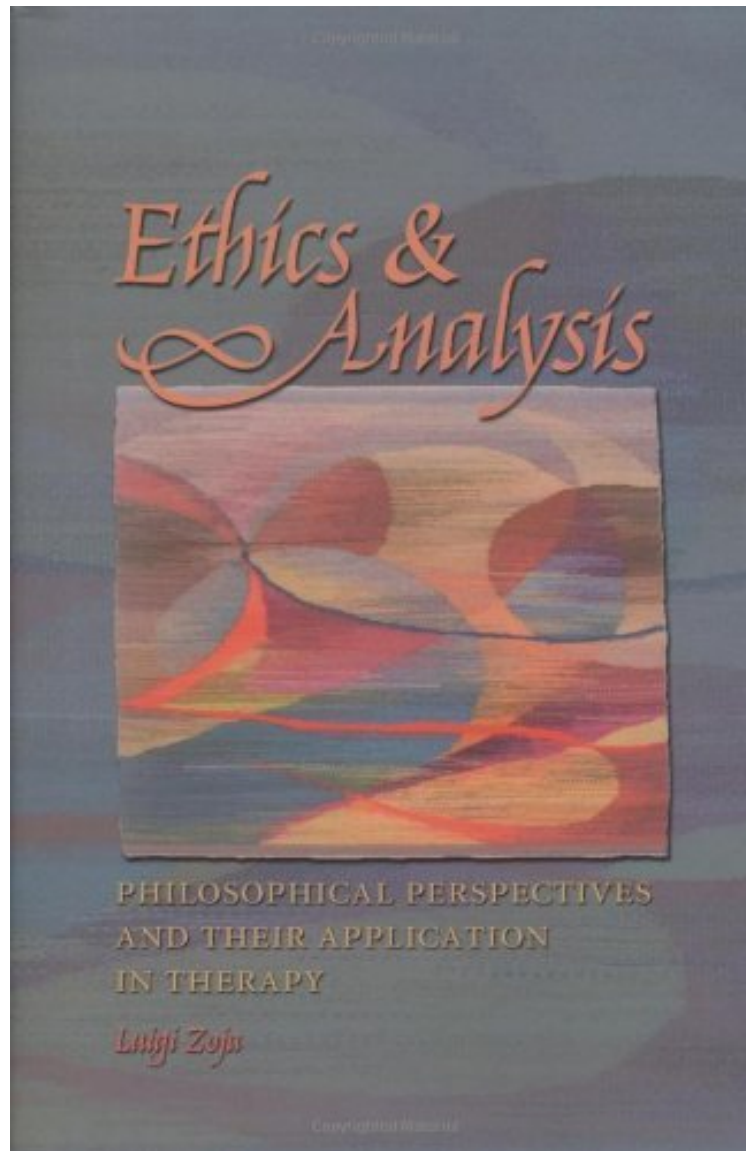


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(Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology)

Ethics and Analysis: Philosophical Perspectives and Their Application in Therapy: 13 (Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology)

Luigi Zoja

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Luigi Zoja : Ethics and Analysis: Philosophical Perspectives and Their Application in Therapy: 13 (Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ethics and Analysis: Philosophical Perspectives and Their Application in Therapy: 13 (Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tragedy, Beauty, and Ethics By Steven Herrmann Reviewed by Steven B. Herrmann, Ph.D., MFT Luigi Zoja's exciting book "Ethics and Analysis" is clearly one of the best books on ethics around. It made a big impact on me when I first read it and continues to do so today. In this fine work Zoja traces the aesthetical and ethical attitudes of consciousness to their roots in the Western world: to the Greco-Roman (polytheistic) and Judeo-Christian (monotheistic) religious dispensations--the former being, Zoja asserts, more aesthetical in accent, the latter more theological (7). Zoja conjectures that from the standpoint of the ancient Greeks, the longing for beauty and goodness was subsumed by the "soul's search for elevation" (9), and he posits two primary principles of great value: 1) "aesthetics aims at fighting abuse no less than ethics does," and 2) a "unitary idea" of ethics will only be realized when beauty is allowed to put up its own kind of fight (10). Beauty! This is clearly a value in ancient Greek philosophy that analysis would be wise to cultivate and it is well worth fighting for! Zoja lets the aesthetic attitude take a center stage in his writing. Not only does he include aesthetics into a psychological attitude, he lets aesthetics take lead part in the play! As far as I know, this is the only text that has elevated the aesthetical attitude to a plane co-equal with the ethical attitude. Zoja makes his calling to write the book known to us when he reveals his belief that depth-psychology is faced with a synthetic "task that is indistinguishably ethical and aesthetic." Here Zoja, a former president of the IAAP, aims at an aesthetical education of ethics itself, where he makes use of tragic narratives--as in ancient Greek drama--as a way of moral instruction for the death and rebirth of analytical consciousness (16), something that I feel is needed today. Zoja writes: "If aesthetics suffer injustice, they become an ethical issue. Aesthetics deprived become ethics reborn" (12). The "backbone of Western narration (and possibly of all narration)," Zoja continues, is tragedy (39) and tragedy is a vehicle for "reaching deeper consciousness" (56-57). Zoja proceeds to touch taproot when he writes: "The most frequent kind of complaint [to the IAAP] concerns abuses of transference" (57, 58). Here, he enters a feeling-full discussion on rules, laws, and limits in the practice of psychotherapy, and then goes further: Zoja discusses the power of tragic stories to create internal shifts in consciousness, so readers can grapple with contradictory clinical issues--in the "grey zone" of analysis proper. "Only that kind of [grey zone] experience," Zoja writes, "can lead the new generation onto the proper ground, where its attention can be quickened and 'ethical elaboration' can take place" (p. 74): in the "middle, where ethics live in equilibrium" (75). Zoja's thesis in Part II is as follows: it is the aesthetical quality of analytical narratives that evoke archaic emotions most deeply in us when we are faced with facts in morally ambivalent cases, and only when such facts are narrated in a truthful way, from the standpoint of the afflicted, can we really learn ethics; tragic emotions, when fully evoked, have the power to transform consciousness utterly, leading any psychotherapist, analyst, or lay public to form negative judgments from the vistas and depths of reflective consciousness. What do we mean by "negative judgments"? By means of tragic narratives archaic emotions--rage, hate, disgust, sorrow, etc.--may be tapped at a bodily and soulful level, and the ambivalence they stir in us may lead in turn to moral reflection, whereby the observing psyche can reflect on the pain and affliction caused by certain actions of our founding fathers; this moral reflection can lead to an increase in ethical consciousness from the standpoint of our rational functions of feeling and thinking and advance the codes of our professional ethics as we move towards a more compassionate psychological attitude. According to Zoja such reflections can lead one to enact an inner "betrayal of one's founding myth" (76); a betrayal based upon "sociopolitical" (99) requirements that coincide, not incidentally, with communal values. Zoja then moves eloquently, in his "Final Remarks," into a discussion of "breaches" in the transference-countertransference. A fierce inventory of our early history as a profession reconciles us with the terrible facts of boundary crossings, and such tragic stories are re-told by Zoja so that we can properly come to know ethics experientially through an upsurge of tragic emotion. By evoking chords of strong emotion in readers, Zoja calls for a "horizontal widening" and "vertical expansion" (101) of psychotherapeutic ethics; an extension upward and to the sides that does not split art, law, and ethics into irreconcilable points of view. Zoja's weaving of these stories, from the plight of the afflicted tragedians, will certainly enlighten any reader on the centrality of rules, codes, and standards of conduct in analysis. But more than that! Beauty emerges out of tragedy in this book to give us the ethical principles of our profession! In sum, Zoja achieves beautifully what he set out to achieve at the errand of his muse of tragedy and Art. I highly recommend Zoja's book to all interested readers. His book is not only a pleasure to read, but is beautifully edited, and beautiful to behold!

Also available in an open-access, full-text edition at <http://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/86082>

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