Dr Lynn Turner (Goldsmiths)

Book: **Desire in Ashes: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, Philosophy**

Chapter: **Thalassal Trends: In at the Deep End with Derrida and Ferenczi**

In his lengthy engagement with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Derrida finds Freud unable to take a clear step beyond anything. Even though Freud dares to contemplate such a thing as a death drive, Derrida finds its contaminating taint to be already at work. Life, the latter finds, is already ‘life death’. Yet this chapter intervenes in the anxious space between Freud and his junior colleague Sandor Ferenczi: where the former speculated upon a desire to return to the inorganic, the latter suggests a ‘thalassal trend’ linking human life not simply to an uncanny desire for intrauterine existence, but to a desire to return to life in water. The thalassal trend turns not just towards our ontogenetic amniotic waters but to our phylogenetic immersion amongst earlier forms of non-human life.

Current feminist work such as that of Elizabeth A Wilson and Vicki Kirby inspired by the legacies of deconstruction now refuses the doxa of a mind/body split endorsed by psychoanalysis such that we need no longer think of the body as barred to the psyche. In light of Wilson’s attention to the ‘stomach-mind’ in particular, we can think the relation between soma and psyche as properly supplemental. In light of Ferenczi’s theory of amphimixis, the singularity of the phallus is displaced – not because anything can assume a phallic function, but because the genitals are supplemented by neighbouring organs from the start.

This chapter reads Derrida and Ferenczi together – principally through the former’s *The Postcard: from Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (1985) and the latter’s *Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality* ([1938] 2005) to explore the possibilities for rethinking bodies that desire.

Bio

Lynn Turner is the editor of *The Animal Question in Deconstruction* (2013) and co-author of *Visual Cultures As… Recollection* (2013, with Astrid Schmetterling). She is currently co-editing *The Edinburgh Companion to Critical Animal Studies* (with Ron Broglio and Undine Sellbach). She is one of the assistant editors of *Derrida Today* and arts editor of *parallax*. She is a Senior Lecturer in Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London.