

# For a history of psychoanalysis' politics: institutionalization, formation and the analysts' political stance<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The political history of psychoanalysis is approached as a movement around psychological ideas and practices not in order to draw a historiography of such movement, but to sketch a historically valuable narrative in regards to certain institutional aspects of psychoanalysis, which show the way through which it has taken political actions within its institutionalization. Based on the psychoanalysts' political stances and their theories, we outlined some intersections among them, analyzing three authors, Paul Federn, Otto Fenichel, and Ernest Jones, and then analyzing the constitution of the psychoanalytical movement and the Freudian cause propaganda. Our hypothesis is that, despite the different stances and political forces that exist within psychoanalysis, they have converged towards the defense of one cause. Thus, the constitution and expansion of the psychoanalytical movement becomes clearer during its first five decades towards a seeming unification

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## Introduction

Much has been said about the relationships between psychoanalysis and politics<sup>2</sup>. Here, we are specifically interested in the political history of psychoanalysis as a movement in regards to psychological ideas and practices. If the theme *psychoanalysis and politics* deserves to be approached through the perspective of the political character inherent to psychoanalysis, then it is also healthy for it to be referred to another field of analysis: namely its social and collective aspects, as well as the political organization of the psychoanalytical movement.

Reflections based on a certain theoretical or technical aspect usually approach the power issues in clinical devices, designing a kind of political anthropology based on the Freudian critique to culture. They may also deal with issues that are strictly political, in a dialogue with the problems of human subjectivation, which is the core of metapsychology.

Among a varied psychoanalytical production, based on little more than a century, it is possible to find different politics in psychoanalysis. We will try to outline some intersections among the metapsychological and technical concepts and the political engagement of some psychoanalysts. The aim is to deal with some examples of these stances, ranging from the most conservative ones – neutral or reactionary – to the most progressive ones – liberal, socialist, and communist.

It is supposed that different psychoanalysis can present political traces in their *corpus* production, in knowledge transmission, in the accepted, refuted and standardized techniques, and in core ideals. This leads us to think about the possible relationship between the politics defended by the different psychoanalyses and its institutionalization modes.

First, some examples of such political divergencies are recognized by comparing the stances and constructs of Paul Federn, Otto Fenichel and Ernest Jones, three authors who are not commonly studied in the productions on the theme. Later, the hypothesis that the psychoanalytical movement was guided by political matters, which determine their institutionalization, is approached. Throughout this process, we aim to shed light on the many forces that acted on the construction and expansion of the psychoanalytical movement through Central Europe.

We will understand how the psychoanalysis' unifying proposals are related to the institutionalization procedure in which it comes to mix itself with Freudian work. When faced with the repetitive breaks from Freud's thinking, the argument about the theoretical and technical differences between the founder and its dissident followers is dissolved, which leaves room for a scenario in which the significant figure is the construction of the cause.

We defend that it was such seeming unification of the psychoanalytical movement that supported its institutionalization and made way for its expansion. In a certain way, the didactical analysis appears to deal with this matter precisely, being also used for the reproduction of an ideal experience. The analytical education becomes the conformation to the repressed and the unconscious, *just as* the Freudian project defined for the psychoanalysis when institutionalizing it.

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2 A search in the Virtual Library of Psychology has about 2700 results.

Besides showing a different view on how psychoanalysis relates to politics and is set as a political movement in its first fifty years, we hope to deal with the pertinence of a psychoanalytical policy that is inherently subversive, while it is concerned with issues caused by the social organization or by the power sharing in a group.

### **Psychoanalysts' political stances and their theoretical productions as narratives of a movement**

The existence of a great difference among psychoanalysts' political stances in regards to the world's problems and their practice is not news. Although the aim is not to reduce the theory's autonomy to a biographical matter, such political stances are somehow underlying theoretical constructions and have been involved in the construction of the psychoanalytical movement. Let us now look at how the relationships between theory and political thinking may happen in the work of three authors: Ernest Jones, Paul Federn and Otto Fenichel.

We will use the well-known Freud biography that Jones (1953/1989) wrote as a starting point, merging the history of psychoanalysis and the life of its creator. Two aspects are striking when the reader faces the theme of the creation of psychoanalysis. First, Freud's creative solitude, restricted to punctual friendships and intellectual partnerships (Breuer and Fliess), who turned their backs on him and disagreed about the fundamentals of that which, supposedly, would have finally appeared in Freud (1900/1985b, 1900/1985c) – and which would make the Freudian discovery something original. Later on, such a scenario is mixed with that portrayed by Freud himself (1914/2012b, 1925/2011b), in which the narrative about his work is merged with his personal history. Psychoanalysis, his creation, would be a different treating method for the nerve diseases added to his psychological research methodology.

It has been extensively explained how much Freudian thinking and its most essential concepts, which would have appeared in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1900/1985b, 1900/1985c) and have become more robust in the thesis and clinical cases presentations during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Freud, 1905/2016, 1909/2013, 1909/2015c, 1911/2010a, 1918/2010b), were already being developed in previous articles (Freud, 1895/1985a; Freud & Breuer, 1895/2016). If there were changes from one period to the other, they are not radical nor absolute (Monzani, 1989), which contrasts from the thesis of Freud's individual genius as proposed by Jones (1953/1989).

Jones' position points to a reading that sees psychoanalysis as an impartial scientific subject. However, different from Freud, who, by placing psychoanalysis within the scientific world view warns that the unified character of explaining the world by science is a non-fulfilled promise (1933/2010d), Jones considers that psychoanalysis, precisely because of its scientific characteristic, has the authority to provide unified and totalizing explanations about humanity.

This becomes clear in a lecture given by Jones (1941). By using psychoanalysis to analyze social problems, he

develops the theory that revolutions can be characterized as a destructive phenomenon that is limited to the Oedipal conflict, in the intention to kill the father in order to take his place. Such a psychological aspect is taken as a unique causal and explaining factor, in spite of the social objective factors that are present in these occurrences.

The indiscriminate use of an allegedly neutral and impartial psychoanalysis serves as a psychologizing justification to highlight the revolutionary as an aggressive and deeply paranoid subject (Jones, 1941, p. 200), while the tradition continuation (p. 207) is set as a distinctive characteristic of civilized man in opposition to his primitive ancestors. The discourse of the psychoanalysis of the scientific character is used for conservative political stances – Jones proposes that this psychoanalytical science, together with hereditary eugenic researches, is the tool for a noteworthy governor to bring true evolution to humanity.

In opposition to such reading, there are authors such as Paul Federn and Otto Fenichel, who are examples of the psychoanalytical left (Federn, 1992).

Paul Federn (1919/2000) recalls Freud (1913, 2012a) in to reflection on the revolutionary movements of Russia (Bolshevism), Austria (the fall of the Empire) and German (the fall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reich) and its organizations, such as the workers' councils and strikes. The author analyzes the revolution phenomenon based on the supposition of the masses' soul, applying psychological principles discovered by individual psychology to a mass psychology<sup>3</sup>. It is one of the first efforts towards understanding the psychological substrate in the difficulties faced by the revolutionary movement at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Jacoby, 1977, p. 100).

One of the important ideas in this text is that social revolution is a consequence of a first revolutionary moment in which the State's power is delegitimized and suspended, making way for new organization possibilities. Another important idea is that the State's organization, if founded on a psychological substrate, is the father imago. For Paul Federn (1919/2000),

the child ardently wishes to depend on a beloved being whose greatness, potency and knowledge guarantee the child absolute safety and protection. The hope of having such a father makes the real one crash and a condition for choosing the father figures remains. (p. 161).

That is, a director, governor or leader who can embody power. The fall of a State can cause affliction for the groups that suddenly view themselves as lacking a figure of power, without a symbolized father on whom they placed their ambivalent feelings that were formerly destined towards the real father.

3 Freud deals with the theme during the 1919 spring (Assoun, 2009, p. 1048) and Federn's article is quoted in a footnote comparing the disintegration of a mass to the ruin of a country's authority (Freud, 1920/2011a, p. 53).

Based on this, a third idea appears: the radical change of social organization will depend on the way through which the masses substitute the State as the representative of the fatherly image. The conservative solution will be reconciled to such a representation; the opposing one can be to look for a substitute to take on State power, be it in the hierarchical party structure or in the council's horizontality, where the power is exerted directly and the psychological substrate is the fraternal relationship.

However, the first opposing solution is the repetition of the patriarchal order reproduced by the family and is updated in society after its suspension during the revolution. Not idly, Federn (1919/2000) says that the coincidence between family and the overthrown patriarchal State, which is non-coincidental to the fraternal organization, are thusly the real problem for building a non-patriarchal social order (p. 164).

Federn (1919/2000) shows sympathy for the establishment of the worker's councils as a way to implement a fraternal social principle, which is less authoritarian and more democratic. His analysis of the historical moment sees the patriarchal feeling, underpinned in humanity through the family education, as an unmeasurable obstacle to the fatherless society (p. 173). Later on, he recalls this issue:

recognizing that all relationships with authorities happen as a result of the dislocation of the libidinal relationship of the fatherly imago to the person in authority, and, likewise, of brothers to later friends and companions, teaching us that the child's life in family must be normal if one wishes to guarantee healthy civic feelings. (Federn, P., 1940, p. 73)

Having control and some consciousness about these libidinal relationships, dislocating them for other representations, without letting political decisions be based on individual neuroses (that depend on the fatherly imago), something that psychoanalysis theoretically should promote, would be the best way to combat the patriarchal model. Only then it would be possible to create a new social order based on a bigger individual autonomy.

In fact, this manner of reading what psychoanalysis promotes as practice and advocates as knowledge can be associated to its political stance, since, as a socialist, Federn intended to use psychoanalysis to serve a social condition better than the less favorable ones (Rath, 2000, p. 140). He was not the only one. His son, when recalling the lives of some psychoanalysts, said that we know, based on the psychoanalysts' biographies or on what he personally knew of them, that so-called left political opinions were probably a little more widespread among them than the conservative ones (Federn, 1992, p. 38).

Bergman (2004) is another author who reaffirms the idea that most of the psychoanalysts were related to left discourses, many having reclaimed communism as a political stance. Jacoby (1977) emphasizes how some psychoanalysts even defended a vital approximation between psychoanalytical

ideas and Marxist thinking. Famous examples of this kind of approximation are Reich (1929/1965) and Fromm (1931/1989).

Although these are authors that dissented from the official Freudian psychoanalysis, there are other less well-known examples: Annie Reich, Edith Jacobson, Edith Gyömrői and Otto Fenichel, who exchanged, for eleven years (from 1934 to 1945) secret circular letters (Fenichel, 1998) in order to foment a debate on psychoanalytical theories and practices, using Marxist thinking and its association to the Communist Party as a background (Jacoby, 1983).

Known as an orthodox Freudian, Fenichel (1945) was the author of a work used as a guideline for introduction to psychoanalysis courses and that not once mentions Marxism or the dialectical-materialist method. Which draws attention, given that Fenichel (1934/1972) published, in the first number of the *Magazine for political psychology and sexual economy*, associated to the Sex-Pol, an article in which he outlines an epistemological program of Marxist psychology. Even though he does not mention anything concerning the dialectical materialism when explaining the fundamentals of the psychoanalytical theory in the 1945 work, the treatment given to the definition of the psychoanalytical theory itself is very similar to that given in this 1934 article.

In both definitions given by Fenichel (1934/1972, p. 165, 1945, p. 5), psychoanalysis is set as a psychology that should investigate, in principle, given the material conditions that serve as bases to it, the collective action of the biological reality of the organism under study, and of the environment that acts over said biological structure.

In the first text, the author bases the definition of psychoanalysis on the dialectical materialism, since considering "material conditions" supports psychology itself as a science and the psychological phenomenon's reality depends on such a stance; secondly, because the "organism's biological constitution" is altered dialectically by the external environment forces. Thus, there is a certain particularity of the psychological phenomenon's natural reality, which is outlined by recognizing these changes in human needs (material and natural ones) that result on the superstructure which human psyche is a part of. It is noteworthy that this same text was addressed more to Marxists than to psychologists (Fenichel, 1934/1972).

Jacoby (1983) helps us to understand what is at stake in this silencing of Marxism in Fenichel's works. He defends that, if between the 1950s and 1980s terms like left Freudians, Marxist psychoanalysts, and politically engaged psychoanalysts (p. 11) sounded strange, they were previously used to describe most of psychoanalysts in Central Europe and represented the psychoanalysis practitioners' commitment in seeing it not only as a therapy, but also as part of a bigger social project (p. 6).

Thus, the shift seen in Fenichel's thinking follows an oblivion history. When the psychoanalysts' political engagement is erased from the historical narratives of psychoanalysis, what is put aside and hidden is the psychoanalysis itself as the expression of a nonconformist thinking, in the case of obviating a psychoanalysis directly



associated to Marxism (Jacoby, 1983). This could be related to the exile of a significant share of psychoanalysts due to Nazism and to the Americanization of psychoanalysis, during McCarthyism, which limited its practice to doctors and contributed to turning it into a conformist theory (Richards, 2013).

In its origins, was psychoanalysis closely related to a revolutionary or social reformism context that was erased from its official narratives? Answering “yes” would be somewhat pamphleteering, but it is possible to say that psychoanalysis used to be inserted in the social context in which its practitioners were educated and in which they tried to interfere, in a reduced way until the end of the 1910s and in a widely institutionalized manner from the 1920s onwards.

In this sense, it is important to recall some authors that dealt with this association between psychoanalysis and politics. For example, Castoriadis (1992) understands psychoanalysis within the general scope of modernity, which has the promotion of individual autonomy within a tangibly heterogeneous society in capitalism as one of its ideals. Frosh (1999) aims to highlight the elements oriented towards the reflection and social change of which Freud's psychoanalysis and post-Freudian currents are laden. In a more decisive way, in regards to the intrinsic characteristic of these relationships between psychoanalysis and politics, Goldenberg (2006) affirms that “between politics and psychoanalysis there is less of an incursion or borrowing relationship . . . but rather there is an inherent relationship that one would hardly suspect at first sight” (p. 9).

Recovering such a psychoanalytical *Zeitgeist* at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has taken many shapes. The *return to Freud* promoted by Lacan (1953-1954/1986), thinkers such as Marcuse (1966/1973) and the studies on the authoritarian personality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Nevitt, 1950) have also been a part of recovering a psychoanalysis that is concerned with extra-clinical matters (Rouanet, 1986).

Broadly, these readings of Freudian thinking aim to recognize, beyond a politics of psychoanalysis, (1) certain systematic relationships between their theories and a certain political thinking; (2) the convergence among techniques, cure ideals, and power sharing established in the treatment; and (3) the possible speech effects of psychoanalysis over the social environment and of it over its mechanisms and concepts.

However, if we follow the idea that psychoanalysis was, during its first decades, strongly connected to a context of struggle and social reforms, it will be necessary to consider that, rather than an inherence between politics and psychoanalysis, psychoanalytical theories at this time were related to more significant historical determinations that provided the conditions for the appearance and that shaped the psychoanalytical movement itself (Johnston, 1976). The possibility of tracking something in the history of psychoanalysis that will reveal a political thinking that acts on its theoretical constructs must consider the psychoanalysts' own engagement without trying to explain their works by their lives. Two paths are possible from this point on.

The first requires a study of such crossings that recovers the social meaning of the clinical practice promoted by psychoanalysts, an assessment that relates the theories and techniques to the sociological profile of clinical practice. The second, closer to the environment of reproducing and transmitting the psychoanalytical discourse, is to minimally understand the way back from these psychoanalysts' who were engaged in theories about psychoanalysis itself and its practices. It is this path that will lead us to our main problem, the political behavior of the psychoanalytical movement while aiming to organize itself through institutionalization.

## **The constitution of an intellectual movement and the propaganda of a cause**

It is possible to say that psychoanalysis' institutionalization began in 1902, with the Wednesday Psychological Society, composed by Freud, Wilhelm Stekel, Max Kahane, Alfred Adler and Rudolf Reitler. From this group the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society would be constituted in 1908. Despite the number of regular attendee increasing since the first meeting, while also receiving visitors who spread and applied Freud's ideas (Sándor Ferenczi, Ernest Jones, Karl Abraham, Carl G. Jung, Max Etingon), psychoanalysis was still far from having an institutional apparatus that could support an expansion beyond small associations. Even the *International Psychoanalytical Association* (IPA), created in 1910 by the merging of the Vienna, Zurich and Berlin societies, did not have more than a hundred members in 1911.

Montejo Alonso (2009, p. 55) recalls the period from 1902 to 1918 as the first institutionalization of psychoanalysis and defends that the goal of this project was to spread a true political-scientific cause and not be a mere corporative protection for psychoanalysts. Looking for a way to unify what psychoanalysis is and what it means to be a psychoanalyst, the creation of the IPA was used to guide the development of psychoanalysis and bring the entire international psychoanalytical movement together around such a scientific program (Montejo Alonso, 2009, p. 28). The matter of qualifying new analysts was not yet a central one during this period. Before this, it was necessary to define what true psychoanalysis would be.

At the same time, the first breakups from the official psychoanalysis appeared, which was allegedly due to theoretical and personal deviations concerning the ideas and leadership figure of Freud. In 1911, Adler and others left the Vienna group. Stekel left in 1912. At the beginning of 1913, Jung broke off relations with Freud, finally leaving his position as president of the IPA in 1914. He took the whole Zurich group with him after the great pressure planned by the group closest to Freud, the Secret Committee, which was made up of Jones, Abraham, Rank, Ferenczi and Hanns Sachs.

Let us take the case of Jung as a paradigm for two reasons. The first is the presence of real conspiracies by a group that protected the Freudian purism against Jung. The letters exchanged among Ferenczi, Jones and Abraham until the end of 1913 and the beginning of 1914 suggest this

(Wittenberger & Tögel, 2002, pp. 31-37). The second is the ostensive campaign by Freud (1914/2012b) to take control of the psychoanalytical movement himself, to the point which he affirmed that neither Jung nor Adler practiced or understood psychoanalysis as he had created in his heroic isolation.

In this sense, it is possible to talk of a “doctrinal vigilance”, which the Secret Committee would be responsible for: the committee, an authentic society inside the international psychoanalytical movement, will guard, from then on, the theoretical purity and the doctrinal vigilance, controlling the international movement from the background, which avoided internal dissent for almost a decade (Montejo Alonso, 2009, p. 194).

Given this, it is not difficult to support that the story told by Freud – and repeated with or without additions by those who guarded psychoanalysis’ purity – had its roots in a certain operating mode of the psychoanalytical movement. It was necessary to guarantee that Freud’s seminal ideas were also the label of quality for the knowhow associated to psychoanalysis.

It is clear that most of these breakups originated from the most basic theoretical divergences possible. For example, the employment of more suggestive techniques as opposed to analytical ones and the emphasis given by Adler on the Self psychology rather than on sexuality. But there are indications that sentimental matters were at stake.

Indisputably, the crossed transferences left their marks and the spot of psychoanalysis’ father occupied by Freud owes them greatly (Kupermann, 1966). The transmission of Freud’s mythical experience in his (self)analysis with Fliess and of his main ideas created by it required some control. Did that which seemed to alter essential characteristics of his child act as the object of reserves by him? It is possible that we may never have a definite answer.

Let us now return to the political-institutional aspect of the matter. How do we control the transmission of that experience and of the knowledge connected to it in order to avoid its technical and conceptual degeneration? Similar questions to this arose in the 1910s, since the need of analysis for the analysts themselves was being discussed, when discoveries such as countertransference started to organize discussions about psychoanalysis’ transmission (Montejo Alonso, 2009). Thus, along with the foundation of four more associations (New York, Boston, Budapest and London) between 1910 and 1914, the psychoanalysis’ scientific cause, restricted to spreading the knowledge on unconscious processes, began being reconsidered.

It must be clear that such propaganda would not cease to be on the agenda of psychoanalytical associations. In 1920, Ferenczi, by starting a regular letter exchange among the members of said Committee – that was now working as a true secret council attached to the IPA’s presidency –, informs that they subsequently need to deal with the psychoanalytical scientific propaganda (Wittenberger & Tögel, 2002, p. 42). This same letter the admission of member candidates has as its first item. The associations should require, through a unified statute, a conference from the candidates before they were

admitted, and it suggests that all local associations should get to know the new members before any of them could make an admission.

Another main reason for this new phase in the institutionalization of psychoanalysis was the First World War, its immediate effects on Central Europe’s population and the impact on European society and intelligentsias (Montejo Alonso, 2009). In this sense, war neuroses became a matter about which psychoanalysis should discuss (Ferenczi, 1918/2011a). At the same time, following Freud’s indications (1919/2011b) at the first international congress following the war years, the psychoanalytical institution began being concerned with the treatment of large numbers of people (p. 291).

The context of demand for social justice and the excitement with the political possibilities seen after the war – the Russian Revolution, Weimar Republic, Red Vienna – was a period of social, political and cultural agitation. If the involvement of psychoanalytical ideas with the problems faced by European society at the beginning of the century was not insignificant<sup>4</sup>; then after the war, the institutionalization of the psychoanalytical movement, with a new generation of analysts, pushed this flirtation towards politics.

Now this process had another address: the free clinics of Berlin (Danto, 1999) – which, little by little, transformed themselves into the center of psychoanalysis, with the application of the standard model for psychoanalytical formation until the rise of Nazism – and of Vienna, which had as its first clinical assistant (1922-1928) and vice-director (1928-1930) Wilhelm Reich (Albertini, 2016)<sup>5</sup>. All this attention given to the neurotic masses was kept as a private initiative by some of the psychoanalysts themselves, since it was difficult to guarantee the budget for the Berlin Polyclinic and the Vienna Ambulatory without State help and with only a few paying patients.

The psychoanalytical movement was expanding beyond the psychoanalytical associations, creating clinics that would provide the patients and, above all, the institutes that would control their formation (Montejo Alonso, 2009; Danto, 2005). The associations would transmit Freud’s theories just as he had conceived them; the clinics would offer the analytical practice to the candidates and the institutes would be responsible for performing seminars, case supervision and didactical analysis.

The interests of the psychoanalytical movement started to seem more aligned when this whole institutionalization process culminated in the formalization of the main guidelines for formation, which are reproduced even today, albeit at a higher or lower degree by the institutes connected to different psychoanalytical associations around the world, with them being affiliated to the IPA or not<sup>6</sup>.

4 For example, Freud (1908/2015b), the Record of the Vienna Society (Freud, 1906-1908/2015a), Gross (2011) and Paul Federn (1919/2000).

5 Diecks (2002) affirms that Reich was the *Ambulatorium* vice-director from 1924 to 1930.

6 Even Lacanianism, which distanced itself from IPA’s guidelines, still takes them as the main core of its critique. See Roudinesco (2009), p. 1049 and ff.

Although psychoanalysis was still determined by the different forces that guided the psychoanalytical movement, the requirement for didactical analysis from 1922 on created a seeming unification of the understanding of what would be a psychoanalytical formation and ending up causing the consolidation of the psychoanalytical institution; differing from the first institutionalization phase, with its dissents that cause expulsions (Makari, 2008).

Consequently, it also narrows the definition of psychoanalysis – the subject created by Freud –, the idea of what it means to be a psychoanalyst: the one who has undergone the analytical experience. The problem is that the analytical experience thusly depends on the analytical experience of the analyst, creating a genealogical tree that would always begin with Freud.

One way or the other, the institutionalization of psychoanalysis makes the psychoanalytical movement recognize itself through the name of Freud. If, up to the 1930s, this movement's internal and external problems associated it to more subversive political problems, then this characteristic would shift with the arianization of psychoanalysis in Central Europe and with its contact to the puritanism of the American middle classes, which would pay little attention to most critical ideas (Katz, 1985; Richards, 2013). At the turn from the 1930s to the 1940s, with Freud's death and the infighting among his intellectual heirs, London became the center of psychoanalysis and the stances closer to the ones taken by Jones became the most promising political forces, which aimed to achieve official scientific recognition (Montejo Alonso, 2009, p. 34).

Based on the relationship among the ideas of some psychoanalysts and political problems, we have basically outlined the vast range of meanings made by the combination of *psychoanalysis and politics* at the moment at which the psychoanalytical movement formed. This has led us to affirm that, even given these differences, there would be something more essential than the individual closeness of psychoanalysts to a political movement or party and activist activity.

Considering this general picture of psychoanalysis' institutionalization, there is a feeling that the expansion of the psychoanalytical movement and the Freudian cause was entangled with revolutionary or reformist politics, which would be reverted and forgotten.

### **The renewal of the psychoanalytical cause: the reproduction of an ideal treatment and the (con)formation of a movement**

Let us consider Ferenczi's letter to the Committee in 1920:

I hope that the ideas exchange – shared throughout the whole year – would always keep the feeling of mutual belonging alive and never allow the feeling of tiredness to rise.

Since our correspondence should exclusively treat matters related to the scientific psychoanalytical propaganda and of personal communications, and since our activity had nothing to do with politics, I would refrain from expressing any opinions on social and national matters (Wittenberger & Tögel, 2002, p. 42).

Through an editorial note, it is known that this refusal was due to the censorship on correspondence along the Hungarian borders, which was being used so that the exchange of ideas, responsible for the maintenance of the feeling of mutual belonging, was kept alive in spite of the censorship.

If the psychological censorship remains even when someone is asked to say what comes to his mind, it is clear that the effects of the police censorship also do not disappear when social matters cannot be discussed. Was it not this that would have happened to a large part of American and European psychoanalysis following the 1930s? The discussion brought by Katz (1985), for example, is certain about how, in the name of guarding the Freudian bases and the psychoanalytical practice, the psychoanalytical movement and its institutions ended up siding themselves towards Nazism, and even going through a hygienization process.

Considering the price paid by psychoanalysis to be kept as an *allowed* practice in the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute after it was taken over by Nazi administration, it is difficult not to ask the question: is the psychoanalytical movement characterized, in its constitution, by the defense of ideas that were used as a tool for social critique and by the wide range of therapeutic techniques combined to progressive political purposes *or* such defense was merely useful to it when it needed to expand institutionally in order to maintain a certain amount of control over its minimal identity, Freud's analytical experience and his works?

Given this, it becomes complicated to support the hypothesis that something as basic and essential to the psychoanalytical movement, regarding the political thinking and social critique, was used to organize the diverse positions that comprised it. It would be better to say that the organization of the different forces contained in its formation occurred due to the feeling of mutually belonging (Wittenberger & Tögel, 2002, p. 42) to Freudian thinking.

It is not because Freud has a critique to culture in his works, and that psychoanalysis promotes a kind of social critique through what it performs to the social bonds (Lacan, 1959-1960/1988, 1969-1970/1992), that it is possible to affirm that the central guidelines of the psychoanalytical institution and movement, in general, are politically subversive or conservative.

If there is something that makes psychoanalysis a kind of politics, unifying psychoanalysts or excluding their dissents, then it is the transmission of Freud's work. It was this kind of agenda that was, more or less explicitly, present in the psychoanalytical movement. Incidentally, would it not be the dispute about this matter which led psychoanalysis to transform itself into many trends, as if different heirs were fighting over the largest share of the father's inheritance?



Let us base ourselves on Freud's speech (1919/2010c) in order to elicit other questions. Given the number restrictions, due to the unequal relationship between analysts and patients, as well as to the granting of analytical treatment for those who could not afford it, Freud suggests adaptations to be made to psychoanalysis, so it could work as a therapy for the masses. He says:

It is also 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; and hypnotic influence, also, might find a place in that again, as it has in the treatment of war neurosis. But, whatever form this psychotherapy for the people may take, whatever the elements out of which it is compounded, its most effective and most important ingredients will assuredly remain those borrowed from strict and untendentious psycho-analysis (Freud, 1919/2010c, p. 292).

After about two decades, Freud seemed willing to give up pure psychoanalysis in favor of using suggestion and hypnosis as therapeutic tools. In order to enhance the availability of analytic treatment for masses, his idea was to include what was created as denial. The analyzed person's privation and the analyst's abstention, which would provide the creation of transference during the treatment, could be diluted with the suggestion. Thus, the gold of true analysis, "strict and untendentious", would be sold as copper. This could institutionally propel the expansion of the psychoanalytical movement.

It may not be too much to say that, behind this metaphor, Freud (1919/2010c) allows his own valuation of an ideal treatment to be released rather than the other, which is performed by an analyst when treating war neurosis, schizophrenia, a group or in a place other than a private office. Scenarios in which transference does not happen as in the standard technique.

Overall, such copper could be any psychoanalysis derivation that is not the setting in which the analyst listens and interprets what appears in the transference neurosis of the repressed unconscious, allowing the patients to make new associations, to create and surpass his/her resistances. Would the "true" psychoanalysis lose value when the psychoanalyst merges it to another thing?

If we answer yes, then we have to consider two things: there is the proposal of two different treatments, even if we consider that the amount of good results provided by the golden share of psychoanalysis surpasses the one by less-valued services, this may be necessary if the ideal treatment does not work. What matters is that there is the affirmation of an ideal treatment, even though it does not in fact happen.

Could this be an unintentional way of defining the difference between a psychoanalysis created by and for the society's upper classes (Freud 1919/2010c) and another one for the poor? In short, for whom is psychoanalysis as a soul treatment made? These are questions that deserve a whole study.

Given this, the second consideration is to remember that the text examined, more than aimed at proposing the idea of organizing psychoanalysis around the development of a mass therapy – as seen, an idea used as a kind of propaganda for psychoanalysis' institutional project –, was mostly addressed in regards to the quarrel with Ferenczi about the active technique (1919/2011b, 1920/2011c), who helped the analysts and construct his own chain associations.

Differing from what happened to Jung and Adler, Ferenczi is not execrated here, even though he is later on. What matters is the concession similar to the one given by the copper offered to the masses. The analyst can make things easier, after all, says Freud (1919/2011b, p. 292), such activity by the analyzing doctor is unchallengeable and completely justified. His concession does not leave out one of his main principles, namely that which guards the analyst's abstention and privation.

The kind of protection the institutionalization of psychoanalysis that were provided to the essential principles of the Freudian thinking and technique becomes gradually clearer. The concern with analysts' formation was the protection of a clinical mechanism that should be reproduced. We emphasize: then there was the protection of a scientific cause and also the defense of an ideal treatment, both connected to Freud's image, which would later define psychoanalysis as a kind of Freudianism<sup>7</sup>.

However, the difference between an ideal and treatment that was brighter than others is not directly related to formation by Freud (1919/2010c), as the organizer of the didactical analysis – which was still not mandatory then. Even though, it did not take longer than a decade for the formation institutes to demand the realization of a minimum number of sessions per week from their candidates, to determine the sessions' duration and to establish various rules. Even if didactical analysis had differences in relation to the ideal treatment of psychoneurosis, it ended up becoming the true standard of what it means to perform psychoanalysis.

Having understood how the definitions for psychoanalysis underwent, in theory and practice, changes related to the institutionalization of the psychoanalytical movement, which represents the Freudian cause, we should bear some considerations in mind. Nothing that was pointed out here can exclude the materiality of an analytical experience nor the significance of Freudian conceptions in order to determine the common ground of what would be the soul therapy practiced by psychoanalysts.

In agreement with Castoriadis (1992), the experience of analysis, when understood as a process related to the hard task of promoting individual autonomy, can positively be a space in which the singularity of the patient is expressed. Nonetheless, the institutionalization of psychoanalysis remains a movement that supported the Freudian scientifically and therapeutic cause politically.

7 Assoun (1991) tries to show how Freudianism, as a doctrine, is not mixed to psychoanalysis as an area of knowledge. Considering this important distinction and the reality in it, we used "Freudianism" to point out how the psychoanalytical movement attached itself to this doctrinal aspect of the relationship with Freudian thinking and its institutionalization.

### **Por uma história das políticas da psicanálise: institucionalização, formação e posicionamento político dos analistas**

**Resumo:** Abordamos a história política da psicanálise como um movimento em torno de ideias e práticas psicológicas não para construir uma historiografia desse movimento, mas para esboçar uma narrativa de valor histórico sobre certos aspectos institucionais da psicanálise que indicam o modo pelo qual ela fez política em meio a sua institucionalização. Partimos do posicionamento político dos psicanalistas e suas teorias para delimitar algumas interpenetrações entre ambos, examinando três autores, Paul Federn, Otto Fenichel e Ernest Jones, passando em seguida à constituição do movimento psicanalítico e à propaganda da causa freudiana. Nossa hipótese é de que, apesar das diferentes posições e forças políticas dentro da psicanálise, elas convergiram em direção à defesa de uma causa. Assim, fica mais clara a constituição e a expansão do movimento psicanalítico durante suas primeiras cinco décadas rumo a uma aparente unificação.

**Palavras-chave:** psicanálise, política, história, institucionalização.

### **Vers une histoire des politiques de la psychanalyse : institutionnalisation, formation et positionnement politique des analystes**

**Résumé :** Nous abordons l'histoire politique de la psychanalyse comme un mouvement autour des idées et pratiques psychologiques non avec l'intention de construire une historiographie de ce mouvement, mais d'ébaucher une narrative de valeur historique sur certains aspects institutionnels de la psychanalyse qui indiquent la manière dont elle fit de la politique dans son institutionnalisation. Nous commençons à partir de la position politique des psychanalystes et ses productions théoriques pour définir des interpénétrations entre les deux dimensions. Nous examinons trois auteurs : Paul Federn, Otto Fenichel et Ernest Jones. Ensuite nous abordons la constitution du mouvement psychanalytique et la propagande de la cause freudienne. Notre hypothèse est que, malgré les différentes positions et forces politiques au sein de la psychanalyse, elles convergent vers la défense d'une cause. Il devient donc clair l'établissement et l'expansion du mouvement psychanalytique au cours de ses cinq premières décennies en direction d'une apparente unification.

**Mots-clés :** psychanalyse, politique, histoire, institutionnalisation.

### **Por una historia de las políticas del psicoanálisis: institucionalización, formación y posición política de los analistas**

**Resumen:** Abordamos la historia política del psicoanálisis como un movimiento alrededor de ideas y prácticas psicológicas no para construir una historiografía de este movimiento, sino para bosquejar una narrativa de valor histórico respecto de ciertos aspectos institucionales del psicoanálisis que indican el modo en que este hace política durante su institucionalización. Partimos del posicionamiento político de los analistas y su producción teórica para delimitar algunas interpenetraciones entre ambos. Examinamos tres autores: Paul Federn, Otto Fenichel y Ernest Jones. A continuación, abordamos la constitución del movimiento psicoanalítico y la propaganda de la causa freudiana. Nuestra hipótesis es que, pese a las diferentes posiciones y fuerzas políticas en el psicoanálisis, estas convergieron hacia la defensa de una causa. Así queda más clara la constitución y expansión del movimiento psicoanalítico durante sus cinco primeras décadas hacia una aparente unificación.

**Palabras clave:** psicoanálisis, política, historia, institucionalización.

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