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A Short History of Psychoanalysis in Palestine and Israel

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The history of psychoanalysis in Palestine/Israel begins with the emigration from Germany of one of Freud's "Group of Seven," Dr. Max Eitingon. Actually, Eitingon was not the first zionistically oriented psychoanalyst to pass through pre-state Palestine in the early part of this century. Eitingon himself had visited Palestine briefly in 1910, and David Eder spent some 4 years here as member of a Zionist commission after meeting up with Dorian Feigenbaum, who came from Vienna, before moving on to New York (see Gumbel, 1965). Yet psychoanalysis as a formal institution came on the scene in this part of the world only when Eitingon finally emigrated from Berlin in 1933.

Freud had considered Eitingon's organizational skills most valuable for the challenge of establishing a psychoanalytic center so far away from the framework of the European scene. This judgment was based on the fact that Eitingon had set up the first psychoanalytic institute and psychoanalytic outpatient clinic in Berlin in 1920, had been president of the Berlin Institute and Society and the German Psycho-Analytic Society, and had chaired the Training Committee of the German Society and later, until 1938, the Training Committee of the International Psychoanalytic Association. He had also been president of the International Association from 1927-1934. Yet it was Eitingon himself who formed and carried out the wish to emigrate to Palestine.

Before emigrating, Eitingon handed over the leadership of the German Psychoanalytic Association to two nonJewish analysts, a decision that ineluctably began the path toward Nazi affiliation on which this Association perforce embarked. The two who followed in Eitingon's steps—Mueller-Braunschweig and Boehm—soon went to Vienna to meet with Freud in an effort to obtain his blessing for changes to take place in organized psychoanalysis in Germany. Freud was, of course, shocked by the proposed changes—removing Jews from all positions in the society, and soon from the society altogether—yet he could not bring himself to take an unequivocal stand against them, believing this might endanger

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psychoanalysis in Germany. Surprisingly, Freud continued to hope that psychoanalysis in Germany could somehow be saved.

In 1933 Eitingon came to Jerusalem, and in the fall of that year, together with five emigre psychoanalysts, founded the Palestine Psychoanalytic Society, known by its Hebrew name: *ha-Hevrah ha-Psychoanalitit be-Eretz Yisrael*. Very shortly after, in the fall of 1934, the Palestine (later Israel) Institute of Psycho-Analysis was founded, becoming the 11th institute in the International Association. Psychoanalysis was now beginning to be taught—first and foremost to future analysts, but also in lectures and courses for the public. Henrietta Szold, who had pioneered the setting up of services for immigrant children in Palestine (Youth Aliya), invited the society to become the clinical consultant to this agency. Margarete Brandt became the psychoanalytic consultant to nursery schools and later to well-baby clinics. The well-known German Jewish writer Arnold Zweig, who emigrated to Palestine in the late 1930s, was an adherent, even though he did not become an analyst until he later emigrated to East Germany in 1946.

Four of the six analysts who had come to set up the Palestine Society were to stay. In addition to Eitingon, these were Moshe Wulff, past president of the Russian psychoanalytic society; Anna Smeliansky, the first secretary of the Berlin Institute, and Ilja Shalit, who also came from Germany. Martin Pappenheim came from Vienna and left; Killian K. Bluhm came from Germany and soon left for the United States (Gumbel, **1966, 1974**). Shalit settled in Haifa, Wulff and Smeliansky in Tel Aviv, Eitingon in Jerusalem, and Dorian Feigenbaum later emigrated to the United States. Other analysts followed over the next few years; some graduated in Israel. Gradually, the number of local analysts grew. In June 1941, the Palestine Psycho-Analytic Society issued a modest mimeographed monograph on the occasion of Eitingon's 60th birthday, which included appreciations by Henrietta Szold; Aryeh Feigenbaum, head of ophthalmology at Hadassah Hebrew University Medical School and brother of analyst Dorian Feigenbaum; as well as by many local analysts (**Palestine Psychoanalytic Society, 1941**).

Amidst the turmoil of the early years following the establishment of the State of Israel, the Israel Psychoanalytic Society published a book “Max Eitingon—In Memoriam” (**1950**). The book was broad in scope and included epigraphs by Arnold Zweig; M. Narkiss, director of the Jewish National Museum “Bezalel,” as it was then called; Moshe Smilansky, the noted Hebrew writer; Margot Klausner, who later founded the first Israeli movie company—Herzliah Films; D. Idelson of the Labor Movement; and an especially unique childhood memory was included by S. Agnon (**1950**), who was to become a Nobel Prize winner in

literature in 1966. Wulff (Israel Psychoanalytic Society, 1950) said of Agnon's contribution: "He seems to have touched upon (it) in personal talks with Eitingon." In fact, in spite of his keen psychological insight, Agnon never directly acknowledged any familiarity with psychoanalytic thought. Other contributions in this publication included those of Moshe Wulff, Erich Gumbel, Ellen Simon, Gerda Barag, A. Isserlin, Daniel K. Dreyfuss, Alice Weiss-Stadthagen, and Josef Friedjung—and also (Princess) Marie Bonaparte and Anna Freud from abroad. Margarete Brandt added a report of the work of the first decade of the Palestine Institute for Psycho-Analysis (**Brandt, 1950**). From this report it emerges that Eitingon had in fact succeeded in creating a particular atmosphere of concern and care for those that needed psychoanalytic treatment, an atmosphere that was handed down from one generation of analysts to the next. (For more information on the life and work of Eitingon see Pomer **[1966]**; Neiser **[1978]**; cf, also Lowental & Cohen, **[1992]**).

The history of psychoanalysis in Israel must take cognizance of the fact that Freud served on the board of governors of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for a number of years in the late 1920s. It is also worth mentioning that Lord Balfour, in a 1925 speech in Jerusalem, listed Freud as one of the three great intellects of the century (**Gumbel, 1974**). An interesting anecdote regarding Freud's relationship with the Hebrew University is revealing: In 1932 Freud wrote (**Rosenbaum, 1954**) to Judah Magnes, Rector of the Hebrew University, proposing that the first Chair of Psychoanalysis in the world be established at "our university." When this seemingly revolutionary idea was turned down, and an academic animal psychologist was appointed to teach psychology, Freud's reaction was to now speak of "your university" in his reply (see **Rosenbaum, 1954**).

The 1950s were a period of creative development for psychoanalysis in Israel. Gradually, more and more applicants turned to the Psychoanalytic Institute. A department of psychiatry was being set up at the Medical School in Jerusalem, and the first three visiting professors to launch it were psychoanalysts from the United States: Milton Rosenbaum from New York, then James Mann from Boston, followed in the third year by George J. Mohr—who provided an emphasis on child psychiatry. This development naturally provided additional fruitful impetus for the growth of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysts also began to teach at the first Medical School in Jerusalem and later at the other medical schools. Heinz Winnik and Ruth Jaffe were the first two psychoanalysts to become directors of two psychiatric hospitals, both of the General Sick Fund of the Workers' Trade Union. Winnik, located in Jerusalem, also became the first psychoanalyst to be appointed associate professor of psychiatry.

Gumbel, Winnik, and other analysts became active in the development of the teaching of psychiatry in its early stages. Gumbel was particularly active in child psychiatry in the Lasker Clinic, set up in the Hadassah Medical School under George Mohr.

The teaching of psychiatry at this stage received considerable input from psychoanalysis. The Israel Psychoanalytic Society, whose membership had grown from under 20 members around 1940 to 30 members, influenced the development of curricula and practice of social work, probation services, criminology to some extent, and later also education. It continued to exert a considerable influence on the kibbutz during the 1920s (a topic I will discuss below), and still later considerably affected social and community psychiatry.

After Wulff (see **Jaffe 1966**), the presidency of the society rotated for almost 20 years between Erich Gumbel, who graduated in Israel at the Institute, and Heinz Winnik, who had emigrated from Bucharest and Vienna. Gumbel also became director of the Institute during this period, which initiated a number of new activities under his leadership. Perhaps the most important of these was the setting up of a 3-year advanced psychotherapy course for nonanalysts (psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers), in addition to the regular teaching curriculum for psychoanalytic candidates. This decision was based on the practical assessment that in Israel at that time there was not an advanced psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy training program beyond the academic degree level. Clearly, this was an additional burden on the Institute's faculty, since teachers had been donating their time to this program, as they did for the other teaching activities at the Institute. Disappointingly, repeated attempts to establish a connection with the University, to have this program take place under the auspices of the University through some combination of the disciplines of psychiatry, psychology, and social work, did not take root. Nevertheless, this course has continued for the last 30 years; about 300 professionals have graduated from it, some of whom have gone on to become analysts.

Psychoanalysis continued to be practiced in Israel. The three main cities (Haifa, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem) became centers in which both practice and teaching activities were carried out; although since about 1950 the teaching was centralized in the Institute in Jerusalem, now called the Max Eitingon Institute of Psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis was offered to prospective patients for a clinic fee, aimed to make it available to persons who would not otherwise be able to afford it. This continued the tradition of caring for the analysands that Max Eitingon had established in Berlin and then brought over to Jerusalem. Psychoanalysts who had trained at the Institute gradually came to take leading positions in psychiatry,

particularly academic psychiatry, and over the years to some extent also in academic psychology. This trend continues even at the present time, when psychoanalysis has in many ways been displaced in favor of biological and social and community psychiatry.

The Israel Psychoanalytic Society held its meetings every 4-6 weeks. Papers were presented by members, by candidates, and often by guest analysts, from abroad. Meetings were usually held on Saturday morning—the free day of the week. Another tradition, instituted by Eitingon, was to have the May lecture held in memory of Sigmund Freud on or around his birthday.

The majority of Israeli analysts held full-time jobs at an academic hospital, or another institution and practiced analysis in addition, which seems determined by the social and economic circumstances existing at the time. Thus, a situation was created wherein relatively few analysts maintained a full-time clinical practice that could provide them with the experience and the standing (and the number of analytic hours required) to serve as training analysts. Understandably, this led to tension between those who practiced analysis part-time while holding significant clinical and academic positions in institutions, and those who practiced analysis full-time. In the past 25 years, however there has been an increase in the number of full-time analysts.

A topic of special interest to analysts and to psychoanalysis as such were the special conditions within which children were raised in the kibbutzim, the collective settlements. The kibbutz movement, in fact, had adopted psychoanalytic principles early on. Shmuel Golan of Mishmar Ha'emek was one of the leading theoreticians (Golan, 1952, 1958, 1959; Golan & Lavi, 1961; see also Kaffman, 1959, 1961). Clearly, these principles seem to have become modified in order to bolster kibbutz views about child rearing. In fact, the kibbutz movement used psychoanalytic theory as a mainstay of some aspects of its ideology. The separation of children from their parents 6 weeks after birth to children's cottages, for example, was believed to be helpful in avoiding two traumatic events of child development, mistakenly using psychoanalytic theory. It was hoped that this policy would prevent the stresses and strains of the oedipus conflict and avoid the traumatic impact of the primal scene. This was to be achieved mainly through having children spend most of their time in the children's home and cutting down on parents' time with their children generally. In fact, these hoped-for results did not come about; nor would one want them to. Although this effort may seem quite naive in retrospect, it was a central element in the wider spread of psychoanalytic sensitivities into Israeli life, even in nonkibbutz communities. And while there have been many reports on children in the kibbutz

(**Bettelheim, 1969; Diamond, 1957; Rabin, 1965; Spiro, 1956, 1958; Tiger & Shepher, 1975; Weingarten, 1955**), relatively few authors reported material based on clinical psychoanalytic experience (**Eisenberg & Neubauer, 1965; Karpe, 1958; Mohr, 1958; Nagler, 1963; Neubauer, 1965; Pelled, 1964; Rapaport, 1958**) or psychoanalytically based study (**Faigin-Antonovsky, 1958; Kaplan-De Nour, Rosenfeld, & Moses, 1971; Rosenfeld & Moses, unpublished; Winograd, 1958**).

An important new development occurred in 1963, when Mortimer Ostow of New York set up a group of “corresponding members” of the Israel Psychoanalytic Society in the United States. These American analysts maintained a special relationship with the Israeli society. Aside from visits, at times by groups, the first joint project was the organization of a symposium held in Jerusalem in 1970 entitled “Why War?” Shimon Peres, then Minister of Transport and Communications, was invited to speak to the symposium, presenting a paper entitled “Aggression in Nations” (**Peres, 1973**). The main presentations of the symposium were published 3 years later, ironically just before the Yom Kippur War, under the title “Psychological Bases of War” (**Winnik, Moses, & Ostow, 1973**).

It was also the Corresponding Members in the United States who made it possible for the Society in the late 1970s to purchase the second half of an apartment complex on Disraeli Street, and the roof of the building, which the Society and Institute had shared since 1954. This was situated in the center of the prestigious residential neighborhood of Talbieh, not far from the Talbieh Psychiatric Hospital, with Margarete Brandt, one of the early members. This was a second location, after having moved from the original location in beautiful quarters on Abyssinian Street in the center of town (cf. also **Winnick, 1977**).

Under the trying conditions of the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War, psychoanalysts assumed important roles. During the first of these wars, the late Gad Tadmor, an analyst, headed the psychiatric branch of the Israel Defence Force Medical Corps (and later became director of the Institute). During the same war, I initiated the organization of a mental health system for the rear echelon Civil Defense Corps in Jerusalem. During the Yom Kippur War, Tadmor and I served as the first commanders of the two main centers for treating combat reactions. Many other analysts occupied other war-related important roles and functions, most markedly at the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Albert Solnit, of the Yale University Child Study Center, came to spend a year in Be'er Sheva when the Yom Kippur War broke out, and subsequently was instrumental in setting up the Department of Behavioral Sciences in the Life Sciences School at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. Later still,

he was to serve for 1 1/2 years as Freud Professor and Director of the Freud Center for Psychoanalysis at the Hebrew University.

During the Lebanon War in 1982, a set of principles for treatment of psychological casualties near the battle areas were systematically implemented for the first time, even though treatment modalities at this time were moving away from the psychodynamic frame of reference (see also **Moses & Cohen, 1984**; and the volume “Stress and Coping in Time of War: Generalizations from the Israeli Experience” [**Milgram 1986**]).

The Israel Psychoanalytic Society became a member of the European Federation of Psychoanalysis soon after the latter's formation in the 1960s. Its representatives were active in both this Federation and in the International Psychoanalytic Association, where the society had been a member since its inception in 1933. This activity took place on several levels: increasingly active participation in congresses and conferences; participation in meetings for training analysts of both groups; meetings of standing conferences for adults and for children; and participation in clinical seminars for associate members of the European Federation as both participants and teachers. Erich Gumbel then became the first Israeli analyst to serve as associate secretary of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) from 1975-77; followed by me from 1977-81. In that capacity, each of us performed a variety of professional tasks for the IPA. Interestingly, Gumbel played an important role in the establishment of the Greek Psychoanalytic Society and of a psychoanalytic group in Yugoslavia.

In the early 1970s, an initiative was launched to invite the next International Congress to Jerusalem, which was to be the first international congress held outside of Europe. After a good deal of lobbying and some political infighting—mainly relating to political attitudes toward Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict—the Israeli invitation was accepted at the Congress in London in 1975.

The Jerusalem Congress, the 30th of the International Association, served to focus a number of developments leading to the growth and crystallization of psychoanalysis in Israel. The most important of these, perhaps, was the establishment of the Sigmund Freud Chair of Psychoanalysis at the Hebrew University, independent of any department, faculty, or school of the university, although anchored administratively in the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Department of Psychology. The endowment for this chair came from psychoanalysts all over the world in a major funding drive. Martin Wanh, who was just about to come and settle in Israel, was one major functionary. This chair, most likely the first chair of psychoanalysis at any university, was an important achievement for international psychoanalysis, and a belated realization of

Freud's wish that the Hebrew University should have a chair for psychoanalysis. The inaugural lecture was written by Anna Freud (1978), although she was unable to deliver it personally. In fact, there was a feeling of disappointment in the Israeli group regarding the fact that Anna Freud—though well inclined toward Israeli psychoanalysis—had never visited Israel. Addresses of welcome were presented by Gumbel (1978) and Moses (1978). The first incumbent of the chair was Joseph Sandler, a British psychoanalyst, originally from South Africa, who had written a great deal on theoretical themes in analysis and was later to become president of the IPA. He stayed in Jerusalem for 5 years and formally gave the chair, and the Sigmund Freud Center, which had been established to broaden its scope, its first impetus and shape. Sandler thereafter returned to England to take up the Sigmund Freud Chair for Psychoanalysis, which had been established in the meantime at the London University College.

As mentioned, the Sigmund Freud Center for Study and Research in Psychoanalysis was soon added to the responsibilities of the chair of psychoanalysis. After Sandler, a number of psychoanalysts, mostly from abroad, held the chair as well as the directorship of the Center, each for a period of 1 to 1 1/2 years. First Albert Solnit, followed by the first Israeli, myself. Then came two incumbents from the United States, each for a single academic year: Sidney J. Blatt, professor of psychology at Yale, followed by Bennett Simon, a psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School. While these senior psychoanalysts served to deepen and further the development of psychoanalysis, particularly but not solely at the Hebrew University, and to contribute to its growth and standing in the country, they were unable to fulfill another one of the goals of the original plan: to have one individual build up the chair and the center over the long term. This was accomplished with the appointment, first as director of the Center, and then in 1995-96 as the present and permanent professor, of Shmuel Erlich, a clinical psychologist who began his training in psychoanalysis at the Austen Riggs Center and completed it in Israel. One of the important yields of Erlich's tenure was the permanent establishment of a doctorate in psychoanalysis at the Hebrew University. Despite these important milestones, there is much room for growth and development for psychoanalysis in the Israeli academic world.

Child psychoanalysis was for a long time a stepchild in Israel. For many, child psychotherapy seemed almost as valid and displaced as child analysis. It was only during the 1970s, mainly through the help of Albert Solnit, that child analysis began to gain a more firm footing. However, the formal training program for child analysts needs further development.

A few words about psychoanalytic demography are in order at this

point. In the earlier years of the Palestine and then the Israel Society, physicians accounted for the majority of psychoanalysts. This was one aspect that expressed how the local philosophy of analysis was European rather than American, that is, psychologists and social workers were also eligible to become analysts provided they obtained sufficient experience in clinical psychiatry. Nevertheless, the proportion of physicians to non-physicians (mostly psychologists), remained 2:1 until the late 1960s or early 1970s. As it happened, some medical analysts wanted to keep things that way. In fact, the better applicants increasingly tended to come from outside the field of medicine. As a result, this proportion has since then been reversed: It is at present 2:1 in favor of psychologists. Consequently, psychoanalysis generally has also become more prominent in psychology.

Another event in which Israeli analysts took part, certainly emotionally, had to do with increasing awareness of the need to explore the relations between Israelis and Germans. Obviously, the Holocaust had had an enormous impact, not only on Israelis generally, but also on Israeli analysts. The issue came to the fore at the Jerusalem Congress in 1977, when the German Psychoanalytic Association proposed to hold the next International Congress in Germany. The suggested venue was specifically Berlin. This proposal was voted down—in part because of the implication of having the first international psychoanalytic congress held since the war and the Holocaust in Germany, but even more so because to many Berlin in particular still represented the Nazi regime. The reaction of German psychoanalysts was intense dismay. As it turned out, this traumatic event was for German psychoanalysts a catalyst for a considerable amount of work on their complex relationship to their past.

The Freud Center at the University also organized a number of conferences since 1977. In 1983, a conference devoted to the topic of projective identification was cosponsored, along with the European Federation of Psychoanalysis, and published in 1987 (Sandler). Two other events from this period are worth mentioning, although not connected to the Sigmund Freud Center: In 1983, a special issue of the *Israel Journal of Psychiatry*, edited by Dan G. Hertz, was devoted to the 50th anniversary of the Israel Psychoanalytic Society (*Israel J. Psychiatry*, (20) 1-2), which also looked back at its roots (Hertz, 1983). Subsequently, a symposium on denial was organized in Jerusalem in 1986 by E. L. Edelstein, and the proceedings of this conference were dedicated to the Israel Psychoanalytic Society (Edelstein, Nathanson, & Stone, 1989).

In 1988, another conference organized by the Freud Center of the Hebrew University was held, entitled: “The meaning of the Nazi Holocaust

for those not directly affected.” Participants here included an important contingent from Germany and many of the Israeli post-war generation and “second generation of Holocaust survivors” (Moses, 1993; Moses & Eickhoff, 1992). Through the use of small groups, in addition to lectures and plenary discussion, an intense and productive emotional interchange between Germans and Israelis was facilitated. There continued to be contact between Israeli and German analysts over the years. The German Psychoanalytic Association (DPV), and recently also the German Psychoanalytic Society (DPG), had invited a number of Israeli analysts to talk to them. An important person in this dialogue was the late Hillel Klein—a survivor of Auschwitz who had studied medicine in Germany and became a training analyst of the Israel Institute and for a while its director. At around this time, there was another step in the work on the complex relationship between German and Israeli analysts. A plan now (1992-93) developed to hold a German-Israeli “Tavistock-type event” on “Germans and Israelis: The past in the present: A Working Conference for Psychoanalysts,” cosponsored by both psychoanalytic societies as well as the Israel Association of Psychotherapy, to be held under the auspices of the Sigmund Freud Center. A second such conference was held in the fall of 1996. Interestingly enough, a similar conference to discuss the complex relationship between the two German psychoanalytic societies, particularly regarding their relations to the Nazi past, evolved after the first conference held in Nazareth.

Throughout these decades, the close relationship with members of the American Psychoanalytic Association continued, mainly through the Corresponding Members of the Society, which has continued to carry on fruitful interchanges with the society. Close relationships have also been formed with other societies: in South America, particularly the Argentine, from where some members of the society had immigrated to Israel; in Europe, particularly England, France, Holland, and now including Eastern Europe.

The Israel Psychoanalytic Society currently has approximately 100 members, a considerable number given the overall population of Israel (about 5.5 million). At the time of writing, the Institute has more than 60 candidates. The number of applicants to the courses offered every 2 years has for some years been about 5-6 times the number of candidates accepted. Recently, this number has decreased somewhat. The society now is proud to have a number of Sephardic analysts and training analysts. Unfortunately, the wish to have Arab Palestinians among the candidates and as members in the society has not yet come about. Many members of the society are involved in teaching either Institute candidates or psychotherapy—both in the regular 3-year program and in a

special 2-year course for experienced psychotherapists. The number of training analysts keeps up with the number of candidates. In recent years, there has been a lively and heated discussion as to whether the role of training analyst should be retained. In this context, the procedure for the selection and appointment of analysts has been changed (**Berman, 1998**). An Ethics Committee has been appointed and a code of ethics submitted to the society for approval.

In summary, the Israel Psychoanalytic Society is a growing and developing group and institute. With tongue in cheek, one might say that comparing ourselves with the United States, we average 15 to 20 years behind in our development; maybe this roughly was the picture until some years ago. But at present we are suffering from some of the same difficulties as are the Americans! We certainly cannot compare ourselves with the enormous growth that took place in psychoanalysis in Germany until 5 or 10 years ago, stimulated there at least in part through the state's willingness to offer financial support for psychoanalytic treatments. In Israel there was never any support from the different Sick Funds for psychoanalysis, with one exception. For some years the General Sick Fund would support up to a minimum – and always at less than half the fee—patients in analysis with candidates at the Institute. Such support had to be renegotiated after each 60 hours or so.

The more the society grows, the further it spreads its wings. Through its members, it is affecting many different areas of service, teaching, and cultural activity in Israel. It has become a small but clearly recognizable design in the larger woven pattern of Israeli society.

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