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Mystics and professionals in the culture of American psychoanalysis

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In this article I shall focus on some important tensions in the contemporary American psychoanalytic culture, but my argument might strike a chord in other national settings as well. Psychotherapy in Britain, for example, is working towards a professional organization at the moment, and may face some of the same tensions as those discussed below. These tensions revolve around the contrasts between the roles of'mystics' in Wilfred Bion's sense (1970) — innovators, reformers or geniuses — on the one hand, and on the other the roles of professionals in the culture. In this context I shall discuss some consequences for the role and tasks of leadership in American psychoanalysis.

Organized psychoanalysis is faced with a central problem: how to organize itself as a profession without destroying its critical perspective. There is an essential tension between the professional and the critical side which demands that a balance must be struck so as not to destroy the critical foundations or an effective organization. Is it possible to have an organization which assumes a body of knowledge at the same time as allowing the other side to bloom: the importance of an unknowing attitude? Is it possible for the organization as establishment to value fundamental critics, outsiders, reformers and geniuses rather than expel them? How is it possible to organize the profession so that it facilitates the rise and assimilation of these critics without allowing them either to dominate

or to have the ground cut from under their feet, destroying them? If the fundamental critic is no longer allowed to surface, then the future and even the present of the profession are stymied. It simply becomes rote technical, routine application of a theory. On the other hand, if the fundamental critic or'genius' were to take over entirely, then the tradition would not have a continuity or organization.

American psychoanalysis is dominated by professionalized technical psychoanalysts (mainly medical) who assume the role of what Lacan calls'the subject supposed to know'. A major problem for American psychoanalysis is how the profession can move beyond a therapeutic, technical view of psychoanalysis which punishes those who disagree with current orthodoxy to an organization that on the contrary welcomes such disagreement and grows from it.

Freud made some distinctions of great importance which are related to this issue. He sharply distinguished the *science* of psychoanalysis, which was a procedure for the investigation of the unconscious, from the *therapy*, which was a method based on this procedure for treating neurosis and from a body of knowledge based on the procedure. Freud wrote:

> *Psychoanalysis 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 on that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and (3) of a collection of psychological information obtained along these lines, which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific disipline. (1922, p. 235)*

For Freud the procedure is paramount. The therapy and the body of knowledge are both *derived* from this investigative procedure — they do not have validity in themselves. The profession of American psychoanalysis is based on the principles of the therapy and the body of knowledge, while concern with the investigative procedure is secondary.

A distinction can be made here between what I term *critical* psychoanalysis and what I term *professionalized* psychoanalysis. Critical psychoanalysis focuses on an open investigation of the field of the unconscious using the psychoanalytic investigative procedure, while professionalized psychoanalysis treats the derivatives of this procedure — the therapy and the collection of information — as primary. Professionalized psychoanalysis does not question its theoretical underpinnings,

regarding them as established truths. Thus while sometimes superficially appearing empiricist and using quasi-scientific jargon, in fact it resembles an institutionalized secular religion. In a recent article, Otto Kernberg(1986) asks what model American psychoanalytic institutions take. Are they seminaries, trade schools, art academies or universities? Kernberg argues that American psychoanalytic institutions occupy the terrain somewhere between a seminary and a trade school, whereas he believes that they ought to lie somewhere in the domain between a university and an art academy.

In his paper‘The mystic and the group’, Bion (1970) discussed the relation of the establishment in any group to forces which appear to threaten established ideology and power. He used the term‘mystic’ to refer to anyone who seemed to be a potential disruptive force in the group. Mystics could be reformers, critics, geniuses with a different viewpoint — in fact anyone who seems to have a competing set of beliefs on what the group is about and threatens to upset the present arrangements. The mystic is necessarily seen to be disruptive to the group as such rather than to present contingent arrangements. Yet the establishment, for Bion, needs to provide for the possibility of the emergence of the mystic and to be able to absorb the shock of the mystic's arrival — that is, if the group is to have a future and not become an ossified bureaucracy or secular religious cult. In this paper I shall use the terms‘mystic’ and‘establishment’ in Bion's sense.

This bears very much on the situation of contemporary American psychoanalysis. The establishment has resisted change so much that it is in danger of having stifled progress to such an extent as to be a danger for the future of the profession. By defining psychoanalysis as a particular set of theories and techniques which are approved by the professional establishment rather than as a field, a method of inquiry and clinical approach, it discourages the development of‘mystics’ within the profession. The leadership in American psychoanalysis has often bolstered orthodoxy and punished heterodoxy, whereas I believe the task of leadership in American psychoanalysis involves encouraging openness and the possibility of new ideas.

Analytic organization faces special problems because of the nature of the field. It needs special resistance against professionalization — a great temptation and potentially ruinous in so far as the rise in accepted

dogma makes it more popular both in its own eyes and in those of the public, which can see it as a part of medicine. This respectability is anathema to its critical foundations and gives ammunition to those who would rigidly control the training process and crush the mystics. Faith in Freud, his theory and the sanctity of professional standards and authority may constitute a defence against the doubts and real difficulties of analysis. Methodology in general has been seen as a defence against anxiety in the behavioural sciences (Devereux, 1968) and analysis, which is so often emotionally difficult, is especially vulnerable to an idealization of method and authority as a defence against anxiety. Elliott Jaques has argued that‘the primary cohesive elements binding individuals into institutionalized human association is that of defence against psychotic anxiety’ and that this gives rise to many forms of maladaptive behaviour in group relationships (Jaques, 1955, p. 479). Again, analytic institutes are vulnerable to the profound transformations involved in their institutionalization which elicit — as a bulwark against the relatively disorganized nature of clinical work — pressures for an increasingly rigid, quasi-legalistic structure (see Bernfeld, 1962).

Leadership centrally involves the management of organizational culture. In the case of American psychoanalysis the organizational culture is that of the thirty or so Institutes of Psychoanalysis affiliated with the American Psychoanalytic Association, an umbrella organization with considerable power, whose membership numbers around 2,500. There is not one psychoanalytic culture, for the cultures vary from institute to institute and from region to region within America. As leadership manages culture, there is more than one form of leadership. But there are quite a number of common issues in the way American psychoanalytic culture is led and managed. Schein observes, about the relationship of leadership to culture:

> *Organizational cultures are created by leaders, and one of the most decisive functions of leadership may well be the creation, the management, and — if and when that may become necessary — the destruction of the culture. Culture and leadership, when one examines them closely, are two sides of the same coin, and neither can really be understood by itself. In fact, there is a possibility, under-emphasized in leadership research — that the only thing of real importance*

> *that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture. (1985, p. 2)*

The psychoanalysis practised by the institutes of the American Psychoanalytic Association is under threat in America today. The threats are of both internal and external origin and of course have important repercussions on each other. Leadership must manage the culture of the organization, and this implies attitudes to external and internal factors. Schein writes about these factors in relation to the group:

> *What we need to understand is how the individual intentions of the founders, leaders or convenors of a new group or organization, their own definitions of the situation, their assumptions and values, come to be a shared, consensually validated set of definitions that are passed on to new members as'the correct way to define the situation'. These intentions and definitions, as they exist consciously or not in the leader's mind, can always be analysed into an external and an internal set of issues. The external issues have to do with the leader's and the group's definition of the environment and how to survive in it; the internal issues have to do with the leader's and the group's definition of how to organize relationships among the members of the group to permit survival in the defined environment through effective performance and the creation of internal comfort. (1985, p. 51)*

Let me start with the external factors. The impact of psychopharmacology, the plethora of alternative therapies, the burgeoning number of alternative analytic institutes which undercut the American Psychoanalytic Association institutes, the problems of the economy and insurance company payments which have brought a much smaller analytic load, are all external problems and threats which threaten the professional growth and importance of the institutes affiliated to the American Psychoanalytic Association. The prestige of the profession has been considerably diminished and biological approaches now dominate psychiatry. Nowadays psychoanalysts occupy few chairs of psychiatry in medical schools. Furthermore, the demands of scientific and professional advancement within academic psychiatry militate against the selection of psychoanalysis as a career path (Wallerstein, 1983).

To make matters still worse for the American Psychoanalytic Association, some psychologists belonging to the American Psychological Association have instituted a lawsuit against it. The lawsuit alleges monopoly trade practice in excluding psychologists from their institutes on the grounds that they are not medically qualified. These psychologists are seeking class certification with the US District Court, Southern District of New York, on the grounds that they are typical of at least 3,000 other psychologists who have been professionally restricted and financially damaged by their exclusion from psychoanalytic training. The plaintiffs also contend that the mental health consumer is being penalized by these restrictions and that the American Psychoanalytic Association is violating antitrust law. The discovery phase of the lawsuit undertaken during 1987 revealed some candid admissions by the American Psychoanalytic Association in minutes and reports of their economic motives in discriminating against psychologists about admission to training programmes. The lawsuit is due to go to trial in the latter part of 1988. Many organizational changes in the American Psychoanalytic Association are inevitable. Indeed, the belief in the medical prerequisite is no longer the majority position among members

of the Association, which is now opening up to others far more rapidly than anyone imagined, importantly under the pressure of the psychologists' lawsuit. It has recently approved waivers for non-medical clinical training (Shane, 1987). In addition, the covenant between the American Psychoanalytic Association and the International Psycho-Analytical Association (IPA) is being revised so that the American Association will not hold the exclusive franchise for IPA-approved psychoanalysis within the United States. This will result in the possibility of institutes of American psychologists or others being affiliated with the IPA.

There are also many major related internal problems that these institutes have to face. Partly because of the fall in prestige of psychoanalysis relative to other methods in psychiatry, there has been a marked fall-off in the number of medical graduates going into psychiatry and a further fall-off in turn within that diminished pool of psychiatry residents going into psychoanalytic training. This smaller pool to choose from among medically qualified graduates has lessened the number of interested and gifted candidates applying to the institutes. The infusion of

young blood into mainstream analysis has fallen drastically with many negative consequences, including fewer new ideas and developments in theory and practice. Ironically, the psychologists' lawsuit may eventually help the American Psychoanalytic Association by opening it up to a larger pool of potential analysts and to a growth in new ideas.

The present situation in the institutes has important organizational origins. In the mid-1920s the American Psychoanalytic Association made a very important leadership decision which was to define the nature of the culture from then on. The American analysts even used the pretext of a non-existent New York law to deceive the International Psycho-Analytical Association into accepting that analysis in America had to be carried out by medically qualified practitioners — this was very much against the views of Freud and the European analysts, who were in favour of lay analysis. Analysis in America was to take the route of an alliance with psychiatry rather than a separate and independent path. By linking its fate with psychiatry at that early stage the medical orientation of American psychoanalysis was enshrined. One major consequence was the enormous rise in power and influence of psychoanalysis, to the extent that in the postwar years analysis dominated psychiatry. The emphasis on practice and technique was paramount and psychoanalytic theory was seen to be the preserve of psychiatrically trained psychoanalysts. The professional guild aspects dominated and psychoanalysts tried their level best to exclude others from the psychoanalytic field and certainly did not act to encourage others to participate in it.

Jacob Arlow (1985) has said that the‘psychoanalytic community is essentially a community of practitioners dedicated to the relief of suffering’. Arlow emphasizes that analysts are doctors whether or not they possess a medical degree and their practice thus accords with the orientation of the American Psychoanalytic Association since the 1920s. So the medical orientation must be seen not simply as an exclusion of psychologists, social workers and others: at base this orientation — the technical relief of suffering — probably pervades professional psychology in America almost as much as medicine. If the psychologists win their action, the American Psychoanalytic Association may not be much changed: it may simply result in a larger number of analysts with more or less the same professionalized perspectives.

As the prototype for the relief of suffering, the medical orientation

can serve as an excuse to adhere to a stereotyped approach in practice and to reject new ideas in all helping professions. Analysts rarely challenge their preconceptions and often do not go much outside their institutes, the outcomes of analysis are relatively poor when they have been studied and change is resisted as a threat bringing impurity and dilution (see, for example, Holzman, 1985; Wallerstein, 1983). Interestingly, the exclusion of other professionals such as psychologists is now basically on economic grounds with the fear of medical fees being undercut. There is little serious belief that

psychologists will not make good analysts. But medicalized psychoanalysis may well be giving way to a broader professionalized psychoanalysis, albeit on the same therapeutic model, a model which has been copied by other professions.

The mainstream of American psychoanalysis has been in ego psychology, which has fitted well with a professionalized, pragmatic emphasis. One reason for the hegemony of ego psychology is historical — much of the migration of European analysts was by Anna Freudians. But there was also an adaptation to the new environment, which Russell Jacoby (1983) calls'the repression of psychoanalysis'. And of course there was a fit between ego psychology, which included conflict-free zones of the personality, and the pragmatic and pietistic approach of the American dream, in which everything was possible for everyone provided an effort was made. Ego psychology emphasized adaptation to present reality, with the cognitive function now seen as independent of the id rather than controlled by it. Emphasis on a conflict-free sphere, adaptation, the reality principle and ego autonomy (Hartmann, 1939) downgraded the importance of the drives and, in line with American cultural values of an open future without restriction, emphasized a far less tragic vision than Freud's. The ego-psychological approach of Hartmann, Kris and Lowenstein, which dominated the American psychoanalytic scene in the fifties and sixties and fitted so well with a pragmatic approach to life, also fitted a medicalized psychoanalysis, since neither the environment nor the ego — regarded as autonomous — was open to question.

Resistance to change has also been aided considerably by a top-heavy administrative arrangement which allows relatively little autonomy to individual institutes in educational and training matters. Training problems have been a constant concern of many members of the American

Psychoanalytic Association, but the issues of‘quality control’ and standardization have been paramount. This has meant that innovation and new ideas — heterodoxy or dissidence — have been punished and orthodoxy rewarded.

From the beginning psychoanalytic institutes have been authoritarian in structure. This has its origins in Freud's experience of Austrian culture, which was not particularly democratic, and in the fact that authoritarianism, which was not part of Freud's self-analysis, was not examined. Around 1924 the Berlin Institute formalized psychoanalytic training procedures which have changed little since (Bernfeld, 1962). This structure fitted badly in American society, with its heritage of democratic structures and voluntary associations, and many tensions were created between American democratic ideas and the imported European authoritarian structures. However, the lack of attention to democratic structure, the unacknowledged interest in status and hierarchy in institutes, together with the lack of reflection and examination of group processes within psychoanalytic institutes, were important issues in continuing the authoritarian structures of institutes. These added to the problems of transferences to Freud and his disciples as father figures whose legacy is passed down through training analyses. The identification with Freud in every analyst is never analysed, and is thus reproduced. There has been discontent and rebellion, but little reform throughout the years.

The debate about lay analysis is important here. The Americans' insistence that psychoanalysis was a medical procedure was the best means politically to legitimate analysis in America. This was basically a political and a professional question — how best to promote the psychoanalytic movement. Psychoanalysis had its origins in neurology, but it could be said that what was new in psychoanalysis was precisely how far it went *beyond* neurology and the biological sciences. None the less most of the first analysts were doctors and their livelihood depended on the private clinical practice of psychoanalysis. Historically there has been a close relationship between medicine and analysis which has, to be sure, been useful to both and has certainly meant that medical analysts were better off as they assumed the prestige, status and rewards of doctors. Freud was in favour of lay analysis partly because he did not see psychoanalysis primarily as a therapy. Indeed, he believed that the‘true line of

division is between *scientific* analysis and its *applications* alike in medical and non-medical fields' (1927, p. 257; original emphasis).

The greater the emphasis on the therapy rather than the science, the more psychoanalysis becomes wedded to and defined by its therapeutic side. (Psychoanalysts often contrast *psychoanalytic* therapy — four or five times a week on the couch, analyses transference and resistance, carried out by a member of the IPA, etc — with *psychotherapy*, which may be less often, does not analyse the transference and resistance, may not be carried out by a member of the IPA, etc., but part of its mixed form is derived from psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysts often concentrate on the therapy rather than the science, but this is a different point from whether analysis is diluted into psychotherapy — a different use of the term'therapy'. Unless otherwise indicated, I am using the term'therapy' to denote the clinical practice of analysis.) Institutes of psychoanalysis become more interested in a training which focuses on therapy and in training people who wish to become full-time analytic therapists.'Real' analysts are defined by a full-time clinical analytic practice and the'science' is defined by the'laboratory of the analytic hour'. Power in institutes is generally with training analysts and the issue of becoming a training analyst is paramount in many'ideological' and scientific issues. Those who are involved with universities, other institutions or approaches are not applauded for their openness but generally rather denigrated as analysts and are not usually the ones in power. Philip Holzman writes that if the task of institutes is

> *training for more than the therapy, the institutes are badly at fault. The institutes are part-time academies with teachers only from within psychoanalysis who donate their time to the institute without significant remuneration. Much of the theory and the technique is taught as'received doctrine', and any research that is undertaken is incidental to the main function of training the practitioners of psychoanalytic therapy. Research cannot flourish in such a setting. The statement that'every hour is an experiment', used as a defensive excuse for the emphasis on therapy, is merely a conceit and ignores the weighty arguments against this view. The selection of candidates for training focuses almost exclusively on choosing those who will practise the therapy. The primary value in institutes is the full-time*

> *therapist. The institutes are thus training people who can become neither future investigative discoverers nor those who will criticize and falsify, working within the context of justification. (1985, p. 766)*

The structure of the institutes discourages open questioning and encourages the focus on therapeutic technique as what analysis is really about. Freud wrote:'Psychoanalysis finds a constantly increasing support as a therapeutic procedure, owing to the fact that it can do more for patients than any other mode of treatment' (1926, p. 264). This was written when there were no serious alternative psychotherapies and before the advent of psychotropic drugs. If the emphasis is on psychoanalysis as a practical therapy (whose criterion is cure) rather than as a method of understanding primary process, psychoanalysis will stand or fall by how effective or ineffective its therapeutic status is in society and the professions. Unfortunately for analysis, the more effective and attractive therapies — or at any rate more seemingly effective and attractive therapies — may well replace analysis and bury it as obsolete. But this was not Freud's model. He predicted:'The future will probably attribute far greater importance to psychoanalysis as the science of the unconscious than as a therapeutic procedure' (1926, p. 265).

Psychoanalysis can be seen as a science, a therapy, a theory of civilization, a profession and a movement. (The term'science' here refers to a field of inquiry which could include hermeneutic sciences such as history, and is certainly not restricted to the natural sciences. Their methodologies are appropriate to the particular field of inquiry rather than having one type of approach, for example modelled on one of the natural sciences. A scientific approach to psychoanalysis would be one that used methods appropriate to the study of its object, the unconscious, rather than those borrowed from other disciplines such as physics.) These aspects can be closely related but are often at loggerheads. Freud, for example, wanted'to feel assured that the therapy will not destroy the science' (1927, p. 254). The growth of the movement might depend on a unity of purpose from the members with relatively little dissent. The guild issues of fees and livelihood may be paramount in a profession whose income derives from private practice rather than paid university positions. The skills of psychoanalysis as a profession

are imparted by an exclusive institution and certified by a professional agency. These skills have been seen as monopolized by the members of the American Psychoanalytic Association and have been accorded high social status and rewards. The issues of the advancement of the therapy will not be fundamentally challenged by those whose livelihood depends on it — and also whose emotional, financial and time investment has been very great. In the professional organization of American psychoanalysis there is a tension between a fundamental interest in its perpetuation as a movement and its advance as a science or body of knowledge. There can be a tension between the social impact of a movement and its interest in knowledge. The advance of a movement, at least in the short term, can be impeded by a critical challenge to its philosophical and practical foundations.

A basic concern of any organization is the issue of its future. American psychoanalytic institutions are professional organizations whose basic aim is to reproduce analysts. Analysts are seen basically as practitioners of clinical psychoanalysis who practise in the tradition of Freud. Freud is seen as a charismatic leader who has set the parameters of the psychoanalytic field — and, more to the point, set up the traditions of theories and practice within this field which are to be honoured and reproduced, at least in name. A big issue in psychoanalytic discourse today is still:'Is it a deviation or is it a development of Freud?' This has led to ossification as the idea of needing to stick to the ideology is paramount and discourages new ideas coming to the fore and being accepted.

A main issue in this ossification speaks to the future of American psychoanalysis: how can new ideas be shown to be acceptable? Can research become important? Individual goodwill is not enough: the organization needs to be structured so that anxiety is dealt with and people can relate to each other with confidence. Analytic organizations need to be'requisite' in the sense used by Elliott Jaques. He regards an organization as requisite to'the extent that it reinforces the expression of behaviours supportive of confidence and trust in human interactions, and reduces suspicion and mistrust' (Jaques, 1976, p. 374). Organizations need to enable people to increase the amount of trust and confidence between them.

The reception of genuinely new ideas can pose a threat to the establishment of any organisation — in fact it can threaten catastrophic

change. An important role of the leadership is to manage the introduction and assimilation of new ideas without their threatening the existence of the organization. Psychoanalysis has been seen as being attacked from all fronts by the organization itself, so it has been important to keep the orthodoxy and mainly defend against enemies from without and their agents within the organization. There is a purity to be preserved, and this will preserve the organization.

Psychoanalysts have been concerned for too long only with themselves (without, incidentally, really looking at themselves as a profession)! They have ignored as far as possible the inroads and effects of the broader society upon the theory and practice of analysis. Psychoanalysts have sequestered themselves in institutes which are difficult to enter and have little contact with the outside world. Psychoanalytic institutes rarely bring outside experts in to teach candidates in areas such as sociology, anthropology, history or philosophy. The institutes are far from Freud's ideal scheme of training, which'must include elements from the mental sciences', from psychology, the history of civilization and sociology, as well as from anatomy, biology and the study of evolution (Freud, 1927, p. 252): they have become medical guilds for technical training following the works of Freud and certain designated epigones. From an early date Freud saw psychoanalysis as a cause to be defended against external attack, and analytic institutes were the bastions of this defence. Freud regarded it as'very probable' that'the large-scale application of our therapy will compel us to alloy the pure gold of analysis freely with the copper of direct suggestion' (1919, pp. 167-8), but he insisted that'whatever form this psychotherapy for the people may take, … its most effective and most important ingredients will assuredly remain those borrowed from strict and

untendentious psychoanalysis' (1919, p. 168). The gold of psychoanalysis could be kept pure and undiluted through the institutes, but this has the consequence of excluding much of the outside world as a threat to shielding the orthodoxy.

It is no accident that this does resemble institutionalized religion. The language of orthodoxy and dissidence, of adherence to Freud or God, of what is pure analysis or gospel and what has been diluted as psychotherapy (rather than psychoanalysis) or become heretical, of initiation ceremonials and rites of passage to join the elect analysts, training

analysts, priests or high priests; of journals which do not accept heterodox articles — these are only a few examples of an institutional religious perspective which has its origins in Freud. It will be recalled that Freud set up'The Committee' to guard the faith in 1911 and gave rings to its members.

The embattled or siege mentality has long been an intrinsic part of the psychoanalytic movement — people are always supposed to resist and oppose psychoanalytic truths and the profession has often been paranoiac about outside assessment and criticism (see Cooper, 1984). There has been a good deal of persecutory anxiety in disputes whereby the groups, whether in or out, fear that the other is out to destroy them and analysis itself. This is evident in the strong negative overreactions to Heinz Kohut, Melanie Klein and Jacques Lacan. There may be some foundations for some of these fears, since once these polarities have been established, self-fulfilling prophecies can occur.

As we have seen, for Bion a major task of the establishment of an organization is to resist change — or, rather, catastrophic change. The extent of the change that needs to be resisted in order to prevent catastrophic change is a matter of judgement, but there are other vital tasks for the establishment: to encourage change, to provide for the possibility of the emergence of the mystic and to assimilate his or her vision. The establishment should make this vision accessible to other members of the group and be able to absorb the shock of the mystic's arrival. On this model, if American psychoanalysis is to have a future and not become only an ossified bureaucracy or a secular religious cult, it needs to encourage the mystic. Since American psychoanalysis has been mainly in the hands of doctors, the sieve which allows entrance from potential mystics is very narrow, even though lately, with the pressure of the lawsuit, there have been moves to include others such as clinical psychologists with a PhD. But this has been 'shutting the gate after the horse has bolted', or even'too little too late'. It has only been under extreme pressure that the establishment has been caving in and they are caving in only because they have to do so; psychoanalysis is in such decline now in the US that there is simply little alternative! The fact that so very few medical people are interested in being candidates is a sign of the low ebb of psychoanalysis, at least in the medical field.

If psychoanalytic institutes have one function, it is the professional

one of reproducing themselves through the transmission of psychoanalysis through education and training. Psychoanalysis has been bypassed by many today who see it as another (medical or quasi-medical) speciality which aims at the cure for patients' complaints — an aim which is seen to be achieved better through psychopharmacology and other modes of therapy. In so far as psychoanalysis is seen as a legitimate competitor of these modes of cure, it is caught as a profession. The infusion from psychologists may stave off a more major crisis in the institutes.

I have been arguing that the basic assumptions of the American psychoanalytic culture are medical professionalized ones which are powerfully influenced by a quasi-religious ideology. In allying itself with psychiatry, psychoanalysis has become fully institutionalized and professionalized and has resisted change. Leadership in the institutes and in the American Psychoanalytic Association has seen itself as simply administering a profession, ensuring quality control and attending to the livelihood of its guild members. In this it has not seen its task as innovative with regard to new ideas and practices but rather negatively resisting potentially catastrophic change brought about by dissidents who are suspected of being out to

destroy psychoanalysis.

Yet it is precisely in so far as there has been relatively little significant scientific ferment in American analysis that its future is threatened. The organization should be‘requisite’ in encouraging the role of the visionary or dissident and somehow providing for the interpretation and assimilation of their ideas to the normal discourse of the organization. Of course the establishment must prevent catastrophic change, but generally it has attempted to prevent any change at all, using rationalizations such as asserting, either implicitly or explicitly, that those who are interested in new ideas are diminishing its standards and diluting and destroying analysis. Psychoanalysis should be seen as a field with theories which can be debated rather than a particular set of theories to be followed. Change is not a threat to psychoanalysis; rather the problem lies in the continued resistance to new ideas, which asks first:‘Is it analysis?’;‘Is it kosher?’ and only secondarily, if at all,‘Is it true?’ Guttman (1985) regards a deviant theory in analysis as one where the theorist's aspirations to overthrow the Freudian paradigm are not equalled by his or her ability to do so. He likens deviant theories in psychoanalysis, such as Adler's and Jung's, to the Christian myth in which Lucifer rose against

his Maker, which could not help but be abortive. Is this a model of science or of religion? It would be mistaken even to think that this approach happens in medicine proper, which is generally far more empirical than psychoanalysis. Researchers investigating diseases are more prone to ask:‘Does it work?’ than‘Is this a deviation or a development?’

The very success of psychoanalysis, which has been due to its political success as a movement which has ridden on the back of psychiatry and has brooked little dissent within its ranks, is precisely what may be its downfall. Institutionalization may have gone too far in discouraging and punishing criticism of the mystic. It may be a good thing for the American Psychoanalytic Association that there is such an onslaught on its exclusivity that it may force some re-evaluation of theory and practice. Kernberg's ideal of an analytic institute lying somewhere between a university and an art institute may slowly replace the combination of trade school and seminary that is the prevalent — though not exclusive — model of the American Psychoanalytic Association today. Psychoanalysis could then be seen as an unrivalled method of illuminating the inner world of unconscious psychic reality.

Psychoanalysis aims to examine the self that seeks illusory answers to questions about our human condition. In so far as a path to reach such a goal is erected, the goal recedes still further, but the profession's task is to transmit, and it feels more comfortable in possessing a‘truth’. It is also less threatened by the enormity of the discomfort of the discovery by its institutionalization. Yet it is precisely in its almost total institutionalization and professionalization that the danger to the future of psychoanalysis lies.

But it would be mistaken to take a one-sided view of the situation. In recent years there has been some opening-up from the totalism in some of the institutes of the American Psychoanalytic Association. In fact its Executive Council, which represents the societies, is generally more receptive to innovation than the Board of Professional Standards, which represents the institutes. Some of the constituent institutes, such as the Boston Institute, located not coincidentally in a university town, are far more liberal than others, such as the New York Institute. The external threats to psychoanalysis — at least to the American Psychoanalytic Association — have forced a re-evaluation of some preconceptions and

have aided the cause of the liberals, moving them further in from the margins. There has been some opening-up of the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* with the appointment of the present editor, even though the Scientific Programmes of the Meetings of the American Psychoanalytic Association remain the same as they have been for decades. Kohut's major dissident movement has not led to a split and his ideas, while still anathema to many, have not been rejected out of hand (see Cooper, 1984). There has been some valuable research by psychoanalysts but regrettably

not generally by those, or supported by those, with psychoanalytic power. Even so, any clear-cut division between‘progressives’ and‘conservatives’ in the organization is not appropriate. For example Arnold Cooper, former President of the American Psychoanalytic Association and a leading‘progressive’ who favours the opening-up of psychoanalysis, leads those in favour of retaining the medical prerequisite for analytic training.

But the issue goes deeper. Groups operate through their‘basic assumptions’ (Bion's term for group positions which avoid psychic pain and achieve the group's agreed-upon values), which are generally very difficult for members to confront; they are taken for granted, tell the members of the group or culture how to think, perceive and feel about things, and are non-debatable (Bion, 1961). Unfortunately the structures of institutes and psychoanalytic culture remain quite closed, and the space and tasks for innovative leadership are as great as ever. Because psychoanalysis in America is seen as a therapy rather than a science of the unconscious, the guild aspects largely predominate over the university aspects of institutes. Important as the external threats to psychoanalysis are, they are mostly beyond the immediate control of organized American psychoanalysis (although an internally renovated institution would be able to deal with these external issues far more adaptively and might well make analysis more attractive).

To make the fundamental point, let us recall the statement I quoted by Schein near the beginning of this article:‘the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture’. If the American Psychoanalytic Association is to become a living force, the leadership of the American and the individual institutes needs actively to manage the culture by providing rewards rather than punishments for innovation

and new ideas. It needs to appraise itself critically as a profession and to examine its own group processes. It needs to define the nature of psychoanalysis as a method of inquiry — as a science — again rather than as a therapy.

The method of inquiry which aims at understanding the unconscious is unique to psychoanalysis — therapy as the application of received theories and techniques aiming at cure is not. In the realm of therapy psychoanalysis ought not to aim at competing with other modalities where other modalities are more effective, but should rather excel at what it does best: the investigation of the unconscious. But this needs urgent critical examination and re-evaluation. American psychoanalysis lives too much in its past. Perhaps somewhat ironically, the best chance for the future of the profession is to replace professionalized psychoanalysis with critical psychoanalysis, a psychoanalysis open to mystics and bent on fundamentally challenging preconceptions in its investigation of the unconscious. I am not suggesting that the university provides a perfect model here; only that employing a fundamentally critical approach, rather than one which emphasizes received truths, is important. It emphasizes what analysis has to offer that is unique: an unrivalled means of investigating the unconscious. (Private practice is — for these purposes — a side issue.)

Distinctions between the science, the therapy and the profession sometimes become blurred, since analysis centrally involves practice. The science involves therapeutic practice; but this is not anathema to a scientific approach in which the aim is knowledge, including of course the unconscious of the patient. Critical psychoanalysis does not mean an end to therapy, only an end to therapy as the stereotyped application of theories and techniques. Open investigation is intrinsic to the concept of science which places value on novelty, and it precludes a compulsion to repeat. American psychoanalysis has something unique to offer America. Of course it is no simple issue as to where the proper place of psychoanalysis lies. But psychoanalysis will be seen at its best, even most effective, when as theory and therapy it is treated as a field of open investigation rather than as a set of specific theories and techniques supporting a profession.

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