

All Psychoanalysis is Local

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ABSTRACT *This article discusses the idea that psychoanalysis, like politics, is based in the “local”. Although there are universal aspects of human nature reflected in psychoanalysis, such as the method and the basic technique, there is great diversity in those who practice, train and work in particular environments and historical epochs. This article examines the development of psychoanalytic institutes and institutions as freestanding rather than university based. It discusses psychoanalytic training and the implications of the top-down foundation of the International Psychoanalytical Association as an organization that ultimately decreed who was and who was not a psychoanalyst across national borders. It explores how this top-down approach to authorization and regulation rigidifies and stymies creativity in the field through psychoanalytic training and education and suggests an institutional structure in psychoanalytic education and training that keeps responsibility and accountability at a local or at a federated national level without official surveillance and control at an international level. Copyright © 2012 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.*

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INTRODUCTION

Like politics, psychoanalysis is also exquisitely local in its evolution and development. Although psychoanalysis deals with universals of human nature, there is a great diversity in the particulars. Freud established the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) to arbitrate what was and what was not psychoanalysis, heading a movement of freestanding institutes. He also set up a secret “Committee”, giving its members rings, to safeguard psychoanalysis from its detractors both within and without. Beginning with Freud, there have always been authoritarian structures in psychoanalytic institutions, reinforced by freestanding structures divorced from universities that authorize psychoanalytic training through national and supranational organizations that work in a top-down direction. Quite differently from other specialties or disciplines such as psychology or psychiatry, the IPA was based upon a system of freestanding institutes, authorized not by the pluralism and market competition of universities but by monopolistic practices of international gatekeeping in decreeing who was and is or is not an analyst. I conclude that stressing the “local” makes for a different, non-authoritarian, associative model. A field grows best in an open system where individuals from a rich diversity of backgrounds and cultures carry out the work.

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ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL

Tip O'Neill, Speaker of the US House of Representatives from 1977 to 1987, famously popularized the phrase his father had told him, "All politics is local" (O'Neill, 1994, p. xii). As a Massachusetts congressman, O'Neill never strayed from the position that political success depends upon the ability to understand and appeal to the particular needs, circumstances and everyday concerns of local constituents.

Like politics, psychoanalysis is also exquisitely local in its evolution and development (see Kirsner, 2009). I believe that, although its universal aspects are mainly embedded in the method or the "science", there is a great diversity in the particulars. These vary according to factors, which include: history; training; country, city and culture; personalities; links with universities; links with medicine and psychology, and links with organized psychoanalysis. There is a tension between the centre and the periphery whereby the centre tries to control the local institutions, but the creativity and work remain at local, even individual, levels. The central, supranational body is often far removed from local conditions and is not in a position to facilitate or control local behaviour in a positive way. While international colleagues can play positive roles in advising, coaching, assisting, supervising, collaborating and generally supporting local analysts informally or in formal scientific forums, it is quite another issue when they try and exert authority in educational and training matters across national borders.

THE UNIVERSAL AND THE PARTICULAR

In the general psychoanalytic literature psychoanalysis can be seen in its various aspects as a method or science; as a treatment based upon the method; a body of knowledge; a theory of culture and civilization; a profession; and as a movement.

These aspects all interrelate and affect one another – but not always in the same direction! Some aspects involve an approach and attitude to universals, such as the method and basic technique, while others involve the people who practice, train and work in particular environments and historical epochs. It is important to trace the history and development of such ideas down their particular paths of people and concepts – the soil that enables some ideas to flourish while others fail.

Psychoanalysis as practiced deals with the universals of human nature. Although humans across cultures may be similarly constituted in terms of defences and wishes, psychoanalysis as practiced in different venues is connected with the historical, socio-political conditions in that place. People bring their own values and ways of doing things to analysis and these sometimes extend beyond the techniques of psychoanalysis. In the IPA, for example, how is a training analysis performed? There is the Uruguayan model, and a French model, as well as the Eitingon approach, which is the prevalent, tripartite mainstream model of seminars, supervision and training analysis (see IPA, 2011). These are geographic and historical realities which give rise to particular issues. In addition, there are challenges of training people to do psychoanalysis in areas where it is brand new, such as China; these challenges may not extend to the basics of performing psychoanalysis.

The history and dispersion of psychoanalysis are long and wide. The early fractious splits involving Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, Wilhelm Reich, Melanie Klein, Jacques Lacan and many others are paralleled by the dispersion across the world of mainstream psychoanalysis, and other branches devolving from ego psychology and including self psychology and relational psychology in the USA; Kleinians and Winnicottians in the UK; Lacanians in France; and predominantly Kleinians and Lacanians in South and Central America, with other interesting dispersions and varieties within individual countries and cities and even locally within them (see Damousi & Plotkin, 2009; Kirsner, 2004; Zaretsky, 2004).

Psychoanalysis may be neither art nor science, but instead an arts-based science. Although some fundamental aspects distinguish “talking therapy” from other approaches, there are many variations. However difficult it may be to demarcate it, there is a universal basis, which involves an attitude or approach towards growth and insight through a “talking cure”. As is clear from the number of schools and the variety of journals in psychoanalysis alone, some very diverse applications are built upon this foundation.

The diffusion of psychoanalysis took place for historical reasons, particularly the rise of Nazism and the forced emigration of analysts from continental Europe to Britain, the USA and beyond. Attempts have been made to control training in a top-down manner across national borders by the IPA, with only the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) fortuitously gaining regional exemption from control by the IPA from 1938 onwards to be in charge of its own training, an exemption which was never voted on. Despite years of complaint, the APsaA has followed the IPA in controlling training in the USA also in a top-down manner. Throughout the psychoanalytic world, difficulties repeatedly emerge about top-down implementation of rules on national and local psychoanalytic institutes. Tensions inevitably arise between such hierarchical imposition of authority and rigid “standards” in the psychoanalytic field, and creative individual and group endeavours at a local level (Kirsner, 2009).

INSTITUTES AND INSTITUTIONS

Psychoanalysis began with the small group clustered around Freud in Vienna, and gradually expanded and diffused. Certainly Freud was authoritarian; and, in 1919, he founded a “Secret Committee” of favoured colleagues, comprising Ferenczi, Abraham, Rank, Sachs and Jones, to safeguard the movement he had begun, giving each of them a gold ring. He set up institutes as free standing, i.e., not as part of any universities; and generally tried to control the direction of the discipline. There were many battles with colleagues over the inheritance of his mantle. Control was mainly effected through establishing who had the right to train, the issue that underlies most psychoanalytic disputes (Kirsner, 2009).

Psychoanalytic institutions are often divided into an institute that is responsible for education and training, and a society concerned with scientific discussion and debate. Freud and colleagues founded the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society; and, in the early days, training in psychoanalysis was informal, didactic and collegial.

Freud presided over a motley crew whose noncompliance increased the further they were from Vienna. The Vienna school was relatively informal, whereas the Berlin school became increasingly formal (Bernfeld, 1962). The Berlin school became the dominant one, resulting in training standards being ruled from the top. In this it was similar to the Catholic Church,

which ultimately ordains local priests rather than ordaining them through a federation of equal institutions. How did this come to pass?

The training analysis began to play an independent and dominant role in psychoanalytic education, rather than it playing, as it ought to, a lesser role as a means to an end, serving the general aims of psychoanalytic education. Thus the training analysis and the position of training analyst came to have a quasi-mystical magical role, far beyond their explicit function. The position of training analyst had – and has – high status and prestige, occupying the central role in the identity of being a psychoanalyst. This is unfortunate if only because the primary definition of psychoanalysis is not as a particular psychotherapeutic technique or procedure in which practitioners can be trained, but as a method of scientific inquiry into the nature of the mind. As Freud (1923) put it:

Psycho-Analysis is the name (1) of a procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, (2) of a method (based upon that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and (3) of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines, which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific discipline. (p. 235)

One could now add others to these aspects: a profession, a theory of culture and a movement. The investigative method does not entail any particular form of training or standards. It is, in the general scientific mode, critical and open, and not authoritarian.

Moreover, Freud (1927) wanted to “feel assured that the therapy will not destroy the science” in psychoanalysis (p. 254). However, whatever the problems in the science per se, today the major threat to the development of the science comes not so much from the therapy (analysis) as from the “movement” aspects of psychoanalysis. This problem has historically lain in institutions structuring and perpetuating identification instead of promoting differentiation and critique. Whatever the professional, cultural or theoretical orientation of the institute, the fault lines clearly surround the right to train and, in particular, the status of the training analyst.

In a recent and illuminating article about the relationships between psychoanalysis and universities, Kernberg (2011) observed that psychoanalytic institutes are generally isolated from research and universities since they are primarily training institutions transmitting knowledge and not research institutions creating new knowledge. Kernberg maintained that the general psychoanalytic culture of institutes treats research as a threat because research necessarily includes questioning received knowledge so as to advance further knowledge. He continued:

In particular, critics have pointed to the hierarchical organization of psychoanalytic education linked to the training analysis system as a source of authoritarian tendencies, dogmatism regarding locally dominant approaches, and discouragement of independent thinking and original research work. The regressive effects of the training analysis system embodied within an institution where candidates, training analysts, and those graduates not (or not yet) designated as training analysts live together exacerbate the dynamics of idealization, submission, paranoiagenesis, and rebelliousness. This system thus reinforces the regressive features inherent in the personal analysis and, ultimately, promotes the infantilization of candidates. The result is the reduction of curiosity, critical evaluation and the development of new knowledge. (p. 611)

According to Kernberg, distance from universities also reinforces authoritarian transmission, an unfortunate result of the regressive effects of personal analysis.

ANOINTMENT AND ANALYSIS

In my book *Unfree Associations* (Kirsner, 2009), I described the process of “anointment” of training analysts as akin to the religious laying on of hands. I chronicled the pivotal role played by anointment in the political histories of psychoanalytic institutes in the USA. The idea of an esoteric pipeline to knowledge has been intrinsic to all psychoanalytic schools, which train their candidates to the level of their alleged “standards”, as though there were some kind of objective reality to these standards. Variations in orthodoxies occur because of regional histories. In the hothouse atmospheres of institutes, followers have often clustered around local leaders directing the local mainstream. Despite some local differences in theory, these events normally concerned who possesses the right to train and who does not (Kirsner, 2009).

Early psychoanalytic education was very different from what it is today. In Europe, for the first twenty years of psychoanalysis, there were no training institutes, and no mandatory training analysis. A much longer time elapsed before there were “training analysts”. Before the 1920s formal psychoanalytic training did not exist. Psychoanalytic societies were scientific clubs with no accredited schools or curricula (Kirsner, 2010). The teaching approach was student centred and individually oriented. Psychoanalytic training originally took one to one and a half years; but over the years, the length of time has gradually increased (Balint, 1948).

Freud’s recommendation for what was called “didactic analysis” did not define its duration and, indeed, included analyses lasting only a few weeks. Although Freud recommended that candidates undertake an analysis, he did not think it should be mandated. Freud took a didactic or teaching approach in his analysis of candidates. It was clearly flexible, and adjusted for teaching purposes as a sampling for the student to gain an experiential understanding of psychoanalysis, and some awareness of his or her own “blind spots”. Freud was teaching analysis at an individual level without resorting to general rules. This form of teaching became a problem only when the mainstream later came to regard the long training analysis as for therapeutic rather than for didactic purposes. A result of this viewpoint has been that the first analysis is seen as “for the institute” and the second for oneself. That is not, however, the way the training analysis originated.

Gradually, training analyses became longer, mutative in intent, and became the master instead of the servant of psychoanalytic education. During the heyday of psychoanalysis, training analyses could afford a very good living for the analyst, in addition to him or her being able to practice their art. The tail was wagging the dog. When the training analyst was required to report to the institute, these reports and the analyses themselves were used politically as a means of control instead of liberation. Once reporting was officially discontinued (although, informally, it remained as the primary means of transmission of assessment), it lost its role in its didactic form, which had been particular to the early days of psychoanalysis. In his classic paper “On psychoanalytic training”, Bernfeld (1962) recalled that Freud:

adjusted the duration of the analysis and the amount of straight teaching included in it according to the wishes and the circumstances of the student-patient and according to the nature of the neurotic complaints. Whenever he deemed it advisable, he included didactic material in the personal analysis. With many of his students he discussed psychoanalytic theory, their own patients, the politics of the young group, and the papers they intended to write. In general, he tended to let the analysis grow into a relationship between two colleagues, one of whom happened to know a little more than the other. From the first to the very end, Freud kept his didactic cases absolutely free from interference by rules, administrative directives,

or political considerations. His teaching was completely student-cantered . . . or more simply he acted as a psychoanalyst should. He continued this long after the establishment of institutes, to the dismay and embarrassment of “the authorities”, as he sometimes, and a little ironically, referred to them. (p. 462)

The mandate during the 1920s for a didactic analysis as part of psychoanalytic training should be seen within the context in which psychoanalysis itself was short and therefore relatively non-intrusive. It demanded little of the candidate. Nonetheless, there were strong and principled arguments against mandating even this, based on the belief that personal psychoanalysis should be left up to the candidate and should not be connected with an institute. An analysis was not even a requirement in the New York Psychoanalytic Society (NYPS) until 1937, when it became a requirement for future training in the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. The requirement did not occur because of questions about the qualifications of the American psychoanalysts; rather, it was occasioned by the reactions of the Americans to the influx of European psychoanalysts, some of whom were training analysts but had not themselves had personal analyses. Not unrelatedly, in the same year, the American Federation of Psychoanalysis, a forerunner of the APA in which the NYPS was the most prominent organizational member, declared that: the American societies would not recognize membership in foreign psychoanalytic societies as fulfilling requirements for membership in an American Society. As Lorand (1969) observed: “this declaration irritated the many immigrant psychoanalysts who settled in New York. All had to apply for membership” (p. 593). These requirements were an attempt to ensure that the Americans kept the upper hand; and it was an aspect of the decidedly cool reception accorded many émigrés by the Americans who feared a European takeover. Changes of psychoanalytic technique, such as the move from relative informality through to the “blank screen”, developed in relation to specific conditions in New York and the USA. This exemplifies how new rules and regulations may be triggered primarily by political and economic considerations. As training became more important in terms of legitimizing the qualification of a psychoanalyst, the authoritarian models grew beyond the cut and thrust of scientific dialogue to legitimate who was and who was not an analyst, that is, training and the movement trumped the science as the major identifying influences on being a psychoanalyst.

Even given Freud’s international standing, his direct power decreased with the distance from Vienna. The approach in Vienna was quite different from that in Berlin where a *Poliklinik*, established in 1920, became the centre of training. The Viennese were interested in the application of psychoanalysis to all fields of therapy and education whereas the Berlin tendency was to establish psychoanalysis as a medical specialty isolated from other fields. Bernfeld recollected:

As a compromise, the clinics in Vienna and Berlin decided to include in their program some provisions for the training of nonphysicians. But with greater and greater intensity their purpose came to be the issuing of diplomas in psychoanalysis. In the long run, the Berlin tendency won out. (Bernfeld, 1962, p. 467)

So training prevailed over learning and over science. Anointment of who had the right to train overwhelmed functional and scientific aims. Freud came to control a federation rather than a College of Cardinals. His aim was the protection of a fledgling, though growing

movement during a threatening epoch, rather than any expectation of successful dictatorship over a quiescent following. At a considerable cost to creativity, authorized training requirements became false gods of power and authority in an interconnected international, national and local hierarchy.

The IPA has a primary role in determining who is and who is not an analyst. It is the only international professional psychoanalytic organization that is responsible for the qualification of its members across national boundaries. It exercises its authority through training and does not use other criteria. It has been the centre of the worldwide psychoanalytic “movement”, a term Freud used throughout his psychoanalytic life, but which does not sit comfortably with open-minded science.

Freud claimed to have founded the IPA in 1910 because he feared the abuses of psycho-analysis would be subjected when it became popular:

There should be some headquarters whose business it would be to declare: “All this nonsense is nothing to do with analysis; this is not psycho-analysis”. At the sessions of the local groups (which together would constitute the international association) instruction should be given about how psycho-analysis was to be conducted and doctors should be trained, whose activities would then receive a kind of guarantee. (Freud, 1914, p. 43)

Clearly, this marked the beginnings of international “quality control” in psychoanalysis.

REGULATION

The IPA originated as the guardian of a movement that would regulate what was and was not psychoanalysis, and most importantly *who* was and was not a psychoanalyst. In a letter to Eugen Bleuler in 1910 Freud explicitly stated that the “central office” (the IPA) would be able to “give authentic information about what should be permitted to be called psychoanalysis” (quoted in Clark, 1980, p. 300). The headquarters could then be in a position to separate what Freud (1919a) later termed the “pure gold of analysis” from the copper of psychotherapy (p. 168), as well as from those falsely claiming to be analysts.

At the Nuremberg Congress in 1910, Jones averred that Freud’s close colleague, Sandor Ferenczi, “had a decidedly dictatorial side to him, and some of his proposals went far beyond what is customary in scientific circles” (Jones, 1955, p. 76). Ferenczi had suggested that the IPA would be run by Jung, as President-for-Life, who would vet and censor all papers and addresses to the IPA. Jones reported: “The discussion that arose after Ferenczi’s paper was so acrimonious that it had to be postponed to the next day” (Jones, 1955, p. 76). In a Platonic vein, Ferenczi wrote to Freud (on 5 February 1910): “I do not think that the $\Psi\alpha$ [psychoanalytic] worldview leads to democratic egalitarianism; the *intellectual elite of humanity* should maintain its hegemony” (quoted in Brabant, Falzeder, & Giampieri-Deutsch, 1993, p. 130, original emphasis). Freud responded (on 8 February 1910) that he “surely already made the analogy with the Platonic rule of philosophers” (ibid, p. 133). Although such elitist attitudes towards democracy were scarcely uncommon at the time, especially in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they exhibit the authoritarian approach taken in establishing the IPA. The establishment of the “Secret Committee” to “safeguard” psychoanalysis reflected the same mentality.

After the recent painful defections of Adler and Stekel and the impending rumblings with Jung, Jones reported Ferenczi's suggestion to him in 1912 that "the ideal plan would be for a number of men who had been thoroughly analysed by Freud personally to be stationed in different centres or countries" (Jones, 1955, p. 172). As that was not likely, Jones proposed the formation of "a small group of trustworthy analysts as a sort of 'Old Guard' round Freud". Freud enthusiastically responded to the suggestion by return mail:

What took hold of my imagination immediately is your idea of a secret council composed of the best and most trustworthy among our men to take care of the further development of psycho-analysis and defend the cause against personalities and accidents when I am no more. (Quoted in Jones, 1955, p. 173)

Interestingly, Jones used the following example to demonstrate that Freud was not dictatorial and that, in fact, his attitude was tempered by political reality. When Abraham complained to Freud that Jung had not published his reviews in the *Jahrbuch* for lack of space, Freud remonstrated with Abraham mainly because he did not want to alienate Jung:

I have purposely refrained from exercising any influence over the arrangements of the *Jahrbuch* and think you could well do the same without any derogation . . . After all, our Aryan comrades are quite indispensable to us; otherwise psycho-analysis would fall a victim to anti-semitism. (Quoted in Jones, 1955, p. 56)

More generally, Freud (1914) feared that, since there was so much opposition to psychoanalysis, "the adherents of psycho-analysis should come together for friendly communication and mutual support" (p. 44). Although it was not possible for opponents "to stem the tide of the new movement" (*ibid.*, p. 44), it also, Freud lamented, could not be controlled by him. Nonetheless, entrance to psychoanalysis through the International Training Commission that vetted training institutes throughout the world was just such an attempt to control. Thus, from its beginnings, the IPA decreed who was an analyst.

Freud's roles as scientist, healer, and a politician who founded a movement were often in conflict. He was both an explorer and a codifier of rules, opening a new realm, which, however, he tried to control, channel and keep in check. He organized, promoted and built the psychoanalytic movement by ensuring his patriarchal control by not forging links to universities. Freud's own unhappy experience with the University of Vienna, which had blocked his own academic progress, influenced his early and abiding stance that psychoanalysis needed to be a movement independent of universities. He blamed the universities for excluding psychoanalysis, asserting that psychoanalytic organizations "will continue to perform an effective function so long as this exclusion persists" (Freud, 1919b, p. 171). However, by then, the die was cast: local institutes and the IPA were firmly established as freestanding institutions accountable to nobody but themselves.

Freud took the unusual step in science and medicine of founding free-standing institutes, operated, regulated and "guaranteed" vertically worldwide via the IPA. The free-standing guild structure of institutes meant there was no appeal to outside professional or societal bodies for regulation or recognition. Psychoanalysis came to be directed and maintained as a worldwide system that authorized the trainings in each individual country instead of individual institutions in various countries deciding and legitimizing themselves through that country's institutions.

In contrast to psychoanalytic organizations, international medical associations are predominantly federations of member institutions which control their own national standards and training. The American Medical Association, for example, might advise the Chinese Medical Association about training and scientific issues but would not mandate particular forms of training; if it were to do so, it would legitimately be criticized as colonialism. World associations do not mandate the means for qualifying for a profession; the associations operate by qualifications from national boards.

Across the world today, there has been a change in psychoanalysis. The early one or two orthodoxies have been transmuted into a plurality of orthodoxies. However, as Cooper (2008) observed:

Unfortunately, plurality in itself does not assure an open competition of ideas. In fact, what we have is a growing plurality of orthodoxies that are responsive to authority rather than to data. Kleinians, Kohutians, Bionians, Sullivanians, Lacanians, relationalists, even Freudians – each group sheltered under its own guru, tending to be self-enclosed, self-satisfied, and fighting off all the others. Thought collectives can be amazingly powerful. (p. 250)

Even clustering around many different leaders ensures the same foundational organization through the evocation of an esoteric pipeline of anointment. The people are different, but the way of doing things is the same. Once again, the right to train leads to identification with and idealization of the leaders. Is there a delusional sense of identity, with the image of psychoanalytic leaders with perfect training (real or imagined), and a projection of oneself into the object? I think so (see Miller, 2009). Instead of encouraging training in new and even old territories to occur in its own collegial way with some input from local practitioners, it is as though the magical assumption of perfect training across countries prevails. This assumption is bolstered, for example, by asserting the esoteric origins in the IPA back through analytic generations perhaps to Freud, Klein or another figure. Does such an over-reach represent an unconscious identification with an imago of a perfect analysis and training? Berman (2000) points to the utopian fantasy of a “new person” in psychoanalytic training that leads to a false and rigid analytic persona that stifles rather than enhances creativity and development. This over-reach appears to have the stamp or trademark of authenticity. Perhaps the relentlessly subjective and deconstructive nature of the psychoanalytic enterprise, with its attendant uncertainty, makes the claim to knowledge more difficult to sustain. As Fenichel (1946) put it: “The subject matter, not the method of psychoanalysis, is irrational” (p. 5).

The IPA started small. Originally it did not have a training program. As it rigidified in the 1930s, and later when it crossed borders, it did so not as a scientific congress, but with rules and regulations regarding training. Today, the IPA has 12 000 members with 70 constituent organizations.

FROM INSTITUTION TO ASSOCIATION

Kernberg’s (1986) classic critique of psychoanalytic institutions remains valid: they mostly lie somewhere between the models of a seminary and a trade school, whereas they ought to lie somewhere between the models of an art academy and a university. Art academies and universities are founded on the creativity of their members and, at least in principle, work individually in a bottom-up direction. The challenge for psychoanalysis has been to get

outside the internally focused cliques that have been so prevalent to a more open system in which creativity and diversity are valued. A focus upon the science rather than who is entitled to train is essential to this. If a training analysis is not mandated, then a caste of training analysts will not run local institutes in the name of international quality control. There is no basis for international control.

During the (20th) “psychoanalytic century”, the psychoanalytic movement moved way beyond its Central European origins to become truly transnational, thriving in a wide range of countries and cultures, from India and China to Peru and Brazil (Damousi & Plotkin, 2009). In addition to immigration (forced and unforced), the strong international organization helped this diffusion. Dissemination of psychoanalysis came by different routes, for example, through psychology and philosophy in France and Argentina, and through psychiatry in the USA. There were different responses in the culture at large. Despite IPA “oversight” psychoanalysis has, for example, developed differently in the USA, and in South America, and in Eastern Europe. The growth or lack of growth in psychoanalysis in different countries has depended on particular amalgams of people, cultures, institutions and history as well as the relationship with the IPA. Without its “movement” and guild aspects, psychoanalysis would not have been so pervasively influential so quickly, although, as Freud anticipated, these aspects were also damaging.

Stressing the “local” makes for a different, non-authoritarian, associative model. While local situations can also trap creativity by being closed political hothouses, ultimately a field grows best in an open system where individuals from a rich diversity of backgrounds and cultures carry out the work. They would not be so stymied by domination from above, but encouraged in their creativity, and both enriched by and enriching of local cultures. This implies – and, indeed, requires – an institutional structure in psychoanalytic education and training that keeps responsibility and accountability at a local or at a federated national level without official surveillance and control at an international level. This, in turn, means fostering local and national flourishing in both the new and established territories of psychoanalysis with a structure that facilitates collegial openness, flexibility, encouragement, advising, coaching and respect.

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