

**“Who, where, what, in which way and to whom”:**

**Upon and about the results of a questionnaire on the present state of the relationship between psychoanalysis and the university in Europe**

**1. Objectives, methods, history of our research and the number of questionnaires collected**

The primary objective of our research is to chart a map of the psychoanalysts affiliated to the *International Psychoanalytical Association* who work in European universities at various levels and in diverse roles. In this way, we intend to ascertain – at least partly – who and how numerous these psychoanalysts are, what they teach, in what way and to whom. In addition, we will seek to clarify their relationship with their respective national psychoanalytic societies of affiliation, and their concerns, hopes and expectations with regard to the IPA and the future of psychoanalysis in academia.

To this end, we sent a questionnaire via e-mail to the Presidents and Boards of each psychoanalytic society in Europe along with an attached letter of presentation in which we described our research project and asked for help in retrieving a list of members working at the university, or for details of colleagues who we could contact in order to obtain this information. In the enclosed letter we had made explicit that our research was under the auspices of the IPA,<sup>1</sup> by whom I had been commissioned – as co-chair for Europe of the “psychoanalysis and university” committee – to run a survey in Europe analogous to that performed by Adela Leibovich de Duarte in South America (chair of this same committee during those years).<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding this, our request fell predominantly on deaf ears, with a few exceptions – namely, the German Psychoanalytical Association (DPV) which already had such a list, having set up an *ad hoc* committee called “*Forschungskommission*”, chaired by Georg Bruns, and the Finnish Psychoanalytical Society which had organized a similar

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<sup>1</sup> To be honest, my project was only embraced several years after reiterated attempts on my part to propose it, first as a member of the “psychoanalysis and university” committee and later as chair for Europe of that committee (see Borgogno 2005, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> The results of that research were presented and discussed under the title “Participation of psychoanalysts in university in Latin America” by Adela Leibovich de Duarte at the Berlin IPA Congress in 2007.

committee in 2006 with seven university departments (one in psychiatry, one in child psychiatry, three in psychology, one in sociology and one in philosophy), named the *Consortium for Psychoanalytic Research*.<sup>3</sup> In order to identify the target population for this census, we therefore had to “play it by ear” and improvise our own research tools, relying on the collaboration of colleagues of my acquaintance from each European society (such was the case for Austria, Switzerland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Poland) or searching for the names of colleagues on our “roster” and on the websites of European universities.<sup>4</sup> In Chicago last year I referred to this process metaphorically with a colourful expression as «recovering the horses who had bolted the stable “one by one” and having to motivate them – not without reluctance and trouble on their part – to go back “into the shared stable”» (Borgogno, 2009).

Unfortunately, for the time being, this procedure is not yet systematic enough in nature to offer a satisfactory degree of representativeness. In other words, it is inevitably biased by the fact that the diverse IPA European societies have not been forthcoming with an official response because, besides perhaps lacking the motivation to participate in this survey, they were unable to provide a list of their members working at the university for the simple reason that they were not in possession of such a document. Hence, the sample on which our inquiry is based is accordingly a “*sui generis* sample” which can only offer a “trend index”. Even though our sample is not strictly speaking valid from a statistical point of view, this trend index provides us with some valuable information, which we hope, perhaps optimistically, will be enhanced in the future. In fact, this is for us only a “first step” – a first step that has proved to be very useful in “rocking the boat” and drawing the attention of IPA to this important issue – and we have in mind that we, or others, may distribute and submit our questionnaire again in order to refine and complete the map charting that we have begun.

Independently of the abovementioned limitations, we have managed to collect a noteworthy number of questionnaires, 134 out of 340 sent,<sup>5</sup> with a percentage of global

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<sup>3</sup> See the recent document by Roussillon (2010) on the existing *status quo* of the presence of psychoanalysts in the universities of France and about the SIUEERPP (*Séminaire Inter-Universitaire Européen d'Enseignement et de Recherches en Psychanalyse et Psychopathologie*), a study group founded by Pierre Fédida (Roland Gori eventually joined in its coordination) which has grouped together IPA and non IPA psychoanalysts, whose total number seems to be 262 (of which 64 professors and 121 senior lecturers) since 2001. On this regard see also: Cupa, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Hence it is inevitable that in this way candidates have mostly been cut off as not present in the IPA roster.

<sup>5</sup> Anyway, in spite of the aforementioned bias, we have to underline that those who participated in our research did so with sufficient care and precision, and, in our opinion, no kind of “sabotage” nor any implicit or explicit belittlement of our project emerge from their answers. At the most, we can ascribe to the length of the questionnaire and time required to fill it in the fact that not all the participants have dwelled at length on its points and some questions (only few, to tell

response equal to 39.41%. The following nations stand out for level of response received: Austria, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Serbia (see Table 1). In these cases, we have succeeded in obtaining a realistic directory of IPA members working in the university.

Two considerations should nonetheless be born in mind when considering the directory obtained. Firstly, the percentage recorded for these countries is based not on the real population (a *datum* which, as we have said, is unknown) but on those whom, country by country, we have managed to track down and have received our questionnaire via e-mail. Secondly, there is, of course, a significant increase in the percentage of replies obtained for those countries where, for various reasons, the number of academic IPA psychoanalysts is exiguous.

**The overall response to the questionnaire**

<b>Nation</b>	<b>Number of questionnaires sent</b>	<b>Number of completed questionnaires received</b>	<b>Percentage of sent questionnaires / received questionnaires</b>
Australia	3	2	66,67%
Austria	19	10	52,63%
Belgium	5	3	60%
Czech Rep.	3	2	66,67%
Denmark	6	3	50%
Finland	15	7	46,67%
France (APF)	45	7	15,55%
Paris (SPP)	43	2	4,65%
Germany	20	12	60%
Great Britain	12	5	41,66%
Greece	2	0	0%
Hungary	2	0	0%
India	1	0	0%
Italy	79	50	63,29%
Israel	9	3	30%
Netherlands	No IPA psychoanalysts working at Univ.	0	0%
Norway	8	5	62,5%
Poland	1	1	100%
Portugal	3	2	66,67%
Romania	3	2	66,67%
Russia	3	2	66,6%
Serbia	4	2	50%
Spain	5	3	60%
Sweden	8	6	75%
Switzerland	13	6	46,15%
<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>39.41%</b>

Table 1

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the truth) have been skipped. So we should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have dedicated time and energy to our survey.

## 2. The data obtained

### 2.1. Who and where?

Moving on to describe the data obtained, let us begin by presenting the answers to the first question posed at the beginning of the paper – namely that concerning the identity (*who*) of the psychoanalysts who are presently teaching at European universities. The reached population is distributed as follows: 46.52% are full professors (located predominantly in Italy, Germany, France, Finland and Austria), 13.2% are associate professors and 29.1% are lecturers and research fellows (65% of all are dissertation directors). In addition to these, pre-/non-career grades such as teaching assistants and doctoral students account for a further, but negligible, percentage.

IPA psychoanalysts (48.5% PhD; 42.5% MD; 5.2% PhD/MD; and 3.75% other qualifications) thus occupy, by a large majority, the highest positions in the university hierarchy. The same is true of their psychoanalytic careers, inasmuch as they are – sticking to their answers – 35.8% training analysts, 31.3% full members, 22.9% associate members and only 12% candidates (I repeat that this last datum is negatively biased as a result of the absence of candidates in the IPA roster listing).

Nevertheless, this result is not comforting at all seeing that, although on the one hand it highlights the academic success that psychoanalysis had in past decades, on the other it foreshadows in reality, upon consideration of the age data (see Table 2), a worrisome reduction in the number of psychoanalysts in academia among the younger age groups and an alarming uncertainty as to whether they, in the near future, may ever reach the highest levels of academic teaching as it is today.

Age of the psychoanalysts contacted

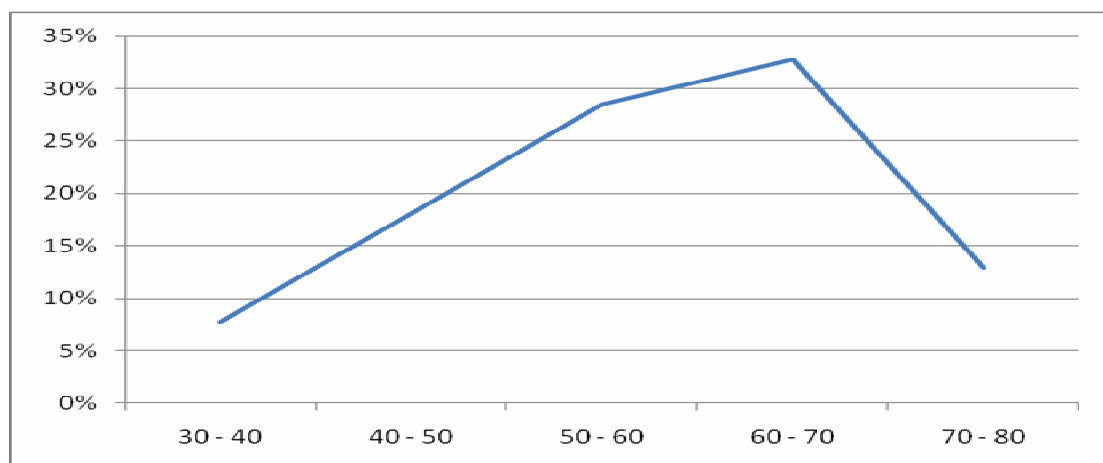


Table 2

As far as the faculty and departments in which they work are concerned, in Europe employment and research in the faculties of Medicine (40.3%) and Psychology (38.8%) clearly continue to prevail over other faculties such as Philosophy, Education, Social Science, Human Science, etc... (see Table 3). According to this trend, the state of psychoanalysis in European universities differs from that to be found in the United States where it is almost threatened with extinction in the medical and psychological faculties and is confined within the humanistic faculties in which, among other things, it is often covered exclusively by Lacanians (a tendency which also seems to emerge in South America, particularly in Argentina and Brazil and, obviously, in France). Turning to the presence of IPA psychoanalysts in European Medical Schools, this has remained copious in countries like Italy, Austria, Finland and, although in a lower extent, Germany, while it has totally disappeared – at least as far as adult psychiatry is concerned – in the UK and France.<sup>6</sup>

**Percentage of contacted psychoanalysts and faculties of affiliation**

Medicine	40.3%
Psychology	38.8%
Philosophy	5.43%
Psychoanalysis Unit (UCL) and Institute of Psychoanalysis	3.88%
Social Sciences	3.1%
Education Sciences	3.1%
History and political sciences	1.55%
Health Sciences	0.78%
Human Sciences	0.78%
Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers	0.78%
Interdisciplinary Studies	0.78%
Center for Multiethnic Research	0.78%

Table 3

Let us now go on to address the set of questions concerning whether there be a link between their faculties and the university hospitals where psychoanalysis would be practiced and whether there be a psychoanalytic institute in their city able to provide the subsequent training in an electively clinical psychoanalytic sense to students once they have graduated. As for the first question, in 74.63% of cases the answer is affirmative; however, we later discover that only 33% of those facilities actively employ psychoanalysis and that only just under half the interviewees (46%) works there. While, as for the presence of an

<sup>6</sup> In France it is still present in the child and adolescent psychiatry, where it is still in a fairly strong position (Roussillon, 2010).

IPA training institute located in the same city where the university teaching takes place this covers 71% of cases. Be that as it may, we must underline that in the remaining 29% of cases, the individuals in question would have had to travel hundreds of kilometres to attend an IPA training as a candidate. This makes the choice of IPA training palpably arduous, and nowadays rather impossible, for those young graduates and students.

## ***2.2. What, in which way and to whom***

The collected data about *what* psychoanalysts teach show that the main subjects of teaching (70%) are typically psychoanalytically based and mostly expressly clinically oriented (psychopathology, diagnosis and treatment), while the rest (30%) is divided between general courses of personality psychology, dynamic psychology, developmental psychology and health psychology, and, in a lower measure, community psychology, psychology of work and of methods of research applied to social issues, and, lastly, courses on philosophy of mind, neurosciences and various other categories including art subjects. Moreover, the most referred authors in their courses are S. Freud (50 entries), D. Winnicott (36), M. Klein (29), P. Fonagy and G. Gabbard (19), W. Bion (18), J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis (14), A. Green (13), A. Freud and O. Kernberg (10), J. Bowlby (9)... .

As for the teaching methods – which, following Freud (1938), we have divided up into two categories – the majority asserts to make use of the genetic-historic method (53%) while the 25% follow the dogmatic approach and 7% use both. Their setting is practically equally shared between ordinary lectures (39%), lectures that favour group interactions (35.5%), and situations of veritable clinical supervisions (25.1%). The vast majority (92%) claim nonetheless to discuss clinical material brought by students and to dedicate a conspicuous part of their teaching time (more or less 50%) to this kind of work.

As for the types of students whom they teach, 36.2% are undergraduate, 48.3% are postgraduate and 15.6% on the “professional staff” (the teachers of these latter are largely psychoanalysts who do not really have a tenured position in the university but work with temporary contracts predominantly in the role of supervisors).

Addressing now the topics of the research projects of the population that we contacted, their fields are: psychopathology 16.4% (of which 28.6% study borderline and similar disorders and 21.4% study depression); efficacy and outcome of the psychoanalytic treatment (standard psychoanalysis included) 13.7%; psychosomatics 12%; attachment and early affect regulation 9.6%; history of psychoanalytical thought 8.8%; early development

and its disturbances 7.9%; neurosciences/neuro-psychoanalysis 6.7%; testing and psychodiagnosis 6.1%; group analysis 3.2%; other 15.5%. The methods used are the following in descending order: empirical method 33.2%; clinical method 30.4%; conceptual method 20.7%; historic method 8.8%; other 7%. From this distribution and from the main topics which have emerged one can infer that most of those research projects are not, strictly speaking, psychoanalytic (for example relating to the Freudian *Junktim*) but instead projects that – although deeply inspired by the psychoanalytic method and our metapsychology – combine these with methods and concepts originating from other disciplines,<sup>7</sup> in particular psychiatry, neurosciences and non-dynamic psychology (above all cognitive and developmental psychology).

### ***2.3. About the relationship between the national IPA societies and psychoanalysts working in the university***

The overall response to the question “Do you think that your Psychoanalytical Society, your Psychoanalytical Institute or Centre appreciate and value your University work and your presence as a psychoanalyst in the University?” is the following: 53% of interviewees answered “yes”, 30% “no”, and 17% left it blank. However, beyond this apparently predominant “yes,” it is necessary to underline two things that emerge from the group of questions connected to the relationship between local IPA societies and university psychoanalysts: firstly, that even those who answered in the affirmative confess, between the lines of the requested comments in support of their statements, that they have been undergoing some sort of “mistreatment” on the part of their societies; secondly, that most – more than answering our question – ended up saying what their national society “should” ideally do in order to support their involvement in the university, instead of reporting what it actually did or does at a concrete level.

Anyway, despite this, one can observe in a great deal of these answers a clear change of attitude in their regard on the part of their psychoanalytical societies of affiliation with the passing of the time and especially in the last years. These latter, besides not carrying the

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<sup>7</sup> In this work, we are not dealing with the age-old debate about the exact nature of psychoanalytic research, a point that as we know finds us divided between those who think that empirical research – external to the psychoanalytic situation – has little or nothing to offer to psychoanalysis and, on the contrary, those who maintain that psychoanalysis, without perverting its nature, absolutely must reckon with the rules and demands of common science (Leuzinger-Bohleber, Dreher, Canestri, 2003; Wallerstein, 2009). Anyway, in the last years, the latter group of colleagues have become more courageous in signalling the unavoidable necessity of also utilizing other research methods beyond those strictly connected to psychoanalysis in order to demonstrate the validity of our treatments and ideas.

previous prejudices towards the colleagues in the university anymore (“impure analysts”, “analysts full of ambition and thus narcissistic and bad analysts”, “intellectual and non clinical analysts”, “analysts who violate the setting exposing themselves publically”, “analysts who believe erroneously that psychoanalysis may be taught outside training institutes and to non candidates”...), now recognize increasingly that the presence of psychoanalysts in the university brings to local societies first of all patients and candidates, and thereafter a certain prestige if those professorial analysts have prominent positions inside universities, and also a certain visibility, not otherwise always accessible, as they create spaces (conferences and seminars) for encounters with other disciplines or opportunities for the transmission of psychoanalysis to a broad audience at large.

Nevertheless, there is not yet a veritable appreciation of the teaching of psychoanalysis in the academia and of the value of psychoanalytical research, inasmuch as local societies appear to be far from understanding the spirit and methods of empirical research and the necessity (connected with these methods) of validating the theories and the results of treatments, even if the situation has improved slightly where, as at least partially emerged in Germany and Finland, a group was created within the societies themselves that makes itself promoter and advocate of these urgent requirements. Notwithstanding such rare instances, the nearly complete absence of an official scientific and financial partnership between local societies and academic colleagues who run research confirms our last observation. Except in a few sporadic cases<sup>8</sup> if there are collaborations and contacts, these are mainly signed in a private capacity with single members of their national societies of affiliation or occur in public circumstances in which the professorial psychoanalyst present his own research to his colleagues of the same society.

Lastly, we would like to remark that a recurrent somewhat “attraction” persists to be now and then in the questionnaire answers towards the introduction of psychoanalysis into the departments of humanities and particularly philosophy and art, a suggestion which seems to meet with the almost unanimous consent of numerous societies. On this regard, I would even go so far as to say that to my mind such an “attraction” is a little unsettling, if it is not accompanied with an equally important awareness that, if we really want to be acknowledged by public health care and thus survive, we also have to work hard to demonstrate to others the clinical effectiveness of what we think and do. I would remind

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<sup>8</sup> Besides the DPV projects (e.g. the societary support of the LAC depression study and the organization of a Summer University in Frankfurt), also the University of Oslo collaborates with the Norwegian psychoanalytic society on a process outcome research project (the so called Oslo II project) and the University of Turku with the Finnish society on a psychotherapeutic process research.



you here of the fact that in a lot of European countries psychoanalytically-based treatments have already been removed from the register of possible forms of treatment accepted by the national health system.

#### ***2.4. What new generation of academic psychoanalysts emerges from the questionnaire?***

From the ensemble of the answers to the questions that inquires about whether our academic colleagues have pupils who work with them able to succeed them in the near future and whether these latter are as involved in their analytic training as they are in their academic career, we learn that almost 40% do not have any, 28% have between two and three on the average, 25% have more than three, and – in sporadic cases, when the person at issue is an internationally known professor – one can reach 10.

At any rate, it is difficult to say whether the pupils they refer to in their answers to this set of questions can really be considered to be at the beginning of their academic career or are conversely simple undergraduate and postgraduate students who occasionally collaborate in various capacities with the professorial colleague, in so far as only 48% of them receive some kind of payment and 60% have started to publish. Probably a “pinch of narcissism” intervened in those who answered this question, especially in those 7% who claim to have a multitude of assistants but later comment, a few lines below, that none of them are paid and that only a few have published something on the work run together.

Among the hypothetical successors, then, 43.6% appear to be interested in undertaking a personal analysis in the following years or have already started it, counter to the 30% that, at least so far, have expressed no intention to walk such a road. However, this would also seem to represent a “datum which does not hold water”. In fact, we do not really know what these young academic pupils will actually end up doing, also seeing that, in our interviewees’ explanatory asides, these two kinds of observations repeatedly emerge: “They would like to do it, but they are certainly restrained by the money issue, by the long time that the analytic training requires and by the distance that separates them from IPA training institutes; maybe they will do it later on, when they are more advanced professionally”; “If they are inclined to undertake treatment, most of them turn to a psychoanalytical psychotherapy instead of a four-time-a-week true analysis on the couch, and similarly, when talking about their psychotherapeutic education, they orient themselves not towards

classical training but towards one of the numerous psychodynamic-psychoanalytical psychotherapy schools.” On top of this, we have to consider that some of these possible pupils are neither medical doctors nor psychologists.

In short, if we had to approximately estimate the number of such individuals truly motivated to undertake the IPA training, the percentage would decrease to no more than 5-10%, to be optimistic.

### **3. Concluding remarks**

The question “What do you think the IPA could do in order to help develop both psychoanalysis in the University and a more effective coordination-interaction between the psychoanalysts involved in the University and itself?” is answered in 95 out of a total of 134 questionnaires (that is 71%), the majority of which (63.44%) appears confident with regard to the possibility that the IPA will manage and wish to do something, whilst the remaining 7.46% are negative about this eventuality, and 29.1% leave it blank.

The problem at issue here is the following: why do so many colleagues not answer? Are they deeply perplexed as to whether the IPA may offer any actual help in this matter, or do they think that our international association can do nothing or that, by now, there is nothing left to do in order to sustain psychoanalysis in the university, at least in the way we currently conceive of it?

Perhaps a look at the opinions expressed in answer to the next question may help us understand this conspicuous lack of response. The question is as follows: “Do you think this questionnaire could have any significance for this purpose?” Upon crosschecking the answers received to this last question (Table 4) with those given to the previous one, it comes out that the very same people who answered positively to the first question (expressing confidence in the possibility of the IPA coordination of initiatives connected to the university) did the same to the second (holding the present questionnaire useful), while 29.1% of blank answers to the first question converged in part with the 18.7% of blank answers to the second, in part with the 13% of sceptics and with the mere 3.7% of categorically negative responses.

One can therefore suppose that the 10.4% which did not answer the first question have an attitude that is not negative towards or *a priori* disillusioned with the IPA initiatives

(such as, for example, our questionnaire), but are instead probably just sceptical. They are sceptical in the sense that they would like to “touch with the hands” like Saint Thomas before beginning to believe that “the wind is changing” and also because of – as we have said over and over – the many times they have already had their fingers burnt in the past (whether through an explicitly hostile and boycotting attitude towards their academic work or through a some kind of coldness or incomplete recognition).

<b>Could IPA do something in order to improve its relationship with the university?</b>	
Yes	63,44%
No	7,46%
Not answered	29,10%
<b>Do you think this questionnaire could have any significance for this purpose?</b>	
Positive	35%
Hopeful	29%
Sceptical	13%
Negative	3,73%
Not answered	18,66%

Table 4

What is this desire to “touch with the hands”? From the more personal comments to the previous questions one can deduce that one central aspect of this attitude is the explicit and implicit request that the IPA may officially support the value that their engagement in the academia has for psychoanalysis, so that local societies may also give it the respect and backing that has been lacking so far. In this regard, let us not forget that a certain number of these colleagues, as reported above, besides not having perceived any appreciation and interest towards their work, felt isolated and in some extreme cases even so marginalized that they felt ashamed of teaching at the university and compelled to hide it from their psychoanalytical societies of affiliation.

The personal comments that we have just mentioned basically converge in three intertwined threads, which we could summarize in this way: 1) creating a network of psychoanalysts working at the university so as to facilitate contacts and collaborations; 2) enhancing empirical, conceptual and clinical research (better for everybody, of course, if funded) both encouraging the organization of regular panels and meetings during the international, regional and local IPA congresses and fostering research sensibility during psychoanalytical training, of which a part could even be dedicated to such matters; 3) offering specific places (indexed journals – preferably with a good Impact Factor – accessible to scholars and researchers involved in academia) where it is possible to publish

on psychoanalysis and academic issues both at a research and at a teaching level, and perhaps, as I myself would suggest, an international psychoanalytical journal expressly dedicated to these topics.<sup>9</sup>

To conclude, what do these personal comments highlight? We would argue that they illustrate not only the general opinion on what the IPA should do in the future in order to guarantee the survival of psychoanalysis, but also that it is necessary, alongside and prior to this, that the IPA declare in strong enough terms to get through to the various national societies that the engagement with the academia has now become a priority target for the renewal of psychoanalysis. This kind of renewal is periodically expected from every genuine branch of science and failure to meet these requirements could lead to our own discipline being totally excluded from the scientific-cultural horizon. It goes without saying that, progressing in this direction, the IPA will have to consider the work that academic psychoanalysts are carrying out as being on an equal footing to the more habitual clinical research work carried out by practitioners in our field.

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<sup>9</sup> It has to be underlined that the vast majority of answers to the question: “In which journals or reviews do you publish the results of your university work and research projects?” foregrounds the current lack of a specific space which hosts this kind of studies that do not belong to the standard model of analytic research. This is rather worrying if we consider that the cognitivists – well aware of the importance of these kinds of publications – have introduced a lot of new indexed journals in the last twenty/thirty years. This is just the opposite of how we have proceeded so far. Indeed, our academic colleagues have minimal and scarcely indexed spaces in psychoanalytically informed journals and are therefore compelled, in the vast majority of cases, to apply to journals of other orientations. All this certainly does not help psychoanalysis to make a higher academic impact.

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