James Grotstein was in analysis with Wilfred Bion in the 1970s, and has been writing prolifically about Bion and his theories ever since. In this major new volume he applies his encyclopaedic knowledge to an in-depth examination and explication of all Bion’s major ideas – language of achievement, reverie, truth, O, transformations, container – contained, dreaming, becoming, thoughts without a thinker, the Grid, reversible perspective, shifting vertices, binocular vision, contact-barrier, among many, many others – bringing them into focus to demonstrate their theoretical and clinical usefulness. They are presented in the context of a synthesis of the whole, gleaned from personal experience and a lifetime of study.

The essence of many of Bion’s major works is recapitulated, to differing degrees, and the “holographic” approach of the book resembles that in Bion’s own work, with concepts revisited from many different perspectives, touching different facets to offer the opportunity to grasp the underlying “truths”.

In the spirit of Bion’s injunction to be focused more on one’s own responses to what he said than on him and his words, Grotstein presents his own views of container – contained, alpha-function, and projective transidentification. In Grotstein’s own words, “The text is the result of my personal ascent of the North Face of Truth, O. This work, in other words, is my own personal diary of reading Bion.”