

Foreword

A basic issue for all those essaying to write comprehensive texts on the nature of psychoanalysis, whether oriented primarily to the exposition of the theory or of the technique of psychoanalysis, — within the American literature the books by Brenner and by Greenson come to mind as exemplars of the two categories — is that of the relationship of the theory to the technique and the practice. This issue is however not always brought into explicit focus in this literature and thereby its problematic nature as a fundamental and not yet satisfactorily resolved dilemma of our discipline is often glossed over, or even bypassed completely, as if we could comfortably assume that Freud had, uniquely in the world's intellectual history, fully succeeded in creating a science and a discipline in which the theory (the understanding) and the therapy (i. e., the cure) were inherently together and truly the same, but two sides of the same coin.

It is the achievement of Helmut Thomä and Horst Kächele, the authors of this book presenting within two volumes — this first one on theory and a second imminent companion volume on clinical interaction and application — an overall statement on what psychoanalysis is (or should be) all about, that they have more than others kept this central problematic of the relationship of theory to practice in the center of the reader's conceptual field and have organized their presentation of the phenomena of our field, of its concepts and its data, accordingly. The heart of the problematic to which I am referring is caught in one short paragraph in Chap. 7: "As for psychoanalysis, one can see that while the theories are predominantly concerned with the determinants of *genesis*, the rules of technique are oriented toward achieving the necessary and sufficient conditions for *change*: psychoanalytic technique is not *simply* application of theory" (p 218, emphasis added). From this distinction and inevitable tension, all else follows though it is of course also an oversimplification and something of an injustice for me to focus the overall thrust of this so very comprehensive book in just this way, or to imply that the whole range of conceptual problems of our field is caught up in the effort at the delineation of the interplay — and the dialectic — between theoretical and clinical therapeutic development.

Nonetheless, it is an important perspective and one that I feel is central to the authors' thinking; and for my part I would indicate two (to me) necessary consequences of this conceptual disjunction of theory from technique with the problem that then emerges of the conditions and the parameters of their relatedness — as against the conventional psychoanalytic assumption of the conceptual unity of theory and technique which conceals and papers over these very questions at the heart of our discipline, how a theory of how the mind functions can relate to a

technique to alter that functioning in desired directions. The first consequence to which I would draw attention runs like a quiet but insistent leitmotif throughout the book, the call at many points for empirical research into the psychoanalytic process and its outcomes that is designed to elucidate the conditions and the parameters of the relationship of theory to technique, research with which the authors have themselves long been identified, and of which they are actually the leading continental European representatives alongside a small band of fellow investigators in the United States and in Great Britain. In this they join forces solidly with the pragmatic and empirical tradition in the Anglo-Saxon (scientific) intellectual world.

A second consequence of this conceptual disjunction emerges even more softly but still unmistakably in the book, the inevitable consideration of the relationship of psychoanalysis qua therapy to the whole range of psychoanalytic psychotherapies, varyingly expressive and supportive, which represent applications of the same psychoanalytic theoretical understanding of the organization and functioning of the mind to the varieties of psychopathological formations presented in our consulting rooms via an array of differentiated expressive and supportive technical interventions, i.e., one theory, but various techniques conceptualized within it. This message emerges most explicitly, as one would expect, in Chap. 6 on the initial interview(s) with all its focus on the problem of diagnosis and of case formulation and the shift expressed there from the concept of " " to the preferred concept of "treatability," ending in "a *diagnostic phase of therapy*, which is not a trial analysis in the conventional sense followed by the decision regarding suitability, but rather has the purpose of finding out what changes can be achieved under what therapeutic conditions. The wide scope of the current forms of psychoanalytic therapy allows room for many ideas, which do not even have to be restricted to the field of psychoanalysis in the stricter sense" (p. 188).

With this statement, the authors align themselves with a tradition very familiar in the American psychoanalytic world, a tradition articulated in the various American panel discussions of the early 1950s around the similarities and differences between psychoanalysis proper and the array of psychoanalytic or psychodynamic or psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapies — varyingly expressive and supportive — that were brought into focus in the important contributions to these issues of E. Bibring and Stone and Gill and Rangell along with the more discrepant voices of Alexander and Fromm-Reichmann. This concern with the broadened scope of psychoanalytically informed psychotherapies tailored specifically to the internal psychological requirements of the patients and the sociopolitical exigencies of the external surround also makes more understandable the authors' willing placement and portrayal of *psychoanalytic therapy* within the constraints of the West German insurance reimbursement system, which limits the therapy to 240 or at most 300 hours for all but the small minority who go on past that point on their private resources.

And for the American English-speaking audience this book carries an additional, perhaps not explicitly intended, message. For a long time the American psychoanalytic world lived within the comfortable feeling that the metapsychological ego psychology paradigm brought to its fruition in the work of Hartmann, Kris, Loewenstein, Rapaport, Jacobson, Waelder, Fenichel and a host of others represented *the* main stream of psychoanalytic development from Freud through Anna Freud and into the psychoanalytic transplantation from Vienna to America (of course also to Great Britain) with the accession of Hitler to power. It has only been within recent years that American psychoanalysis has become more fully appreciative of the true diversity of theoretical perspectives within psychoanalysis, not only the Kleinian which had long been looked at as a unique theoretical aberration existing within the psychoanalytic corpus, but also the Bionian, the Lacanian, the English object relational, and now from within the American scene itself, the rise of Kohutian self psychology to shake what had once been the monolithic hegemony in America of the so-called "classical" ego psychological metapsychology paradigm. In this pluralistic and therefore relativistic psychoanalytical world in which we now all live, this book by Thomä and Kächele is nonetheless a reaffirmation of the still established place of ego psychology as an encompassing psychological world view, delineated here not from a parochially American and English language literature standpoint but drawing more broadly upon similar developments and thinking deeply within the German language orbit and to a lesser degree within other language literatures as well. Much as there are today all the diverse overall theoretical perspectives within organized psychoanalysis that have been indicated, they have also each broken loose from their origins and confines within a particular geographic and language setting and are thus more widely counterpoised against each other within each regional and national center of psychoanalytic activity world-wide. (For within the same German psychoanalytic and intellectual world in which Thomä and Kächele present a natural science and an empirical research-linked ego psychological paradigm there also exists at the same time a vigorous psychoanalytic (and philosophical) hermeneutic perspective identified with such names as Habermas and Lorenzer.) It is, of course, ultimately all to the good of psychoanalysis both as science and discipline that each of its perspectives in theory and in practice should flourish in confrontation with and in side-by-side interaction with each of the others within each cultural and linguistic tradition.

All of this amounts to more than enough reason to happily introduce this book, which has already been published so successfully in the German-speaking psychoanalytic world, to its natural audience in the English-speaking psychoanalytic world. For it is indeed far more than a carrying of coals to Newcastle. A last note on a tour de force that pervades the book: The reference to the salient related literature is so very fresh and recent and so comprehensive in its

coverage — at least for the English and German languages — in *each* chapter that it seems as if each of them was the very last one completed and barely so just as the book was going to press. Every reader knows that this is not always so.

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