

RESEARCH AND PSYCHOANALYSIS THE FINNISH POINT OF VIEW

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Johannes Lehtonen

GENERAL REMARKS

- The relation between psychoanalytical knowledge and empirical sciences is unclear and much debated
- Freud regarded psychoanalysis to stand on an equal ground with the other sciences

”The hypothesis we have adopted of a psychical apparatus extended in space, expediently put together, developed by the exigencies of life, which gives rise to the phenomena of consciousness only at one particular point and under certain conditions – this hypothesis has put us in a position to establish psychology on foundations similar to those of any other science, such, for instance, as physics.” An outline of psychoanalysis. Freud, SE 23, 1940.

- The meaning of this Freud’s statement, for today, remains to be opened and worked through

GENERAL REMARKS, continued

- On the other hand, **clinical psychoanalytical knowledge** is based on clinical autonomy of the therapeutic couple
- Scientific knowledge relevant for psychoanalysis therefore always needs to be evaluated and reflected from a clinical point of view

“We have found it necessary to hold aloof from biological considerations during our psycho-analytic work and to refrain from using them for heuristic purposes, so that we may not be misled in our impartial judgment of the psycho-analytic facts before us. But after we have completed our psycho-analytic work we shall have to find a point of contact with biology; and we may rightly feel glad if that contact is already assured at one important point or ” The claims of psychoanalysis to scientific interest. Freud, SE 13, 1913.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN THE PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETIES

Some organizational principles

- The aims of the psychoanalytical societies are 1) training of psychoanalysts and 2) maintenance and development of psychoanalytical knowledge
- The psychoanalytical societies have a private organization covered by IPA. They are not an organizational part of any public institution, such as the universities
- The societies do not have an obligation to practice research as the universities do have, and the societies neither provide academic degrees as the universities do
- Thus, for fostering empirical research relevant to psychoanalysis, a collaboration with a university (or other public) institution is for the psychoanalytical societies *a conditio sine qua non*

RESEARCH IN THE PSYCHOANALYTICAL SOCIETIES, *continued*

- The psychoanalytical societies should support the candidates and members to work in collaboration with a university department or other public institution for gaining a formal frame and a relevant infrastructure for research
- In Finland, a consortium for psychoanalytical research, a part of the Finnish society, has organized methodological and research seminars since 2007
- *Pure psychoanalytical research – clinical and conceptual – continues to be the responsibility of the psychoanalytical societies.*
- It does not require a public organization – university or other – for its existence, although if proper understanding prevails the latter may be helpful

PSYCHOANALYTICAL AND PSYCHODYNAMIC STUDIES IN FINLAND 2000 - 2011

Publications in international peer-reviewed journals

- **Total number of papers: 283 per 31.1.2012**
- The subject of the papers has a wide range from pure psychoanalysis to empirical conversation analysis, clinical epidemiology of mental disorders, research on treatment outcome, neuroscience, adolescent psychiatry, child psychiatry, family therapy, philosophy, nursing sciences
- A wide range of journals from high impact journals to small clinical journals
- The high volume of publications is mainly based on the activity of society members with a university position in psychiatry, adolescent psychiatry, child psychiatry, family therapy, sociology, philosophy

PUBLICATIONS FROM FINLAND, *continued*

- **Books, book chapters and academic dissertations**

Per 31.1.2012: total number of items 280

Out of them, 71 in non-Finnish languages and
4 academic dissertations

CONCLUSIONS

- The withering out of academic psychoanalysis in Finland is not true
- Yet, it is represented more than previously in other than the medical faculties
- Adolescent and to some extent also child psychiatry show continued interest in psychoanalysis. Sociology and philosophy are on their way of coming
- Combining of clinical research with neuroscience is incipient
- The representation of psychoanalytical thought in the universities is a crucial issue, and, in this respect, the future does not look that austere as believed
- The new Finnish legislation for moving the psychotherapy training to the universities will most likely have an impact, hopefully a positive one