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Special Issue: The Intertwining of External and Internal Events in the Changing World

Issue Editor: Vamik D. Volkan

Introduction:

Galdi, G. (2015). Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the American Journal of Psychoanalysis. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 351–352.

This Special Issue, guest edited by the eminent psychoanalyst, recipient of the 2015 Sigourney Award, Vamik [Volkan \(2015\)](#), with intriguing contributions from an international team of psychoanalysts ([Beyoğlu, 2015](#); [Gonzalez-Torres and Fernández-Rivas, 2015](#); [Schmidt-Löw-Beer, Atria and Davar, 2015](#); [Streeck-Fischer, 2015](#); [Vallabhaneni, 2015](#)), completes our 75th Diamond Jubilee Volume. The topic of this Special Issue on the “Intertwining of External and Internal Events in the Changing World,” has been an important part of the heritage of the *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*. Quoting Rendon, “venturing outside the intrapsychic” ([1981](#), p. 351), and the resulting dynamic interplay of the interpersonal and intrapsychic, defined Karen Horney, our Founding Editor’s holistic and systemic thinking from the earliest days of her work ([Horney, 1930](#)). This interconnectedness of the external and the internal has been guiding us in seeing the individual and the environment as mutually and reciprocally influencing each other ([Kelman, 1958](#), p. 80). Culture is for Horney what language is for Lacan, writes [Rendon \(1991\)](#), and by culture we think of the sum of all cultural creations such as language, art, religion, law, the state, and it also includes all the values that we learned, neurotic values included (p. 293). This perspective is nourished by considerations from anthropology, sociology, philosophy, religion, and a deep appreciation of how external forces become internalized and structured in the developing individual ([Ingram and Lerner, 1992](#), p. 41)...

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Volkan, V. D. (2015). In these pages...The Intertwining of External and Internal Events in the Changing World. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp.353–360.

I would like to thank Giselle Galdi for inviting me to edit this Special Issue, which concludes the 75th Volume of the *AJP*, on the effects of cultural, ethnic, national, religious, political events and massive traumas, especially those at the hand of the “Other,” on individuals’ internal worlds and societies. We also wish to illustrate how such external events influence our clinical work. Beginning with Sigmund Freud,

psychoanalysts have ventured beyond the couch and have written about myths, religions, wars and related topics. Nevertheless, until a few decades ago, psychoanalysts did not place much focus on how external events impact the psychopathology of individuals they were treating...

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Articles:

Vallabhaneni, M. R. (2015). Indian Caste System: Historical and Psychoanalytic Views. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 361–381.

Abstract: This paper elucidates the historical origins and transformations of India's caste system. Surveying the complex developments over many centuries, it points out that three positions have been taken in this regard. One suggests that the caste one is born into can be transcended within one's lifetime by performing good deeds. The other declares caste to be immutable forever. And, the third says that one can be reborn into a higher caste if one lives a virtuous life. Moving on to the sociopolitical realm, the paper notes how these positions have been used and exploited. The paper then attempts to anchor the existence and purpose of the Hindu caste system in Freud's ideas about group psychology and Klein's proposals of splitting and projective identification. The paper also deploys the large group psychology concepts of Volkan and the culturally nuanced psychoanalytic anthropology of Roland and Kakar. It concludes with delineating some ameliorative strategies for this tragic problem in the otherwise robust democratic society of India.

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Beyoğlu, E. (2015). Cyprus Turkish Fairy Tales: Glimpse of a Harmonious Past. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 382–393

Abstract: On the island of Cyprus, believed to be the birthplace of Aphrodite, the Muslim minority (settled there following the Ottoman conquest of the island in 1571) and Orthodox Christians (the native majority) lived together in peace for hundreds of years. However, as a result of ethnic conflict in the late 1950s, the Muslim Cypriot Turks established their own political state in the north of the island in 1974, and Cyprus was divided into northern Turkish and southern Greek sections. This paper attempts to examine historical, religious, cultural and psychological aspects of the relationship between these two large groups, prior to recent conflicts, by studying fairy tales told by Turkish Cypriots about a hundred years ago. It is hoped that this paper will encourage similar studies of other communities where different large-group identities live side by side, and that such studies may support their peaceful co-existence.

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Schmidt-Löw-Beer, C., Atria, M., Davar, E. (2015). Communism and the Trauma of its Collapse Revisited. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 394–415

Abstract. This paper focuses on the intertwining of society and the psyche as a consequence of 70 years of Communist rule and the trauma of its collapse in the 90's. The trauma had profound effects on the psyche. An empirical study that was carried out in 1996/1997, which compared the personality structure of adolescents from Russia and Austria, and a research dialogue in 1999, has been re-evaluated in the light of current political events. One aim that we had was to find out whether we could discover characteristic personality features, resulting from the Communist totalitarian society in Russia, as well as from the trauma of its collapse. This led to the development of the concepts of the "impersonal self" and the "denial mode". The Russians seemed to be frozen in a protective shell with "flat" affects. They were anxious, conflict avoidant, and somewhat lost. Ideas about missing adolescence and the importance of privacy are discussed. Society was shown to not only have intruded into the individual psyche, but also into the members of the intercultural research team in the form of projective identification. The importance of the interaction between society and the individual as a basic psychoanalytic concept dating back to Freud is elaborated. Finally, considerations pertaining to mental health and democracy are presented.

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Gonzalez-Torres, M. A. (2015). Female Sexuality, Nationalism and Large Group Identity. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 416–437.

Abstract: Nationalist movements are emerging today everywhere in the world. Many of them display a high level of aggression and a negative attitude toward sexuality and especially female sexuality. Along with this, erotic fiction with a sadomasochistic orientation has achieved great success and has hundreds of millions of readers in the world. This collective fantasy allows some integration of aggression in sexual life while questioning liberal morality and its equality in gender roles and conservative morality and its idea of control over passion. Both phenomena may represent different responses to the appearance of a new female sexuality threatening the social structure we know.

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Streeck-Fischer, A. (2015). Identity Formation Difficulties in Immigrant Adolescents: Three Cases from Germany. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 438–453.

Abstract: Adolescence is a period of instability caused by biological changes and restructuring of the personality. An immigration background renders the process of identity formation even more difficult or fragile, with an additional burden coming from persecution and harassment. Three case studies of mentally disturbed adolescents with different immigration backgrounds illustrate the problems in diagnosis and psychotherapy. All three cases share a common feature—the particular influence of the native country on the psychic disorder of the adolescent, be it a suitable target of narcissistic self-aggrandizement, a reactivated metaphor of the past or a deposited conflict. I point out and discuss the danger of diagnostic colonization and activation of perpetrator-victim constellations—such as the Nazi past in the present. Offering a

transcultural transitional space as a container yields a therapeutic approach to the different worlds of these borderland adolescents.

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Book Reviews:

Finn, M. (2015). Book Review. *The Interpersonal Tradition: The Origins of Psychoanalytic Subjectivity* by Irwin Hirsch. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 454–455.

Beginning with Sigmund Freud, psychoanalysts have ventured beyond the couch and have written about myths, religions, wars and related topics. Nevertheless, until a few decades ago, psychoanalysts did not place much focus on how external events impact the psychopathology of individuals they were treating...

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Friedman, H. J. (2015). Book Review. *The Search for a Relational Home: An Intersubjective View of Therapeutic Action* by Chris Jaenicke. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 456–458.

During the 1960s, a decade in which psychoanalysis experienced a period of unprecedented dominance in the therapeutic arena, Elizabeth Zetzel, more or less singlehandedly, championed the unpopular idea of the therapeutic alliance, meaning that the patient needed to understand their own role in pursuing the goals of analysis, as a necessary component of the relationship between psychoanalyst and patient. This was in distinct contrast to the more general belief that such an alliance was detrimental to the emergence of transference and ultimately to the purported “transference neurosis” from which a cure would emerge and without which all psychoanalysis would fail to reach a deep enough level. We have come a great distance from that battle over psychoanalytic technique...

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Bacciagaluppi, M. (2015). Book Review. *Psychosis, Psychoanalysis and Psychiatry in Postwar USA: On the Borderline of Madness* by Orna Ophir. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 458–461.

This book is based on a study carried out at Tel Aviv University, and was originally published in Hebrew. The author now works in the United States, and the English edition is part of the ISPS (International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis) Book Series. The author—both a historian of science and a practicing clinician—examines the shifting relationships between the three subjects listed in the title during the last four decades of the 20th century...

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Mintz, D. (2015). Book Review. *Learning About Emotions In Illness: Integrating Psychotherapeutic Teaching Into Medical Education* by Peter Shoenberg and Jessica Yakeley. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 461–464.

Every generation of medicine faces unique challenges and crises. For this generation, the Institute of Medicine, America's most influential medical policy organization, has identified a "quality chasm" (IOM, 2001) between the ideal and actual practice of medicine. Among 6 key issues, the IOM highlights that aspects of the doctor-patient relationship that may be crucial for healing are often eclipsed by pressures for efficiency, and a growing reliance on technology...

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Freeman-Carroll, N. (2015). Book Review. *The Origins of Attachment: Infant Research and Adult Treatment* by Beatrice Beebe and Frank Lachmann. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 75(4), pp. 464–467.

Psychoanalytic theories have always tried to imagine the baby. We wonder, while listening to adults, what were they like as children, or as infants? Who was their mother and how did she care for them? Our ideas about the baby, its mother and the kind of loving care that we imagine will best support development have shifted over the decades, reflecting the multiple psychoanalytic cultures that now co-exist...

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