

## Editorial

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This issue of *Psychotherapy and Politics International* could almost be a themed issue on history, as the history of ideas in psychotherapy and of political and social movements and their relationship to psychotherapy – and it to them – is a strong thread through a number of the contributions. There also a strong theme and attention to the social/political context and this is both represented and reflected in the first two articles, which focus on the impact of Israeli political reality on psychotherapy and, specifically, psychoanalysis.

The lead article, by Dr Emanuel Berman, a member of the journal's Editorial Advisory Board, focuses on the political surroundings of Israeli psychoanalysis. Twelve years ago Berman's previous article on Israeli psychotherapists and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Berman, 2003) was the lead article in the very first issue of *PPI*. In that previous article, Berman discussed the position taken by Israeli analysts and therapists with regard to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and suggested, amongst other things, that political issues cannot – and should not – be avoided in analytic discourse. In this current article, Berman reprises his original theme and concerns, focusing now on the impact of the Middle East conflict on Israeli psychoanalysis. Berman interleaves his (socio-political-psycho-)analysis with vignettes from his own work as an analyst, and in doing so acknowledges that he and his patients are “co-participants in the same historical, social, and political drama” (p. 83) – a point and a position that, I think, describes the praxis of the socially reflexive and engaged psychotherapist and, more broadly, psy practitioner.

The next article, by Shai Epstein, is also written against the background of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and also weaves the political and the clinical (in the form of a case study of “Miriam”), together with the personal, i.e. the decision of Epstein and his life partner to join a bicultural Jewish–Arabic kindergarten initiative. Epstein draws on this to discuss questions of closeness and connectedness between people – and peoples – and in psychotherapy. This article was first published elsewhere, and I am grateful to Asaf Rolef Ben-Shahar, himself a previous contributor to the journal, for his suggestion to reproduce this paper, and his work in translating the original from the Hebrew, and to the publishers, Body Psychotherapy Publications, UK, for their permission to reprint this poignant and important paper.

The theme of storms (from Berman's article) is echoed in the next article, in which Dick Blackwell discusses the riots that took place in the United Kingdom and, specifically, in London in 2011. Blackwell, another member of the journal's Editorial Advisory Board, brings his experience – as a researcher on an action research project in the 1970s, and as a consultant to

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various organisations working with homeless, disadvantaged, and disaffected young people in inner city London – as well as his perspective as a group analyst to bear on this phenomenon. Primarily, Blackwell, who previously contributed a short piece that contextualised the May '68 Uprisings (Blackwell, 2009) in a special issue of this journal on that theme, develops a view of the riots concerned with making human behaviour intelligible. This view, specifically informed by group analysis, is that the riots represent a significant communication about the social unconscious.

The next three articles are linked by their sense of history and their review of different aspects of history and their impact on psychology and psychotherapy. In the first, Suzanne Jenkins describes the journey of psychology in Australia from that of a colonising agent to cultural broker, a journey in which practitioners – and politicians – need to look back and to look forward. Only in this way will psychology and, more broadly, other psy disciplines and professions be rehabilitated in Australia – and, by implication, other countries that have had a history of colonisation. Of course, the word “habilitate” is a significant one in this context, as one of the points Jenkins makes in her article is that Australia was regarded by James Cook and the subsequent colonial settlers as “terra nullis” (empty land), a view and “grand erasure” (Connell, 2008) that made the Aboriginal people who had been living there for tens of thousands of years inhabitants who somehow are not “habilitated”. In this context we might consider that Western – and Northern – psychology needs to be de-habilitated and certainly decolonised before it can be habilitated in a way that is appropriate to the Australian context. Jenkins’ article and the point about habilitation is a contemporary one: as this issue was being prepared, in a speech supporting Western Australia’s proposed closure of 150 remote Aboriginal communities, Australia’s Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, said that the taxpayer should not have to fund what he considers to be a “lifestyle choice”!

The last issue of the journal of 2014 was devoted to Marxism and psychotherapy, a subject which has been studied for over a hundred years, and generated a full issue of this journal, and another article in this issue. In her article Gordana Jovanović discusses the relationship between psychoanalysis and Marxism with specific reference to the situation in two countries – the Soviet Union and Germany – at the turn and beginning of the last century. She discusses six historical moments that help us to consider the relationship between these two subjects, which lie at the heart of this journal’s concern: psychotherapy and politics; of particular interest (at least to me) is Jovanović’s discussion of Lenin’s reading of Freud’s work. Jovanović’s article is part of her wider research into cultural-historical psychology and I look forward to reading more of her work – and, hopefully, more in this journal.

The historical focus of the last article is also the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In it, John Lees and Richard Cleminson, also previous contributors to the journal (Lees & Cleminson, 2013), examine anarchism, psychoanalysis and revolutionary transformation in Germany in the 1890s and in Spain in the 1930s and, specifically, the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), the German philosopher and educationalist, and of Félix Martí Ibáñez (1911–1972), the Spanish/American psychiatrist. The contributors’ retrieval of this past – or these pasts – invite us to consider what is usable of these ideas in the present.

I am delighted at the continued internationalism of the journal with, in this issue, contributors from Israel, the United Kingdom, Australia and Serbia, and very much hope that this continues and expands. I am also appreciative that two of the journal’s Editorial Advisory Board have contributed to this issue and look forward to further contributions from other members of the journal’s Board, as well as from subscribers and other visitors to the journal. As I mentioned in

the previous Editorial, the journal is now accepting submissions through the ScholarOne manuscript management system: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ppi>. The past three years have seen four special, themed issues of the journal, which, from the feedback I have received, have proved popular. For news of other special issues planned, go to the journal's home page: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1556-9195](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1556-9195). As ever, I hope you enjoy and are stimulated by this issue of *PPI*.

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