

INTRODUCTION: LETTER FROM BERLIN

I first met Martin Teising during the 2007 IPA meeting in Berlin. The psychoanalytic institute in Kassel had invited attendees to a pre-Congress tour of the Documenta, a contemporary art exhibition that regularly takes place in Kassel, and about twenty of us had arrived from Berlin. I had accepted the invitation but had come mainly to see Kassel, the city of my birth, which I'd left as a toddler.

As director of the Kassel institute, Martin began its reception for us with a brief history of the city and its fate during the war. In his moving introduction, he was forthright about his awareness that traveling to Germany might be difficult for some of us, and he voiced his gratitude for our having come. It was a stirring and sobering welcome for those who might have had misgivings about travel to Germany since the war.

Over the ensuing years I would regularly see Martin and his wife, Ingrid, at international meetings. Several years ago he told me he would be giving up his practice in Kassel to assume the role of president of a psychoanalytic university in Berlin. I peppered him with questions about structure, funding, faculty, programs, and so forth. Many of us in the U.S. have long thought it imperative to reintroduce psychoanalysis as part of university curricula, and not just in departments of art and literature, but we have not known how this might be accomplished. So hearing Martin's description of undergraduate and graduate programs in psychoanalytic studies, of an entire degree-granting university with funded research devoted to psychoanalytic ideas, was extremely exciting.

I've asked Martin to explain to us how this has been accomplished in Germany, in the hope that it can serve, if not as a model to be replicated, at least as a suggestive example for our own attempts to normalize psychoanalysis as a domain of inquiry at the university level.

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LETTER FROM BERLIN: THE INTERNATIONAL PSYCHOANALYTIC UNIVERSITY

*If—which may sound fantastic to-day—one had
to found a college of psycho-analysis . . .*

—SIGMUND FREUD (1926)

Over the last few decades, a nomothetic understanding of science, one less concerned with an understanding of the individual, has prevailed. Such a perspective seeks universal laws through the application of empirical research and frequently reductionist methods, primarily taking quantitative data as its basis. Unfortunately, to a large extent this situation has become true for psychology as well.

In accord with this shift, an enormous amount of capital from the private sector has been invested in health and education, sectors that in Germany in the past had been broadly supported by the public purse (indeed, more than “broadly supported”; nearly 90 percent of the work in the health system was done by public agencies). As these two processes advance, psychoanalysis has been almost completely removed from German universities.

In terms of psychotherapeutic care provided under the statutory health insurance system, proportionally speaking, an ever increasing amount of behavioral therapy is being conducted. A steadily increasing number of therapists are receiving their training and qualifications from behavioral therapy institutions, often with a link to or on a par with universities.

Today’s students are less concerned with self-discovery and developing their personalities than was once the case. They are more focused on

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efficiency in their studies and on the demands placed on them by external reality. Consequently, they are also less guided by the utopian vision of the founder of psychoanalysis: “Our civilization imposes an almost intolerable pressure on us and it calls for a corrective . . .,” Freud wrote. “Perhaps once more an American may hit on the idea of spending a little money to get the ‘social workers’ of his country trained analytically and turn them into a band of helpers for combating the neuroses of civilization” (1926, pp. 249–250).

In the same text, “The Question of Lay Analysis,” Freud proposed: “If—which may sound fantastic to-day—one had to found a college of psycho-analysis, much would have to be taught in it . . . : alongside of depth-psychology, which would always remain the principal subject, there would be an introduction to biology, as much as possible of the science of sexual life, and familiarity with the symptomatology of psychiatry. On the other hand, analytic instruction would include branches of knowledge which are remote from medicine and which the doctor does not come across in his practice: the history of civilization, mythology, the psychology of religion and the science of literature. Unless he is well at home in these subjects, an analyst can make nothing of a large amount of his material” (p. 246).

In Berlin, however, it was not an American but rather a foundation that, in view of the situation outlined above, decided to found the International Psychoanalytic University (IPU). The foundation’s capital was provided by Christa Rohde-Dachser, a training analyst at the German Psychoanalytic Society and Professor Emeritus in the Psychology Department of Frankfurt University. Together with Jürgen Körner, she had the idea of establishing a psychoanalytic university.

The International Psychoanalytic University Berlin gGmbH, a non-profit limited liability company, is the body responsible for the university. The single shareholder of the company is currently the Foundation to Promote University Psychoanalysis.

At IPU a fundamental understanding of psychoanalysis is taught and researched, and we make every effort to foster a psychoanalytic focus and direction among up-and-coming young scientists. The university and all its courses of study are accredited by state agencies. Such accreditation is a precondition for applying for the right to award doctorates.

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

The B.A. Psychology Program

This undergraduate course of study covers all the traditional subjects of psychology, including general psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, and empirical research methods, as well as biopsychology, cognitive neuroscience, and industrial and organizational psychology. Clinical subjects such as differential diagnosis, as well as theories and methods of psychological intervention, are one focus of this course of study, as most of the graduates of our psychology programs work in the counseling or psychotherapy fields. To complement this core curriculum, courses are offered in “affinity” areas from neighboring disciplines. In addition, students gain experience in practicums (i.e., work-placement professional internships).

The Bachelor of Arts in Psychology program teaches psychology from a psychoanalytic perspective. Students learn how people develop in social and cultural contexts, how they shape and structure their surroundings, how they become mentally ill, and how they can become healthy again in a conducive relationship bond using psychotherapeutic methods.

This program is intended to reflect the interdependence of theory formation, on the one hand, and practical application, on the other: students learn how psychological concepts emerge from the practical resolution of concrete problems and impact them in turn. An essential goal is that graduates from this program become capable of working independently in the field of psychology; to this extent, the B.A. in Psychology at IPU is intended to provide a long-term qualification for a professional career in psychology.

The M.A. Psychology Program

This course of study can be taken either full-time or, for those who must work, part-time. While its curriculum is based on recommendations of the German Psychological Society, one focus of the program is on learning fundamental diagnostic, counseling, and therapeutic competencies. The program’s psychoanalytic perspective is reflected in the fact that, although behavioral therapy and systemic and other methods are also taught, psychoanalytic methods are a major focus. The program consists of five core areas of study and a compulsory elective subject intended to give students the opportunity to focus on a scientific or academic field in

line with their particular interests. In this program, too, students gain work experience by completing practicums. Also taught are empirical and statistical methods especially suited to recording and mapping the processes and results of psychoanalytic treatments. The psychoanalytic perspective is reflected also in the fact that students become familiar with psychoanalysis not only as a psychotherapeutic method but also as a cultural theory and an applied social science.

The goal of courses in the Master of Arts in Psychology program is to enable students to work independently as clinical psychologists, to further their scientific or academic studies, and to pursue a university or higher education career, as the case may be. Graduates can apply to train as psychological psychotherapists in accordance with the German Psychotherapy Act. However, it is expected that due to their experience in application-related courses (initial interview seminars, case presentations, diagnostic seminars), they will be especially well prepared for the content and aims of psychoanalytic training.

The M.A. Psychoanalytic Cultural Studies Program

Intended as further training as a part-time program while working full-time, this course takes a dual approach: the psychoanalysis/culture interface is studied from both sides. Cultural issues are studied as an historical influence on the formation of psychoanalysis, while psychoanalytic approaches are studied as they in turn have an ongoing major influence on cultural studies. This interdisciplinary focus provides a multi-layered approach serving to illustrate a wide spectrum of cultural phenomena and their unconscious dimensions. Students learn to analyze artistic creations and ordinary occurrences as products of cultures of knowledge and remembrance, and of social relationships and their transformations.

By shifting perspectives between various approaches and levels, new views are developed and professional, cultural, and social competencies gained. Through examination and analysis of concrete subjects, students' understanding of social dynamics and mechanisms, including their products and problem areas, is deepened and differentiated.

This program is intended for cultural scientists, humanities scholars, humanists, and social scientists who would like to broaden their scientific and psychoanalytic expertise, as well as for psychoanalysts, those

working in therapeutic counseling and medical fields, and artists who would like to gain a qualification in cultural studies.

The M.A. Organizational Studies Program

This program is intended to be undertaken in conjunction with one's work life. Over a three-year period it conveys the scientific knowledge and skills needed to meet the leadership and consultation requirements of companies and other organizations. With psychoanalysis as its fundamental referential theory, the program provides access to an understanding of the dynamics of unconscious conflicts, beyond rational intentions and plans, that have a sustained impact on everyday work processes. The program focuses specifically on reception theory, casework, and self-awareness.

This course of study familiarizes participants with psychoanalytic, social-psychological, and science-based consultation viewpoints and perspectives. It thus enables participants to initiate and direct changes in their positions as executive managers or consultants, coaches or supervisors, permitting them to make their contribution to a more flexible organization capable of adjustment and change.

The M.A. Program in Integrated Care of Psychotically Ill Persons

This new advanced program, intended to be taken while working full-time, is being offered jointly by IPU (with primary responsibility) and three other universities: the Charité University Medical Department in Berlin; the Catholic University for Applied Sciences Berlin; and the Hamburg Eppendorf University Hospital.

The cooperative effort will permit the integration of four different professional competencies in a unique manner, all of them required when working with psychotically ill people: psychodynamic competency; medicinal and pharmacological competencies; social work competency; and social psychiatric competency.

Lecturers from the participating universities are involved in the structure and design of the program. They will supervise and support students during their studies, which are intended not only to convey specialist knowledge and expertise, but also to encourage understanding of the psychodynamics of the therapeutic relationship in concrete work situations with psychotically ill people (including the ability of therapists to reflect on their participation in this relationship).

This course of study is aimed at psychologists, doctors, teachers, and professional social workers who have already gained professional experience and have completed a first university degree qualifying them in their profession.

The Postgraduate Study Program to Accompany Individual Doctoral Dissertations

Until IPU is granted the right to award its own Ph.D., we have established special arrangements with other universities for our doctoral-level students. We have a cooperative agreement with the Humboldt University Berlin for this purpose, and other arrangements with universities in Frankfurt, Kassel, and Magdeburg, as well as with the Free University in Berlin, that allow our students to be awarded Ph.D.s from these institutions.

Students participating in the doctoral program are supported and mentored by our teaching staff. They meet for two or three weekend sessions per semester. This support and supervision begins with setting the students' research aims and continues until their work and dissertations are completed. Experts in specific methods are invited to the lectures and seminars to give students the opportunity to discuss their work. The aim is to train qualified researchers capable of enriching clinical psychology and cultural studies, while advancing psychoanalysis at a rigorous scientific level. The lectures are held in English.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT, FEES, AND FACULTY

The number of students is constantly increasing. In November 2014 there were 263 students in the undergraduate B.A. psychology program; 239 in the M.A. psychology programs (full-time and part-time); 15 in the M.A. Psychoanalytic Cultural Studies program; and 21 in the M.A. program in Integrated Care of Psychotically Ill Persons. Twenty candidates were enrolled in the Postgraduate Study Program to Accompany Individual Doctoral Dissertations.

In German public universities, fees are not usual. Thus, tuition at IPU is low in comparison to what U.S. private universities charge. For example, a masters student in the psychology program pays 5,000 euros per semester.

The IPU faculty includes seven full-time professors; nine part-time professors; one junior professor; seven guest professors; five research associates; nine research associates in special projects; and thirty-five lecturers. All of the clinical professors are psychoanalysts. In addition to its

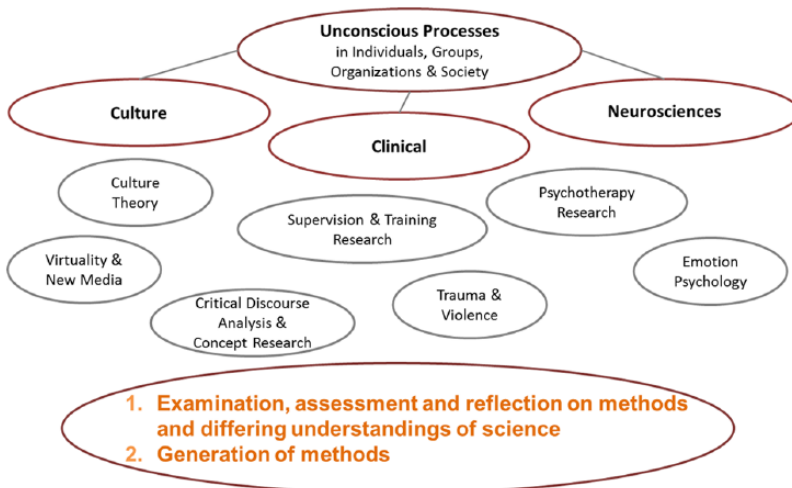
faculty, IPU is supported by a scientific committee of external scientists and an international advisory board.

RESEARCH

IPU has made considerable efforts to establish a research structure meeting university-level requirements. In pursuing this end, we have depended on securing third-party funding or having cooperative arrangements. The German Research Community (DFG) has recognized IPU as a university entitled to apply for support.

IPU uses its own resources to launch various research projects, thereby aiding the research application process. This seed money is not to exceed 20,000 euros for any single project, with money allocated for up to five projects each year.

IPU's research profile stresses studies on the effects of the unconscious processes of individuals, groups, organizations, and entire societies on clinical work and on culture. The various researchers at IPU work intensively in cooperation with international partners, examining various scientific methods and approaches: qualitative and quantitative, hermeneutic and empirical. The research profile chart below provides an overview of current research fields and subjects. (A complete listing and descriptions of current research projects can be found at <http://www.ipu-berlin.de/en/university/research.html>.)



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

IPU has been awarded the Erasmus Extended University Charter of the European Union. The charter is required for implementing an exchange network of students for internships, as well as for the exchange of lecturers and other university faculty.

There are currently bilateral arrangements in place for Erasmus contracts with five European universities (in Vienna, Rennes, Stockholm, Istanbul, and Paris). Further cooperative agreements have been established with Budapest, Innsbruck, Zurich, University College London, St. Andrews, Ghent, Paris, Madrid, Lisbon, Rome/Parma, Sofia, Prague, and Stockholm.

Promos is another program, managed by the German Academic Exchange Service, that supports activities similar to those under the aegis of the Erasmus Charter. Promos is aimed at countries that are ineligible for the Erasmus program. Apart from these programs, IPU also provides support via its foundation and its Sponsors and Fundraisers Association for the completion of internships abroad in eighteen partner institutions. IPU offers a language course, the Specialist English Knowledge course (English Terminology for Psychology and Psychoanalysis), for students who would like to study in anglophone countries.

In 2015 we will have student exchange programs with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Warsaw, giving our students the opportunity to participate in the working through of German history.

THE OUTPATIENT SERVICE AND OTHER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In November 2011, IPU's Psychotherapeutic University Outpatient Service commenced its activities. The Outpatient Service is authorized by the Berlin Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians to provide psychoanalytic, depth-psychological, and behavioral therapy services in the context of research. The service provides differential diagnosis by means of initial consultations and case history sessions, as well as psychological testing methods designed for adults, children, and adolescents. We offer assessments based on evidence-based forms of therapy, as well as crisis intervention and advice on treatment methods.

Since 2013 an advanced studies course on parent, infant, and toddler psychotherapy, intended for qualified psychotherapists, has been

conducted on our campus jointly with the Chamber of Psychological Psychotherapists and Children and Youth Psychotherapists in the State of Berlin. Thus, we have begun to offer the advanced studies and training required of us by the Berlin Higher Education Act. We have adopted an advanced educational studies and training plan that has already proven its worth and been conducted successfully, and we hope it will generate income to fund and develop future programs.

Other components of our advanced training, studies, and outreach include (1) a training program to qualify Balint group leaders, planned for the fall of 2015 together with the Balint Working Group in Hanover; (2) a collaboration with the Ulm-based Psychotherapy Research Workshop, whose activities are being continued by our outpatient service; (3) an IPU Public Lecture Series and IPU Library Talks.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

IPU faces a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, we have to honor the rules and meet the requirements of mainstream academic psychology so that our graduates will have suitable professional opportunities available to them. On the other hand, though we would like to convey psychoanalytic thinking and ideas, we are often constrained by these requirements, particularly in our B.A. program.

We are dealing with the same balancing act when it comes to research work. As we all know, psychoanalytic research has long been torn between a retreat into the intimacy of the psychoanalytic ivory tower, on the one hand, and, on the other, excessive conformity to an understanding of science that is inadequate for the study of psychoanalysis. This dilemma cannot be set aside. Rather, it must be reflected on critically again and again in an interdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue and structured productively, as an antidote to excessive conformity to the zeitgeist prevailing at any particular time. At this time, the greatest challenge for IPU is to make itself independent of the initial financing and support provided by our foundation.

In the field of psychoanalysis generally, and in the various organizations that represent it, IPU has been warmly welcomed; there is widespread awareness that without it psychoanalysis could disappear from German universities. That members of the various professional associations are represented on our committees, providing active

support in our everyday work, is a clear indication of our shared interests and commitments.

It is our goal to train and qualify talented young scientists who will become psychoanalysts or psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapists, and who will be appointed one day to professorships at public universities.

We appreciate this opportunity to inform our North American colleagues about our work and welcome their support.

REFERENCE

FREUD, S. (1926). The question of lay analysis: Conversations with an impartial person. *Standard Edition* 20:177–258.

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