



HELLENIC
PSYCHOANALYTICAL
SOCIETY

18 - 20
NOVEMBER



15th CONFERENCE OF THE HELLENIC PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETY

time & unconscious

BENAKI MUSEUM - PIREOS 138 - ATHENS - GREECE

time & unconscious

T O P I C

The question of time is constantly present in psychoanalysis. We find it in the fundamental conflicts between the representation of time in the consciousness system and the timeless unconscious. Between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, the primary and secondary processes, free and bound energy, the life instinct and the death instinct. It is certainly at the heart of any clinical work the aim of which is to redeem the present from the past by redeeming the past within the present.

The sense of time does not depend on calendar time, which is nothing but a contract. This is evident in the painful acceleration of time in the sense of the ephemeral, but also in the endless prolongation of the boredom or impatience of the children who want to grow up, to abolish the time separating them from the age of their parents. We can also find it in the instantaneous "passion" of the drug addict that shrinks time to a single moment where beginning and end meet.

Lived time has as its starting point the biological rhythms, the alternation of hunger and satiation, but also the breathing, the pulses, the intervals between breast feeding and defecation, and mainly the function of the sense-organ, which will periodically draw information from the external world. This discontinuous mode of operation will provide the psychic apparatus with protection through destimulation.

The dialectic of absence/presence and the feeling of deprivation caused by the experience of separation introduces temporal discontinuity. This also introduces the concept of object and externality. In short, experiences of distress and frustration constitute the entry of the temporal dimension, simultaneously opening up the world of meaning. Memory will organize temporality, contrasting the destructive passage of time with time that is both protective and constructive.

What is the role of repetition compulsion and 'amnesic memory' for the psyche in relation to the requirement of a work of time and temporality? Does it concern memory and/or anti-memory?

The representation of time in psychoanalysis intersects several other concepts such as regression, fixation, condensation, repetition compulsion, hallucinatory wish fulfilment, deferred action, anaclisis, psychic transformation, etc.

Deferred action, this two-phase model of trauma, not only reverses the chronology; it overturns it. The key question posed by the deferred action is "What was the hysteroproteron?" In the first phase, that is to say, when the initial event occurs, the trauma is not translated but leaves an imperceptible trace-"an unconscious emotion"-while in the second phase there is an emotion that cannot be attributed to obvious causes. This emotion will stimulate consciousness, thus triggering the unfolding of time.

The relation of the psyche to time is described in Freud's writings from very early on. It concerns "shattered time". On the one hand, the processes of the unconscious system (UCs) are timeless: they "bear no relation to time at all". On the other hand, the origin of the representation of time can be found in the discontinuous relation that the preconscious-conscious system maintains with the external world, the time dimension being exclusively associated with acts of consciousness.

Freud constantly reminds us of the importance of the time-factor as an element of reality, while the unconscious, in all his work, steadily resists subordination to the linearity of time through timelessness.

Timelessness does not mean the stoppage of time; what stops time is repression, while timelessness preserves desires as they are in the unconscious, in an 'eternal now'. Thus, the traces of sexuality-related experiences recorded in childhood continue to act out of consciousness, whatever changes may occur in sexuality or mental activity. Freud's notion that the unconscious is timeless was for him the key to describing mental processes. In "The Wolf Man", he declares that the physician must behave as "timelessly" as the unconscious itself, if he wishes to learn or achieve anything. Moreover, he will ultimately succeed in doing so if he has the strength to renounce any "short-sighted therapeutic ambition", any dependence on time. With regard to the length of the treatment, Freud emphasizes that shortening it is unrealistic due in part to the slowness of the deepest mental changes but mainly to the timeless unconscious.

However, he never ceased to be amazed by the "indifference" of unconscious processes to chronology, that time has neither place nor role in the Id and does not alter mental processes in any way. For him, the inalterability by time of the repressed remained an enigma, something "dark", which he bequeathed to the following generations: "Nor, unfortunately, have I myself made any progress here" (1933).

Here are some treatments that have enriched the psychoanalytic approach to time: Temporal continuity is at the base of the depressive position in the sense that the child has to concentrate on different moments in order for the good experience to come into contact with the bad experience. The "nameless dread", dominated by the death instinct, can be assumed to refer to a timeless dread. In the "continuity of being" and "going on being", a temporal parameter is implied, while "fragmentation of being" undoubtedly has to do with the temporal discontinuity of being. The conception of the drive/object dyad, based on the concept of temporality, with the two parts of the dyad experiencing periodic intensity fluctuations, opens a new path between the time of the subject and that of the Other: the time of the meeting of the two. We could think of timelessness either as something instantaneous with no duration, where the unconscious suppresses all diachronies in favour

of a synchrony involving all times, or as something of infinite duration, and therefore elusive. The fact that the unconscious bears no relation to time does not mean that time cannot be represented in the formations of the unconscious that will translate in their own way the so-called psychic temporality.

However, in a more general sense, psychic life seems proudly to ignore time. Neurotics suffer from fixation or regression. The concept of timelessness also describes defense mechanisms against death anxiety through denial of time passing.

Unawareness of the passage of time, or even a return to the past when the present becomes frustrating, is on the agenda of our clinical work. Freud spoke of the total absence of the sense of time in psychosis but made no attempt to explain this. The incapacity of the psychotic to conceive of a future time that is not just a pure repetition is attributed by others to his/her failure to succeed in transforming the fragmentary evidence concerning him/her into a temporal continuity. Fantasy treats chronology with even greater indifference insofar as it links present, past and future into a single time. Moreover, transference neurosis is based precisely on anachronism of emotions.

Every psychic organization and every pathology uses in its own way the escape from time, which is also an escape from reality.

We could say that time is the only reality that the analyst offers to the analysand. As a parameter of the analytic framework, time refers to the psychic space. A space fragmented into realms that define the Ego and others that are outside the Ego, with the Ego being transcribed in the present time, and the outer Ego in timelessness. At the same time, the analytic session allows us to see how the different temporalities, which need the framework to develop and structure each other, coexist in the same subject. The inscription in time is not a given in psychic life, it is always the result of psychic work. In other words, the genesis of temporality is not just cognitive or a matter of maturity, but depends on the formation of the Ego in the sense of psychoanalysis.

During analysis, time is both present and past, neither absolutely of the "past" nor absolutely of the "present", and the analyst is called upon through their interpretation to give meaning to both the present and the past. If the analytic process contributes to untying the knots of the past, it can also be led to other knots, reinforced by trauma reenactment. We would also add to these difficulties the multidimensional aspect of psychic life, which on the one hand tends towards greater consciousness but encounters resistance, and on the other hand returns to the unconscious, which, when activated, seeks every night to regain the ground won by consciousness.

But how does unconscious mental content enter temporality? How can we conceptualize the involvement, the participation of the other, the person next to you, the analyst included, and the unconscious of the other, in the mental genesis of temporality?

Temporality is established in the transference in two ways: it is directed, on the one hand, to the past, through the new reading of the representations of personal history, and, on the other hand, to the future, through the activation of a hope that is the first symptom of the transference neurosis.

Negative transference, on the other hand, impedes the progress of the treatment and destroys the effectiveness of the transference bond. How could we conceptualize this endless and stagnant transference that seems to be installed in a state of timelessness?

The patient comes to psychoanalysis because he suffers from a temporal fixation on a symptom, an experience, a memory. He will work for a long time with the analyst using associations, displacement, and transference to dissolve, to resolve this fixation. Through internalization of the different temporalities that coexist in the psyche, if all goes well, he will exit the psychoanalysis with a history, a legacy, a destiny and plans for the future free from recurring obstacles.

In a sense, the task of psychoanalysis is to reveal unconscious processes by passing them through a timeless dimension to a temporal dimension. Thus, the goal of psychoanalysis could be formulated as follows: "where timelessness was, there temporality shall be".



Ariella Asser
May 2022



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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

18-20 NOVEMBER 2022

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time & unconscious

FRIDAY
18/11/2022

19.00 - 20.00

REGISTRATION

20.00 - 20.30

GREETINGS

I. VARTZOPOULOS, CO-ODRINATOR OF
THE CONFERENCE'S ORGANISING COMMITTEE

C. ZERVIS, PRESIDENT OF THE HELLENIC
PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETY

20.30 - 22.00

CHAIR: J. KONTOS

SPEAKER: V. DIMOPOULOS

*Dynamic and not Dynamic Unconscious
The Dynamics of the Time*

GR/ENG

SATURDAY
19/11/2022

09.30 - 10.45

CHAIR: I. CLEOPAS

GR/ENG

SPEAKER: V. KAPSAMBELIS

Timelessness of Unconscious, Temporality of Psyche

10.45 - 12.00

CHAIR: C. JOANNIDIS

ENG/GR

SPEAKER: A. BERGSTEIN

Buried in the Future Which Has Not Happened

12.00 - 12.30

COFFEE BREAK

12.30 - 14.00

CHAIR: A. ASSER

GR/ENG

SPEAKER: F. BOBOS

The Timeless non Dynamic Unconscious: Lot's Wife looked back to the past, and she became a pillar of salt

SPEAKER: D. PANITZ

The Past is Present-Processes of Repetition

14.00 - 15.00

LUNCH BREAK

15.00 - 16.30

WORKSHOPS A

GR

A1 - CHAIR: I. PANAGIOTOPOULOU

DIALOGUE ON V. KAPSAMBELI'S PAPER

A2 - CHAIR: K. ZERVOS

DIALOGUE ON A. BERGSTEIN'S PAPER

ENG/GR

16.30 - 16.45

BREAK

16.45 - 18.15

WORKSHOPS B

ENG/GR

B1: N. AKUZUM, G. YILDIZ,

N. ANDRIOTIS, I. VARTZOPOULOS

Bion on time: Memory as evolution and waking unconscious thought

B2: M. SKOURTELI, M. PETEINAKI,

N. TAKIS, F. BOBOS

The Endless Struggle with Time as an Attempt at Mental Organization: the Cace of Sisyphus

GR

18.15

COCKTAIL

SUNDAY
20/11/2022

09.30 - 11.00

CHAIR: M. CHATZIANDREOU

GR

SPEAKER: H. MORIKIS

*Uprootedness from Historical Time:
Unconscious and Destructiveness*

SPEAKER: A. CHRISTOPOULOS

*The Use of the Singular and Plural Tenses by the
Psychoanalytic Dyad. Dimensions of Transference -
Countertransference and Unconscious Aspects of Time*

11.00 - 12.30

CHAIR: C. ZERVIS

GR

SPEAKER: N. TZAVARAS

*The Meaning of the Present in Psychoanalysis -
The Threatened, Slippery Present*

SPEAKER: CH. GIANNOULAKI

How Timeless Recedes into Memory of the Past

12.30 - 13.00

COFFEE BREAK

13.00 - 14.30

CHAIR: D. MALIDELIS

GR

SPEAKER: A. ALEXANDRIDIS

Temporality and Subjectivation

SPEAKER: S. MITROSSILIS

*Aspects of Temporality: Repetition - Memory -
Historicization*

14.30 - 15.30

LUNCH BREAK

15.30 - 17.00

WORKSHOPS C

GR

C1 - C. GIANNOULAKI

SPEAKER: P. KALLIGAS - DISCUSSANT: N. TZAVARAS

Time from a Philosopher's View

C2 - C. MICHALOPOULOU, D. PANITZ,
M. CHATZIANDREOU, S. MITROSSILIS, F. BOBOS
Time, Absence, and End of Analysis

C3 - D. MALIDELIS, E. TELIONI

*Transference as a Meeting Point of
the Unconscious with Time*

17.00 - 17.15

BREAK

GR/ENG

17.15 - 18.30

FINAL ROUND TABLE OF THE CONFERENCE:

I. VARTZOPOULOS, N. LAMNIDIS, C. GIANNOULAKI



HELLENIC PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETY

16th CONFERENCE OF THE HELLENIC
PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETY

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24 - 26 | 11 | 2023

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ATHENS - GREECE

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