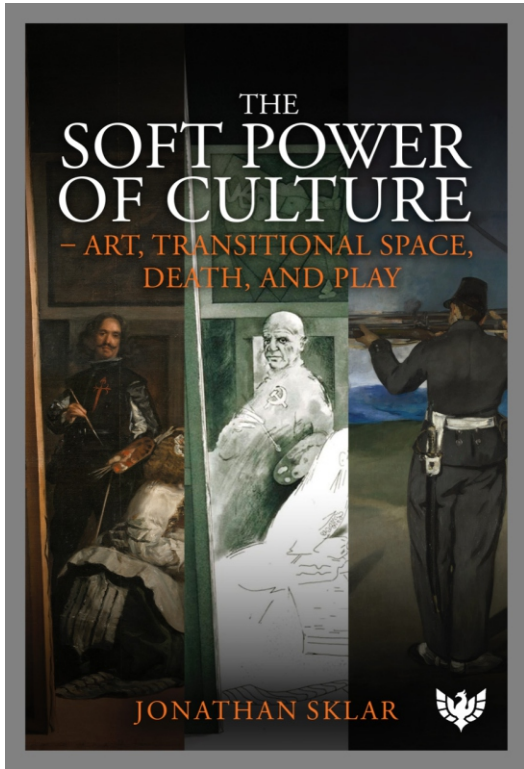


# The Soft Power of Culture

*Art, Transitional Space, Death and Play*

JONATHAN SKLAR



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**Subject Area:** Society & Culture; Psychoanalytic Theory

## Keynote

Using the prism of art, music, and storytelling, Jonathan Sklar takes psychoanalytic thought to a wide audience to enable a greater understanding of humanity.

## Key Features & Highlights

- Contains discussions on Francis Bacon, Cézanne, William Tillyer, the Bloomsbury Group, Sigmund Freud, the British Psychoanalytical Society, and dancing bears.
- Reinforced with playful appearances by Velasquez, Goya, Klee, Picasso, Hannah Arendt, Benjamin, Brecht, Huysmann, Bollas, Bion, Shostakovich, Forrester, Milner, and Enid Balint.
- Includes contributions from Endre Koritar, Victoria Hamilton, Philip Hewitt, Danielle Knafo, Drew Tillotson, Marcelo N. Viñar, and Wang Qian.

Totalitarian governments emerge from the same unconscious sadomasochistic structures that are found in the analysis of traumatised patients. Since the earliest times, art has been used as propaganda both to uphold the status quo and to subvert it. The arts as a whole connect with the individual and can open eyes and change minds. Culture is a valuable tool and one where the lack was felt keenly during lockdown when galleries, sports and music venues, and theatres were closed. Culture begins in the child's mind. For Winnicott, it is located in the potential space between the individual and the environment as the child's mind develops its unconsciousness and capacities for play. And the ability to play, or not, is connected to the freedom to think own's own thoughts or, by preference, to follow the leader. Another thread running through the book is of holding one's nerve, being alive in the moment, and realising that enactment in clinical work can be another royal road to the unconscious. Yet another is how culture can speak to hardcore power and how metaphor can be used as a process to sustain recovery and new beginnings. This book opens your eyes and changes your mind on all that culture brings.

**Dr Jonathan Sklar**, MBBS, FRCPsych is an Independent training and supervising psychoanalyst of the British Psychoanalytical Society. He was consultant psychotherapist at Addenbrooke's in Cambridge, and he now works in analytic practice in London and lectures widely across the world. He is an honorary member of the South African Psychoanalytic Society and the Serbian Psychoanalytic Society, and established and chaired the Independent Psychoanalytic Trust. He is the author of *Dark Times: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Politics, History and Mourning*.



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