

The Vicissitudes of Psychoanalysis in Today's World

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November

December

Early Bird Registration
until 30.9.2019

75 euros
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2019

Keynote Speaker

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British Psychoanalytical Society

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Proposals for workshops by colleagues (IPA members) in English or French language are welcomed (Deadline : 31st August 2019)

Freud wrote that Psychoanalysis is incapable of creating a Weltanschauung of its own. It does not need one; it is a part of science and can adhere to the scientific Weltanschauung. However, Psychoanalysis is not securely sealed from the surrounding social and cultural changes; especially, in an era where, at least, two "revolutions" are in progress: Globalization and the Internet, with their own manifest and latent derivatives. It is also the work of Psychoanalysis to contribute to further understanding, mentalization and symbolization of each new (social) reality.

In Freudian terms, Psychoanalysis, both as a theory and as a clinical practice, is exposed to the Aktuell, to the (potentially) traumatic impact, on psychic structure & functioning, of an ever-changing "today". Indicative of this are the changes that even the psychoanalytic method itself has undergone in just over a century of its existence. Most impressive among them is the change in the duration of analyses: from several months in Freud's era to several years nowadays; and the (reverse) change in the frequency of sessions: from 6 times per week, in Freud's era, to 3-5 times per week nowadays.

In dreams, the unconscious derivatives par excellence, we may distinguish actual elements (day residues) connecting dream material with topicality, and contributing in granting the dream its lived quality. Similarly, the fact that the psychoanalysts and their analysands are embedded in the current "actual" and do take it in by participating in multiple worlds and taking on several identities, in tandem with the unavoidable experience-near quality with which they mark our clinical practice, may significantly influence psychoanalytic theory and thought.

More specifically, in clinical psychoanalysis, the working through and the analysis of the transference and counter-transference (which means, the revival and bringing up to the present) has been situated nowadays at the center of the analytic scene. Hence, acting-out has no longer only the meaning of an exclusively destructive movement, but also, as enactment, it can take also the meaning of an unconscious attempt to actually embody the absent past. Clinical analysis continuously invents ways of experiencing and reviving of the past here and now, so as to actualize the unconscious; given that this takes place at the appropriate psychic level, within the range of pleasure/unpleasure principle.

Psychoanalysis opens the mind up to an enigmatic externality (Laplanche), aware of the challenges represented by the enigmatic (social) messages, which invade our day-to-day analytic practice. Consequently, it is inevitable to work on/within this enigmatic actuality, in a twilight (preconscious) zone between a world as we would like it to be, and another one, as it is; on/within a here-and-now being potentially traumatic.

At the Conference, we are therefore interested in considering the following indicative issues::

- What remains invariant in psychoanalytic theory? What is variable or varying? Are there any (current) major socio-cultural transformations that call for changes on fundamental theoretical and clinical tenets of Psychoanalysis?
- How does Neuroscience affect basic psychoanalytic principles? Does it enrich and empower them or, on the contrary, questions them or even proves them wrong?
- Do the so called "new psychopathologies" justify changes in clinical practice and metapsychological conceptualizations?
- Regarding the existing (and suggested) modifications of the analytic setting (e.g. 3 instead of 4 or 5 times a week, analyses via Skype, etc.), what are their foundations and why are they necessary or not? How cautious should we need to be concerning therapeutic relationships, which take place, almost exclusively, through computer screens? How much do all the above influence the psychoanalytic technique as well as the concept of therapeutic space? What may be lost with virtual reality or may be gained through the communicational possibilities of technology?
- What is the relationship between the "classical" analytic setting and modified settings, such as face-to-face, group analysis etc.?
- Is Psychoanalysis qualified to have views on social, political and cultural issues? How is this eligibility justified?
- Are the existing conceptualizations on trauma and the traumatic sufficient? Do the psychoanalytic theories on trauma need reconsideration? How can one remain a psychoanalyst when one is situated in the here-and-now, consequently exposed to the traumatic actuality?
- Is the economic crisis in our country a challenge for psychoanalytic theory and practice? Is nowadays psychoanalysis a "luxury"?

February 2019,
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