class of change-indicating sentences from language, without making a linguistic restitution of any sort. (SM, 79, 224-25)

Secondly, in saying, in (x), that 'S' creates the illusion of science while functioning to express a group of unconscious thoughts, Lazerowitz means that 'S' creates the false appearance that it expresses a proposition (a truth-value claim), in order to give concealed expression to an unconscious fantasy: in order to effect the hidden gratification of a repressed wish. (SIM, 217) 'S'

...creates the appearance of a profound theory about the cosmos, while it actually expresses inner psychic

dramas. And the appearance and dramas are dynamically connected. The appearance acts as a screen for the inner dramas, and the dramas protect the appearance from being unmasked. (SIM, 251)

For Lazerowitz, 'S' is made to revamp<sup>5</sup> ordinary language, under the semblance of science, to the end of concealing the psychodynamic function of 'S': the way in which 'S' operates to satisfy the unconscious wishes and fantasies of the philosopher advancing 'S'.

Stage 4. Lazerowitz, in view of the analogical claim

xi) 'S' is a 'verbal dream',  
takes (x) as entailing his "R-claim",<sup>6</sup> particularized,  
namely:

xii) Psychoanalysis is relevant to 'S'

Note: In saying that 'S' is a 'verbal dream', Lazerowitz means that 'S' is analogous to a dream in that, like a dream:

- a) 'S' ...caters to an unconscious wish. (PI, 113)
- b) 'S' has ...meanings which are hidden from the philosophers themselves and are not available to their conscious reasoning processes. (PI, 99)
- c) 'S' ...stands in need of interpretation. (PI, 82)

In exemplifying (xii), Lazerowitz invokes psychoanalysis, and proceeds to interpret and use it, with a view to giving an account of both

- I. the unconscious content of 'S', and
- II. the durability of 'S'.

I. Lazerowitz's account of the unconscious content of 'S' runs thus: 'S' expresses a proposition that successfully prevents a memory (of the traumatic experience of his birth) from coming to the philosopher's consciousness.<sup>7</sup> It expresses (via repression)<sup>8</sup> the proposition that

a traumatic event, the philosopher's birth, did not take place and that there is no memory of it in the philosopher's mind. (SM, 73)

Lazerowitz makes his characteristic appeal to Freud. He tells us:

According to Freud, the abrupt change, in birth, from a quiet, unruffled environment to an entirely different one which overwhelms the helpless infant with a flood of strange sensations creates anxiety and is the prototype of all later anxiety-arousing situations. (SM, 72)

Subsequently, Lazerowitz observes: 'S'

...reports the inner fact that the work of repression is successfully preventing a memory from coming to consciousness; it expresses an unconscious belief that is a bulwark against the invasion of a dreaded remembrance. [viz. the traumatic event of the philosopher's birth.] (SM, 73)

II. Lazerowitz's account of the durability of 'S' takes the following form. First, we have an absorbing and enduring interest in 'S', since we unconsciously grasp the underlying proposition, the wish-fulfillment, 'S' is made to express. We are thus held captive by 'S', inasmuch as it plays a psychodynamic role for us, expressing "a hidden proposition that is important for our unconscious mental life." (SIM, 256) Second, we safeguard 'S', as a vehicle for the expression and gratification of our repressed needs, by unconsciously erecting a barrier which prevents us from

getting close enough to 'S' to see it for the illusion that it is. It is the "inner psychic dramas" that 'S' expresses, while creating the appearance of being a factual claim, which protects this "appearance from being unmasked," (SIM, 251)

In the preceding, in considering Lazerowitz's procedure in treating a philosophical statement 'S', I exemplified the main and supporting arguments which Lazerowitz takes as entailing his "R-claim". Here, in preparation for a critical assessment of his main argument, I shall exhibit both its structure and that of its supporting arguments.

## 2.2 The Structure of the Argument

The structure of Lazerowitz's main argument may be displayed as follows:

- P1) Philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which, while creating the illusion of science, function in essence to express a group of unconscious thoughts.<sup>9</sup>
- P2) If philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which, while creating the illusion of science, function in essence to express a group of unconscious thoughts, then, psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning and function of philosophical theories.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore:

- C3) Psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning and function of philosophical theories.<sup>11</sup>

Here, it must be acknowledged that (P1) is a compound proposition, the truth of which is contingent upon that of

its components; these are;

- Pl.1) Philosophical theories are linguistic proposals,
- Pl.2) Philosophical theories create the illusion of science,
- Pl.3) Philosophical theories function in essence to express a group of unconscious thoughts,

Lazerowitz recognizes the need to establish these premises, and therefore tries to support them by sub-arguments.

### 2.3 The Structure of the Supporting Arguments

In support of (Pl.1) Lazerowitz presents the following sub-argument;

- Pl.1a) If philosophical theories do not express propositions, then, philosophical theories are linguistic proposals.<sup>12</sup>
- Pl.1b) But, philosophical theories do not express propositions, for; philosophical theories are neither empirically factual nor linguistically factual,

Therefore:

- Pl.1) Philosophical theories are linguistic proposals.

In support of (Pl.2) Lazerowitz presents the following sub-argument:

- Pl.2a) If philosophical theories are linguistic proposals, which appear to be about matters of fact, then, philosophical theories create the illusion of science,

- Pl.2b) But, philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which appear to be about matters of fact.

Therefore:

Pl.2) Philosophical theories create the illusion of science.

Finally, in support of (Pl,3) Lazerowitz presents the following sub-argument:

Pl.3a) Either philosophical theories function to reform language in order to facilitate practical discourse or they function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts.

Pl.3b) But, philosophical theories do not function to reform language in order to facilitate practical discourse; for: the philosophers advancing these linguistic proposals do not themselves adopt them outside of their 'philosophic moments', and the linguistic proposals themselves are incomplete linguistic reforms, banishing from ordinary language whole classes of sentences, without replacement.

Therefore:

Pl.3) Philosophical theories function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts.

Here, some comments on (P2) and (C3) are in order.

First (P2). (P2) supposedly represents an implication, such that it is a contradiction (say) to jointly affirm its antecedent and negate its consequent. For Lazerowitz, thus, given (P2), the statement 'philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which, while creating the illusion of science, function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts; but, it is not the case that Freudian principles alone can discern the meaning and function of philosophical theories' is self-contradictory.

Ostensibly, (P2) logically parallels: 'if A) a piece of discourse 'D' consists of premises and a conclusion, then, B) we can discover by virtue of a decision procedure, or of

logical analysis, whether 'D' is valid or invalid'. For, here, the joint affirmation of (A) and the negation of (B) is a contradiction. That is; any statement of the form 'A. $\neg$ B' is, where 'A $\rightarrow$ B', self-contradictory.

In addition, informing (P2) is the following analogy, namely:

- i) If dreams function to express a group of unconscious thoughts - an unconscious content, a latent meaning - then, psychoanalysis can discover the meaning, the function of dreams.
- ii) Philosophical theories are analogous to dreams: they are indeed "verbal dreams" (SM, 26); like dreams they:
  - a) ...cater to an unconscious wish, (PI, 113)
  - b) ...have meanings which are hidden from the philosophers themselves and are not available to their conscious reasoning processes, (PI, 99)
  - c) ...stand in need of interpretation, (PI, 82)

Therefore:

- P2) If philosophical theories function to express a group of unconscious thoughts - an unconscious content, a latent meaning - then, psychoanalysis can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories.

Second (C3). It must be acknowledged that (C3) is ambiguous. It can be taken as meaning either:

- I) Professional philosophers - e.g. Lazerowitz and his adherents - by applying Freudian principles to philosophical theories can discover what these theories mean and how they function,
- or,
- II) Accredited psychoanalysts can confirm or disconfirm the speculations of professional philosophers about the meaning and function of philosophical theories,



resulting from these philosophers' application of Freudian principles to such theories.<sup>13</sup>

In advancing (C3), Lazerowitz vacillates between (I) and (II). This will be discussed in Chapter 3.

#### 2.4 Recapitulation

To sum up, then:

We set ourselves the task ab initio of displaying the logical features of Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim". And, in the execution of this task, we:

- i) described his strategy in dealing with a given philosophical theory;
- ii) exhibited the principle and ancillary arguments informing this strategy;
- iii) displayed, in view of (i) and (ii), the logical features of Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim".

## CHAPTER 3

## THE CRITIQUE

3.0 Aim of the Chapter

We are now in a position to answer the queries: Is Lazerowitz's argument successful in establishing its conclusion? Does it suffice as a proof for his "R-claim"? Does it enable us to see that psychoanalysis is relevant to philosophy? In this chapter, I shall show that Lazerowitz's (main) argument, albeit valid, fails to establish his "R-claim", since the argument is unsound, both its premises being false. Independently of this, I shall show that Lazerowitz's argument could not succeed anyway, since his "R-claim" is false.

3.1 The Validity of the Argument

Let us restate Lazerowitz's (main) argument for his "R-claim". It runs thus:

- P1) Philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which, while creating the illusion of science, function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts.<sup>1</sup>
- P2) If philosophical theories are linguistic proposals, which, while creating the illusion of science, function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts, then, psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore:

- C3) Psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical

theories.<sup>3</sup>

If Lazerowitz's argument is valid and its premises true, then, it entails his "R-claim". Is the argument valid? Yes. It has the form:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} p & \rightarrow & q \\ p & & \\ \cdot & & \\ \cdot & & q \end{array}$$

and this is modus ponens, a valid argument form. Thus, Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is valid.

### 3.2 The Soundness of the Argument

Since Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is valid, if its premises are true, then, they entail his "R-claim". But, are the premises true? I shall argue that neither (P1) nor (P2) is true. Let us consider these premises in turn.

### 3.2.1 The First Premise

(P1) asserts that philosophical theories are linguistic proposals which create the illusion of science, while functioning in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts. Now in attempting to establish that philosophical theories are 'LIP' (our abbreviation for what (P1) asserts), Lazerowitz draws upon a subset of the set of philosophical theories, the members of which subset are not essentially different from the other philosophical theories, which in view of (P1) are 'LIP'. That is: in the process of demonstrating (P1),

Lazerowitz accepts, uses and defends the philosophical theories of others, not different in kind from those his (Pl) characterizes as 'LIP'.

The following are some of the cases, in which Lazerowitz, as it were, tips his hand:

Case I. In attempting to establish that philosophical theories are 'LIP' rather than a priori truths based, as the rationalists hold, upon rational insight into the nature of reality, he defends the highly controversial linguistic theory of the a priori,<sup>4</sup> namely, the theory that

- a) the necessity in the being of things is... linguistically created. (SIM, 209)

In view of this philosophical theory, "...if the philosophical utterance were a priori its purport would be a verbal point with regard to actual usage; it would not express a theory about the nature of events," (SIM, 252) Thus, Lazerowitz holds

the claim that the sentence 'Every event has a cause' expresses an a priori true proposition entails, and is entailed by, the claim that the sentence, 'As a matter of usage "has a cause" applies to whatever "event" applies to, so that "uncaused event" has no use', expresses a true empirical proposition. (SIM, 252)

Case II. In attempting to show that philosophical theories are 'LIP' rather than analyses of the meaning of concepts, Lazerowitz criticizes the referential theory of meaning and defends the disputed philosophical theory that the meaning of an expression is the rules for its use,<sup>5</sup> viz., the theory that

- b) ... knowing the meaning of a word is the same as knowing its proper use, (SM, 89-90)

Thus, Lazerowitz maintains:

The expression 'the meaning of a term' is not used to denote objects, and this is brought out by the fact that the expression 'the literal use of a term' substitutes without serious distortion for it. The expression 'use of a term',... denotes an activity,... and no mystery attaches to the idea of analysing an activity. Plainly, analysing the use of an expression E comes to nothing more than stating the rules for E's use,...' (SIM, 196).

Case III. In describing philosophical theories qua 'LIP's', Lazerowitz appeals to the mooted philosophical theory that there exist propositions which are the bearers of meaning,<sup>6</sup> to wit, the theory that

- c) ...the meaning of a sentence and the proposition that it expresses are the same thing, (SM, 54)

And, in keeping with (c) he asserts that philosophical theories express "hidden propositions" (SIM, 256), and that the import of these propositions is "unconsciously grasped". (SIM, 254)

Here the question prompts itself: if (a-c) are not philosophical theories, what are? Yet, in the process of establishing his (Pl), Lazerowitz accepts, uses and defends philosophical theories such as (a-c), which are not different in kind from those that his (Pl) characterizes as 'LIP'. (Pl), which asserts (a-c) are 'LIP', is true, only if it is false: only if (a-c) are not 'LIP'. Thus, Lazerowitz's (Pl) is self-contradictory and hence logically false. For (Pl) is true, only if certain things which are

inconsistent with it are true,

The upshot of the above is this:

1) Lazerowitz sets out to establish

P1) The set of things (a-z) described by the expression 'philosophical theories' is included in the set of things described by the expression 'LIP'.

And, therefore, to show false

P1\*) There exists something (a-c) which belongs to the set described by the expression 'philosophical theories' but does not belong to the set described by the expression 'LIP',

2) But, Lazerowitz, in the process of demonstrating (P1), presupposes the truth of its contradictory (P1\*). Thus: in his attempt to show that philosophical theories (a-z) are properly described as 'LIP', he assumes that philosophical theories (a-c) are not properly described as 'LIP'. Hence, Lazerowitz's (P1) is true, if and only if (P1\*), which is inconsistent with (P1), is also true.

3) Lazerowitz's (P1) is, thus, self-contradictory, since it is true, only if it is false.

### 3.2.2 The Second Premise

(P2) asserts that, if philosophical theories are linguistic proposals, which, while creating the illusion of science, function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts, then, psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories. It was indicated above (2.2.2) that Lazerowitz's

(P2) represents an implication, such that it is a contradiction to jointly affirm its antecedent

- A) Philosophical theories are linguistic proposals, which, while creating the illusion of science, function in effect to express a group of unconscious thoughts.

and deny its consequent

- B) Psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories.

The consequence here is this: that any expression of the form 'A.-B' is self-contradictory. For: 'A→B'.

It should be indicated that (P2) is informed by the following analogy:

- i) If dreams function to express a group of unconscious thoughts - an unconscious content, a latent meaning - then, psychoanalysis can discover the meaning, the function of dreams.
- ii) Philosophical theories are analogous to dreams; they are indeed "verbal dreams" (SM, 26); like dreams they:
  - a) ...cater to an unconscious wish. (PI, 113)
  - b) ...have meanings which are hidden from the philosophers themselves and are not available to their conscious reasoning processes. (PI, 99)
  - c) ...stand in need of interpretation. (PI, 82)

Therefore:

- P2) If philosophical theories function to express a group of unconscious thoughts - an unconscious content, a latent meaning - then, psychoanalysis can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories.

If philosophical theories and dreams are similar in the respects required, then, Lazerowitz's (P2), as he intends

it, is false. For Freud refers to cases which may be taken as constituting counter examples to (P2). Such cases indicate that 'A,~B' is not self-contradictory and hence that 'A→B' is false.

Freud refers to cases in which the hidden, unconscious content of a piece of discourse ('PD') ~ in this instance a dream as verbalized ~ can evade discovery, if the person's whose 'PD' it is, does not bridge the gap between his 'PD's' manifest content and its hidden, unconscious meaning; if he "does not help us the manifest content in question will remain for ever incomprehensible,"<sup>7</sup>

What does the existence of such cases indicate? This: that, albeit a 'PD' may possess an unconscious content, psychoanalysis cannot discover this 'PD's' unconscious content, its latent meaning, without the contribution of the person whose 'PD' it is. Lazerowitz's (P2) is, thus, false. There are cases, described by Freud himself, which may be taken as constituting counter examples to it.

The upshot of the above is this;

- 1) Lazerowitz's (P2), the antecedent of which is (A) and the consequent of which is (B) ~ above ~ asserts: 'A→B', such that 'A,~B' is false.
- 2) Freud himself describes cases which indicate that expressions of the form 'A,~B' are true.
- 3) Lazerowitz's (P2) is, thus, in view of (1) and (2), false.

We have, thus, shown that neither the first (P1) nor the second premise (P2) that Lazerowitz advances in support



of his "R-claim" is true. And, from this it follows that Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is unsound. Independently of this, I shall show, in what follows, that the conclusion of the argument, which asserts his "R-claim", is false.

### 3.2.3 The Conclusion

(C3), Lazerowitz's "R-claim", expresses the proposition that psychoanalysis - Freudian principles - alone can discover the meaning, the function of philosophical theories. Now, it was indicated above (2.2) that Lazerowitz's (C3), his "R-claim", is open to two interpretations. In what follows, I shall show that irrespective of which construction is put on it, (C3) is false. I shall begin by noting two points.

First, Lazerowitz's (C3) issues from, or is bound up with, his analogical view that philosophical theories are "verbal dreams", with "meanings which are hidden from the philosophers themselves"; and, which, therefore, like dreams "stand in need of interpretation". (SM, 26; PI, 82,99)

Second, the analogy underlying (C3) may be exhibited thus: just as psychoanalysis can discover the meaning, the function of dreams, so, too, it can discover the meaning, the function of verbal dreams, namely philosophical theories, discovering the meaning of the latter being analogous to discovering the meaning of the former. (See above, 2.2.2)

Keeping these two points in mind, I shall now i) present

Freud's views concerning the conditions that must obtain if psychoanalysis is to discover the hidden meaning, the latent content of dreams; and ii) proceed to show that, if philosophical theories and dreams are similar in the respects required, then, in light of Freud's revelations, (C3), Lazerowitz's "R-claim", under either of its two possible interpretations, is false.

i) In Freud's view, the necessary and sufficient conditions for psychoanalysis discovering the hidden meaning or the latent content of a dream are as follows, Psychoanalysis attains to the relevant discovery, if and only if

- a) The analysand effects the discovery directly
- or,
- b) The analysand effects the discovery indirectly.

For Freud, the analysand, the dreamer himself, compasses (a) by "a direct association" and he compasses (b) by providing "so much material that there is no longer any need for special penetration in order to solve it - the solution thrusts itself upon us as inevitable."<sup>8</sup> Here, therefore, it is the dreamer himself that bridges the gap between the dream as verbalized and its hidden meaning; thereby affording the interpretation of his dream.

ii) As was indicated, two constructions may be placed on Lazerowitz's (C3), which is his "R-claim". It can be taken as meaning either (1) or (2):

- 1) Accredited practitioners of psychoanalysis can confirm or disconfirm the speculations of some

professional philosophers (e.g. Lazerowitz and his adherents) concerning the hidden meaning of philosophical theories, by discovering whether these conjectures are consistent or inconsistent with the Freudian principles, on the strength of which they are made,

- 2) Some professional philosophers can discover the hidden meaning of philosophical theories, by making conjectures, on the strength of Freudian principles, as to the unconscious content of such theories,<sup>9</sup>

In keeping with (1), we find Lazerowitz saying:

It is understandable that conjectures about the unconscious significance of philosophical theories will be received with displeasure, for a number of different reasons; but the charge is by no means true that they are idle, in the sense that they lie beyond the practical possibility of being established or confuted by an existing technique for investigating them. It is now possible to establish them or disestablish them, for there does exist a science of the unconscious. (SM, 69)

When Lazerowitz intends (1) by his (C3), when he acknowledges that he is not an accredited analyst and that his psychoanalytic explanations remain to be confirmed or disconfirmed by such analyst, we discover Lazerowitz prefacing his psychoanalytic conjectures with such qualifications<sup>10</sup> as: "it seems... reasonable to think that..." (PI, 117); "we may permit ourselves to guess at..." (PI, 256); and "it would not be surprising if..." (SIM, 180). In such cases, Lazerowitz is acting "...on the maxim that it is better to have guessed and missed than never to have guessed at all." (SM, 69)

Now, in keeping with (2), we find Lazerowitz speaking of having "brought to light facts" about the "enigmatic, if time-honoured, subject" philosophy; which facts "some people would prefer to have pushed back into their former obscurity,

where they cause no uneasiness." (PI, 13)

When Lazerowitz intends (2) by his (C3), when he fancies that professional philosophers, independently of the surveillance of accredited analyst, can discern the meaning of philosophical theories, we discover Lazerowitz advancing his psychoanalytic "explanations" without qualifications such as the above. Here, he gives the erroneous impression that these "explanations" possess the force of a Q.E.D.: the force of, to use an expression of his, "it cannot be seriously doubted that...." (PI, 139)

In any event, whichever of these two constructions (1) or (2) - we place upon Lazerowitz's (C3), upon his "R-claim", it is false. For under either interpretation (C3) presupposes the truth of

- 3) The hidden meaning, the unconscious content, of a piece of discourse ('PD'), in this case not a dream as verbalized but a 'verbal dream', can be got at and interpreted independently of the contribution of the person whose 'PD' it is, in this case a philosopher.

But (3) is false. It fails to satisfy Freud's conditions (a) or (b), above; according to which, the latent meaning, the unconscious content, of a 'PD' gets interpreted, only if the person's whose 'PD' it is bridges the gap between his 'PD's' manifest and latent content. And, if (3) is false, so is (C3), under either interpretation (1) or (2). For under either interpretation (C3) requires that the latent content, the hidden meaning of a 'PD' be

accessible independently of the gap-bridging work of the person whose 'PD' it is. {

The upshot of the above is this:

- 1) Freud maintains that psychoanalysis can discover the hidden, unconscious meaning of a 'PD', only if one of two conditions - (a) or (b) - is satisfied.
- 2) Lazerowitz's (C3), under either of its two interpretations - (1) or (2) above - presupposes that psychoanalysis can discover the hidden, unconscious meaning of a 'PD', in the absence of conditions (a) or (b) being satisfied.
- 3) Lazerowitz's (C3), his "R-claim", is, thus, in view of (1) and (2), false.

We have, thus, shown that Lazerowitz's "R-claim" is false. And from this it follows that, independently of the fact that Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is unsound, the argument could not succeed anyway (since his "R-claim" is false).

### 3.3 Recapitulation

To sum up, then:

We set out to discover ab initio whether or not Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is sound. We found that

- 1) Lazerowitz's (main) argument for his "R-claim" is valid, since it is cast in a valid argument form, modus ponens.
- 2) Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" is unsound, both its premises being false.

And, finally, we found that, independently of (2),

- 3) Lazerowitz's argument for his "R-claim" could not succeed anyway, since his "R-claim" is false.

## CHAPTER 4

## POSTSCRIPT

When we do philosophy we are like savages, primitive people, who hear the expressions of civilized men, put a false interpretation on them, and then draw queer conclusions from it. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, p. 48.

Philosophical reasoning has a peculiar power to blind us to the obvious. Norman Malcolm, Knowledge and Certainty, p. 180.

In approaching the Lazerowitzian corpus, one initially is, perhaps, filled with the excitement of having been brought to discover, by virtue of his genuine analytico-technical expertise,<sup>1</sup> scandalous and debunking facts about the pronouncements of professional philosophers.

But one ultimately comes to see that, albeit far from primitive in point of his logical sophistication and his technical skill, Lazerowitz is none-the-less qua metaphilosopher not unlike a Wittgensteinian savage. For he places false constructions upon the pronouncements of civilized men; and, thereupon, he proceeds to draw queer conclusions about such pronouncements.

One, thus, is brought to see that Lazerowitz is in quest of a will-o'-the-wisp, and that the peculiar power of his philosophical reasoning has blinded him to this obvious truth. And one is, perhaps inevitably, saddened by the fact that he invests so much, and surely, not only in the way of verve and finesse, in an odyssey so quixotic.<sup>2</sup>

One is moved to allow that, if it is neither by his arguments nor by his precepts, then, it is by his own example, as a philosophical fellow-traveller, that Lazerowitz reveals something of the ecstasy and the futility of the philosophical quest.

## NOTES

## NOTES TO PREFACE

1. Lewis S. Feuer, "Lawless Sensations and Categorical Defenses: The Unconscious Sources of Kant's Philosophy," Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, eds. Charles Hanly and Morris Lazerowitz (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1970), pp. 77-8.
2. Ibid., p. 90.
3. Ben-Ami Scharfstein and Mortimer Ostow, "The Need to Philosophize," Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, eds. Charles Hanly and Morris Lazerowitz (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1970), p. 270.
4. Ibid., p. 272.
5. George Edward Moore, "An Autobiography," The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, ed. P.A. Schilpp (New York: New York University Press, 1942), p. 14.
6. George Edward Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953), p. 203.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 1, THE CLAIM

1. In Chapter 2, I shall attempt to describe the logical features of the argument which Lazerowitz advances in support of his "R-claim".
2. See SIM, 217, 234-35; PI, 97-8, 109-110, 113, 117, 139-40; and SM, 78-9, 230.
3. Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952), p. 218.
4. Ibid., p. 322.
5. Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on Sexuality," The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953), Vol. VII, pp. 125-231.
6. Robert D. Nye, "Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis," in his Three Views of Man (California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1975), p. 25.
7. For Lazerowitz, a substratum philosopher is one who advances c), the claim according to which "things, as against the experienceable attributes they possess, are unknowable." (SIM, 231)
8. Nye, op. cit., p. 26.
9. Denial is to be distinguished from repression, discussed in Chapter 2. Denial, as Charles Brenner observes, "refers... to the blocking of certain sense impressions from the outside world. If they are not actually denied access



to consciousness, they at least have as little attention paid to them as possible and the painful consequences of their presence are partly nullified." Charles Brenner, An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955), pp. 100-01. By contrast, as Brenner notes, "repression consists in an activity of the ego which bars from consciousness the unwanted id impulse or any of its derivatives, whether memories, emotions, desires, or wish-fulfilling fantasies. All are as though they did not exist as far as the individual's conscious life is concerned." Ibid., p. 89.

10. Nye, op. cit., p. 24.

11. Robert M. Goldenson, "Defense Mechanism," The Encyclopedia of Human Behavior: Psychology, Psychiatry, and Mental Health (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970), p. 300.

12. Nye, op. cit., p. 24. For an enumeration of the defense mechanisms to which Freud referred in his writings see Anna Freud, The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense. (New York: International Universities Press, 1946).

13. John Hospers, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 336-37.

14. In this connection, a remark of Brand Blanshard is instructive: Lazerowitz's theory, Blanshard observes "is an ingenious fusion of Wittgenstein and Freud." "Review of Philosophy and Illusion," Metaphilosophy, Vol. I (1970), p. 179.

15. Here, two points are noteworthy. Note, firstly, that in the Freudian idiom the term 'unconscious' is used in three basic senses. These are: 1) the descriptive sense, "which merely attributes a particular quality to a mental state," distinguishing it as unconscious rather than as preconscious, or as conscious, in point of its strength, clarity or accessibility. 2) The dynamic sense, "which attributes a particular function to a mental state," characterizing it as "a repressed force endeavouring to make its way into activity" or against "a repressing force" by which it is "held in check." And, 3) the systematic sense, which attributes a structural division to the mind, "a division into portions to which it is possible to attribute a number of differentiating characteristics and methods of operating." James Strachey, "Editor's Introduction" in Sigmund Freud, The Ego and the Id (New York: Norton & Co., 1962). Note, moreover, that Lazerowitz's use of 'unconscious' in propositions 1-4 exemplify the term in its systematic sense.

16. Sigmund Freud, Delusion and Dream and Other Essays (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956), p. 69.

17. A.A. Brill, Basic Principles of Psychoanalysis (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), p. 136.

18. Freud, A General Introduction, pp. 135-36.

19. Ernest Jones, Papers on Psycho-Analysis (London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1950), p. 17.

20. Ibid., p. 217.

21. Ibid., p. 17.
22. Ibid., p. 248.
23. Goldenson, op. cit., "Dream Interpretation," p. 348.
24. Freud, A General Introduction, pp. 112-13.
25. I have concluded that by 'psychoanalysis' Lazerowitz intends 'Freudian theories'. My procedure in this connection has been to answer the query a) "What does Lazerowitz intend by 'psychoanalysis'?" by determining an answer to the query b) "How is 'psychoanalysis' exemplified in the context of the Lazerowitzian corpus?" This conclusion no less than the procedure employed in arriving at it reflects the influence of commentators on Lazerowitz. See: Charles Frankel, "The Status of Freud's Ideas," Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 324-28; Hospers, op. cit., pp. 336-39; Max Black, "Comments on Professor Lazerowitz's Paper," Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 358-59; Donald C. Williams, "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis," Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 157-79; Sidney Hook, "Science and Mythology in Psychoanalysis" Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 212-24; B. Blanshard, "Review of Philosophy and Illusion," Metaphilosophy, Vol. 1, 1970, pp. 178-85; Richard M. Gale "Review of Studies in Metaphilosophy," Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 15 (1965), pp. 363-69.
26. For a discussion of philosophical therapy, see P.F. Strawson, "Construction and Analysis," The Revolution in Philosophy (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1963), pp. 97-110; G.J. Warnock, "Analysis and Imagination," The Revolution in Philosophy (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1963), pp. 111-126. For a discussion of the similarities and differences between psychoanalytic therapy and philosophical therapy, and for a critique of the latter kind of therapy, see M.J. Charlesworth, Philosophy and Linguistic Analysis, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1961).

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 2. THE BACKING

1. Concerning the view that philosophical utterances are verbal claims, cf. Norman Malcolm "Moore and Ordinary Language," The Linguistic Turn, Richard Rorty, ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 111-24. Herein, Malcolm tries to show that philosophical utterances are verbal claims which go against or violate ordinary language and are false on this account. For a critique of Malcolm's

view, see Roderick Chisholm, "Philosophers and Ordinary Language," The Linguistic Turn, Richard Rorty, ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 175-82.

2. Note: The term 'proposition' is ambiguous as between a) bearer of truth (or falsity) and b) vehicle of meaning. Thus, Lazerowitz says, consistently, that 1) philosophical theories express no propositions, and 2) philosophical theories express a hidden proposition, which is unconsciously grasped. For: 'proposition' in (1) has the force of (a), and 'proposition' in (2) has the force of (b).

3. This view is hinted at by Wisdom in his "Philosophical Perplexity," "Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis," and "Philosophy, Metaphysics and Psycho-Analysis," in his Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis (California: University of California Press, 1969). This view is elaborated by Alice Ambrose in her "Linguistic Approaches to Philosophical Problems," in The Linguistic Turn, ed. Richard Rorty (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967); and, applied by her in "Philosophy, Language and Illusion," in Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, eds. C. Hanly and M. Lazerowitz (New York: International Universities Press, 1970). The view is criticized by Roderick Chisholm in his "Comments on the 'Proposal Theory' of Philosophy," in The Linguistic Turn.

4. For a critique of the view that philosophical statements do not function to reform language, see: C.J. Ducasse, "Psychoanalysis and Suggestion: Metaphysics and Temperment," Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. S. Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 319-23; also, cf. Richard Wasserstrom, "Hume and Philosophical Analysis: A Reply to Professor Lazerowitz," Philosophy, Vol. 35, (1960), pp. 151-53.

5. In saying (A) that 'S' revamps ordinary language, Lazerowitz is calling attention to this feature of 'S': that 'S' banishes the whole class of change-indicating sentences from language, without making a linguistic restitution of any sort. And, in saying (B) that 'S' does not function to reform language, he is calling attention to this feature of 'S': that 'S' qua linguistic proposal is not geared to the freeing of ordinary language from vagueness or ambiguity. No doubt, Lazerowitz may consistently assert both (A) and (B) of 'S'.

6. See below, pp. 26, 33.

7. Here, Lazerowitz applies Freud's theory of repression. This theory states that repression is the unconscious process of removing threats to the ego by means of excluding from consciousness "unpleasant or undesirable impulses, thoughts, feelings, or memories... because of their anxiety-producing potential." Robert D. Nye, "Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis," in Three Views of Man, p. 25.

8. Concerning the distinction between repression and denial, see above, notes to Chapter 1, n., 10.

9. For evidence of Lazerowitz's commitment to (P1), see SM, 78-9, 230; SIM, 217, 234-35; and PI, 97-8, 109-110, 117, 139-40.

10. For evidence of Lazerowitz's commitment to (P2), see SM, 256. Concerning the use of 'philosophical theories' in (P1), (P2) and (C3), in the Lazerowitzian idiom, the terms 'utterance' and 'theory' function, in connection with particular philosophical statements, as cognates. He, accordingly, describes a philosophical statement variously as an utterance or as a theory. See, SM, 67-79, passim.; SIM, 118-121, passim.; and PI, 203-215, passim. This usage reflects the convention that attaches to 'theory' the significance 'utterance' or 'statement' over above the significance 'set of utterances' or 'set of statements'.

11. For evidence of Lazerowitz's commitment to (C3), see SM, 69; PI, 99-100, 109. Note: There is nothing inordinately strong about Lazerowitz's (C3), his "R-claim". For, as J.A.C. Brown, in his Freud and the Post-Freudians (England: Penguin Books, 1961), observes "the word 'psychoanalysis', strictly speaking, refers solely to the theories of Freud.... This was recognized by Alfred Adler who, on breaking with Freud, gave his school the name of 'Individual Psychology' and by C.G. Jung who used the title 'Analytical Psychology' in similar circumstances. [Adler and Jung] recognized that their thought was not Freudian and hence not psychoanalytic." p. 1. And, in view of his exhibitions of the term's use, it is in this strict sense that Lazerowitz employs 'psychoanalysis'. Freud himself required this strict usage, in his On The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement, trans. Joan Riviere, ed. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1966).

12. Concerning the ambiguity of 'proposition', see above, notes to Chapter 2, n., 2. In this sub-argument, 'philosophical theories do not express propositions' has the force of 'philosophical theories are not truth-value claims'.

13. It is noteworthy that (C3) may also mean that accredited psychoanalysts alone, by applying Freudian principles to philosophical theories, can discover what these theories mean and how they function. But Lazerowitz allows no such meaning to (C3). For, such an allowance would render his psychoanalytic 'explanations' otiose, thereby undercutting his enterprise.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER 3. THE CRITIQUE

1. Concerning Lazerowitz's commitment to (P1), see above notes to Chapter 2, n., 9. For further criticisms of Lazerowitz's (P1), see; Ducasse, loc. cit., Black, loc.

cit.; Raphael Demos, "Psychoanalysis: Science and Philosophy", Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook, (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 329-35; Anthony Flew, "Philosophy and Psychopathology", Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy, ed. Sidney Hook, (New York: New York University Press, 1959) pp. 180-97; L.O. Kattsoff, "Lazerowitz's Verbalism" Philosophical Studies, Vol. 19 (1950), pp. 17-20.

2. Concerning Lazerowitz's commitment to (P2), see above, notes to Chapter 2, n., 10.

3. Concerning Lazerowitz's commitment to (C3), see above, notes to Chapter 2, n., 11. It is inescapable that Lazerowitz intends this by (C3), his "Re-claim". When executing this claim, by applying Freudian principles to the philosophers he takes as examples, "he fails to realize that the Freudian theory is not the only one that warrants consideration." Gale, op. cit., p. 366. It is noteworthy that Lazerowitz may disassociate the truth of his claim from "the truth of the Freudian theory" by dint of admitting "that his psychoanalytic explanations are not to be taken seriously since they only serve the purpose of illustrating the type of explanation that could be given for [philosophical theories]." Gale, loc. cit. Needless to say, Lazerowitz makes no such allowance.

4. For a critique of this theory of the a priori, see Arthur Pap, Semantics and Necessary Truth: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958).

5. For a critique of this theory of meaning, see J.N. Findlay, "Use, Usage and Meaning," Readings in Semantics, eds. Farhang Zabeeh, E.D. Klemke, and Arthur Jacobson (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974); and J.R. Searle, "The Assertion Fallacy" Readings in Semantics, eds. Farhang Zabeeh, E.D. Klemke, and Arthur Jacobson (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974). pp. 512-23.

6. For a critique of this theory, see A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1952); and Gilbert Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning," Readings in Semantics, eds. Farhang Zabeeh, E.D. Klemke, and Arthur Jacobson (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974). pp. 217-44.

7. Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction, p. 247.

8. Ibid., p. 246-47.

9. For a possible meaning of (C3), which meaning would undermine Lazerowitz's very own enterprise, see above, notes to Chapter 2, n., 12.

10. cf., William E. Kennick, "On Solipsism," Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, eds. C. Hanly and M. Lazerowitz (New York: International Universities Press, 1970), pp. 188-209.

## NOTES TO POSTSCRIPT

1. In this connection Blanshard observes: "Mr. Lazerowitz handles all he touches with competence and sophistication." Blanshard, op. cit., p. 178.

2. In this regard, Blanshard remarks: "my feeling about Lazerowitz's new book (Philosophy and Illusion) is a compound of admiration for its acuteness and regret that so much acuteness should be expended on a thesis that even great dialectical skill can hardly render plausible." Blanshard, op. cit., p. 185. In a similar vein Donald C. Williams observes: "I should be sorry to have it thought that I am not grateful to Mr. Lazerowitz for the courage and energy with which he has pressed home a repulsive and cumbersome hypothesis that might have been a threat to the traditional understanding of philosophy. A pioneer in his wilderness, he has naturally wrought less elegantly than settled folk would prefer. I hope, however, that he has done just well enough, and ill enough, to show that his travail need not be undertaken again." "Philosophy and Psychoanalysis" in Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy, ed. S. Hook. (New York: New York University Press, 1959) p. 178.

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