

What Can Psychoanalysis Learn from an Enhanced Awareness of Architecture and Design?

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Psychoanalysis is undergoing a paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1962). The hegemony of ego psychology and its postulates, including Freud's second theory of anxiety, drives, defenses, unconscious fantasy, and conflict and compromise formation is giving way to new models of mind (Wallerstein, 2002). The belief that therapeutic action results from making the unconscious conscious, reconstructing early experience, and resolving conflict is being replaced with perspectives which focus on the nature of the experience of both analysand and analyst of their analytic relationship (Blum, 2003a, b; Fonagy, 2003; Hoffman, 1994). Detailed discussions about how to conduct an analysis once stressed Freud's technique papers; today, such inquiries focus on the two-person analytic situation, and include ideas about the self, object relations, attachment, intersubjectivity, interpersonal experience, and the dialectical nature of social constructions. In this state of flux, where there has been such a dramatic shift in what is considered useful information for analysts reconsidering a theory of mind and a theory of therapeutic action, applied analysts no longer simply attempt to impart analytic wisdom to scholarly pursuits in other fields. Rather, applied analytic investigators now look to the scholarship of other fields for insights which will illuminate the psychoanalytic enterprise. Examples

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include the integration of mathematical models into theories of mind (Galatzer-Levy, 1995, 2004), and the use of the experience of working as an applied analyst in the realm of political science to enhance one's clinical work (Sonnenberg, 1993a). Adherents of the typical structure of the analytic situation, who stressed anonymity, abstinence, neutrality, frequency of sessions, free association, and the use of the couch have been replaced by more flexible investigators who ask, "What makes for an analytic environment which promotes effective self-inquiry?" In that regard a focus on the environment, on architecture and design, on form, on space and structure, might offer useful insights into how analysis works, and how it might work better. If that is so, what better place to start than with the naturalistic experiment that Sigmund Freud conducted when, as a man of 46 years, he visited the Acropolis?

Freud at the Acropolis

Freud wrote of this visit in a letter to Romain Rolland, in 1936, in honor of Rolland's seventieth birthday (Freud, 1936). He wrote at the age of 80, focusing on his disturbance of memory at the Acropolis. This is an outstanding example of his self-analysis, in which he demonstrates the ongoing challenge of exploring his oedipal conflicts. He also illustrates in this letter the interplay of past (memories from his childhood and of his experience at the Acropolis 34 years earlier), present (his personal admiration for Rolland and the event of Rolland's seventieth birthday), and transference (he notes that Rolland and his brother, Alexander, who was with him at the Acropolis, are both ten years his junior) when exploring an event from the psychoanalytic perspective. Today, this concurrence of focal points is still often used as a guideline in assessing what constitutes an excellent interpretation or a good analytic hour.

Freud's letter has been the subject of scholarly scrutiny, most often focusing on its text, and additionally on what is known about his transference relationship and correspondence with Rolland (Blum, 1995; Bouchard, 1995; Guillaumin, 1995). In these investigations, oedipal and preoedipal themes in Freud's self-analysis have been examined, as well as his views on mysticism (Guillaumin, 1995; Masson and Masson, 1978), the concept of the oceanic feeling (Masson and Masson, 1978), war and aggression (Werman, 1977), narcissism and homosexuality (Guillaumin, 1995), disavowal (Guillaumin, 1995), splitting (Guillaumin, 1995), and religion (Halpern, 1999). Also, the role in Freud's development of childhood loss (Bouchard, 1995), infantile seduction (Masson and Masson, 1978) and sexuality (Slochower, 1970, 1971), and ambivalence about his Jewishness (Gedo, 1992; Halpern, 1999) have been considered. This scrutiny constitutes a very wide-ranging

exploration, illustrating how varied are the possible interpretations of what went on in Freud's mind as he first experienced the Acropolis and then re-experienced it self-analytically, probably many times, leading up to his 1936 letter.

Yet in all this scholarly inquiry there are only occasional references to what Freud specifically encountered on the Acropolis, and hypotheses as to how that may have motivated or stimulated his self-analysis. Flannery (1980) writes that Freud could well have experienced the frieze carvings on the Parthenon, including the carvings removed and in the British Museum, in an oedipal framework, relating these to what at that time he was exploring within himself. Flannery hypothesizes that Freud unconsciously identified with the carved figures as he visualized what was there and imagined what wasn't, with the help of a guidebook. Another writer, Harrison (1966), emphasizes that monuments and memorials, whether natural or man-made, elicit powerful reactions from inspired observers, stimulating a response that organizes these observers into a cohesive group. This leaves open the possibility that Freud was so moved.

The Lens of Self-Analysis at the Neue Synagoge

Today the majority of analysts stand on the shoulders of Freud in their practice of self-analysis; and when reading Freud's letter to Rolland, there is an opportunity to explore how that process might have been facilitated by the place on which Freud stood when he experienced his disturbance. In this essay I, a clinical analyst, will examine Freud's self-analytic experience on the Acropolis through the lens provided by another naturalistic experiment, my experience at the Neue Synagoge in Berlin, Germany. I shall focus on the physical characteristics of each place, aspects of which were originally planned by architects, artists, and designers, and aspects of which were created by other forces, including the erosion of structure over time, the effect of the removal of parts of structure by people taking antiquities for display elsewhere, and restoration efforts after the devastation of the Holocaust and World War II. In the end, I shall try to use an architectural and design perspective to understand how my psychological experience and Freud's were facilitated by the environments that motivated each of us to engage in self-inquiry. Finally, I shall try to answer a question: What does an architectural perspective suggest to us about what in the analytic environment promotes effective inquiry, be it in self-analysis or clinical analysis? I believe this will provide fresh insight into how we might do our clinical work more effectively.

Earlier, in a series of articles, I described my practice of self-analysis, and the range of applications of my self-analysis, including clinical work (Sonnenberg, 1991, 1995), teaching (Sonnenberg, 1990), writing (Sonnenberg, 1993b), and

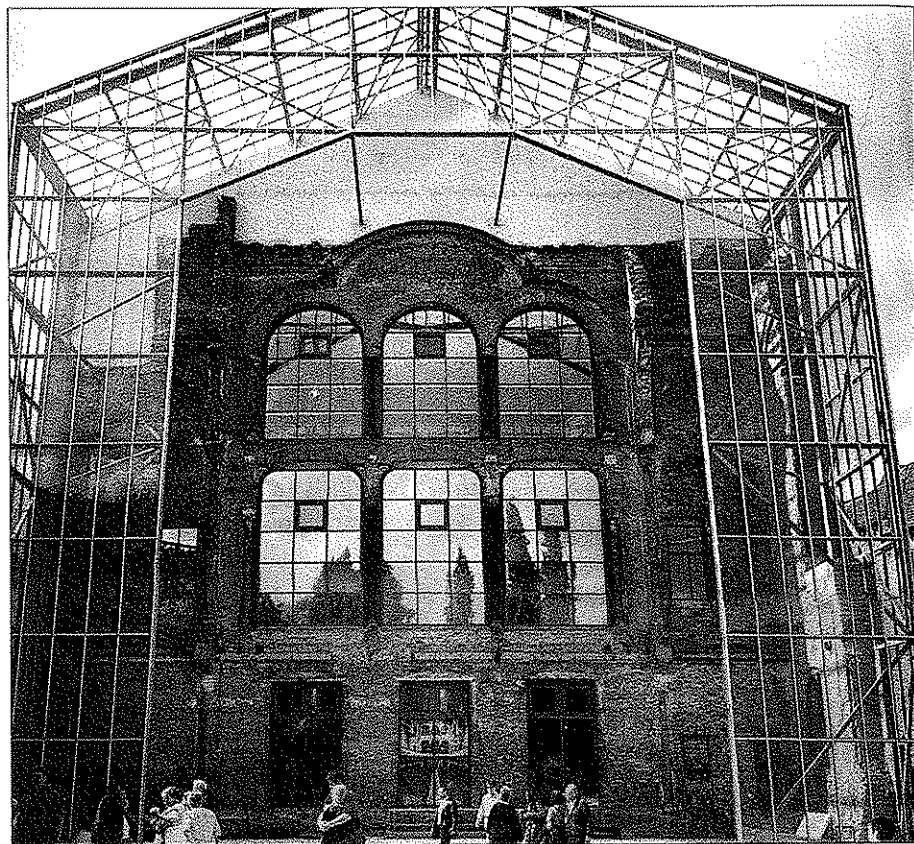


FIGURE 1. The Rear Wall, Neue Synagoge, with reinforcing glass structure.

performing applied analytic research (Sonnenberg, 1993a). At that time, between ten and 15 years ago, I emphasized the usefulness of disciplined self-exploration, and offered examples of how I actually processed my own associations when I systematically self-analyzed. However, I also noted in something of an aside, that my self-analysis often took place more spontaneously, in a less formal way, while listening to patients, sitting at my desk, lying in bed at night, or taking a walk (Sonnenberg, 1991). More recently, I have noted that such less formal self-analysis was more important as a source of self-understanding than I had previously appreciated (Sonnenberg and Myerson, 2004).

Recently, while in Berlin, I visited the Neue Synagoge. Construction of the Synagoge began in 1859, and prior to the Holocaust it was the home to a very large,

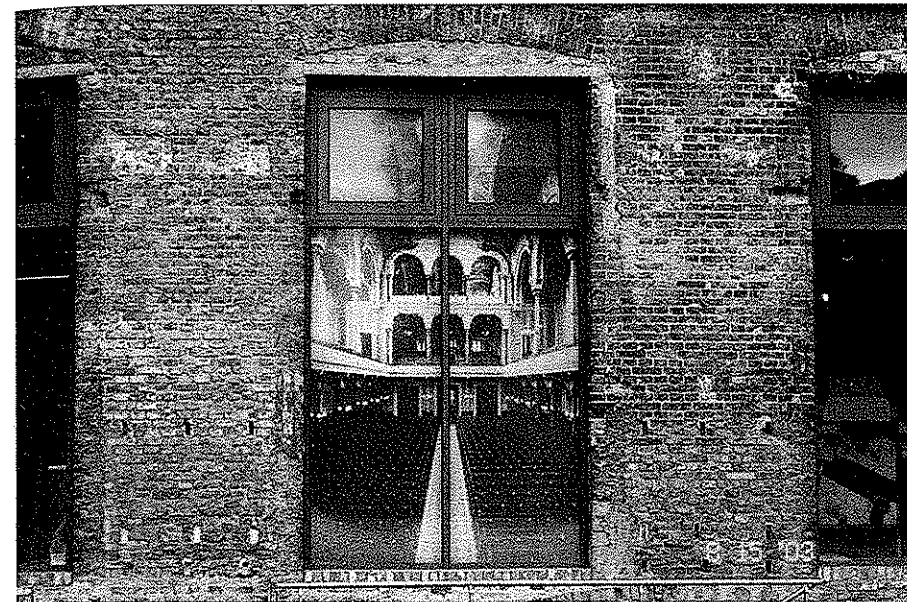


FIGURE 2. The Rear Window, Neue Synagoge.

successful, and culturally assimilated Jewish congregation (known in Germany as a community). The building was desecrated by the Nazis, and suffered a great deal of war-related damage from aerial bombardment. After the war, the damaged sanctuary, which had seated more than 1,500 congregants, was not rebuilt, reflecting the fact that the once robust Jewish community was now very small. That small community gave permission for the demolition of the sanctuary, with the stipulation that the front part of the structure remain standing, as a memorial to the Holocaust and the historical importance of the Jewish community of Germany. The demolition took place in 1958. Then, in 1988, one year before the fall of the Berlin Wall, efforts at restoration of the Synagoge began with a grant from the East German government. The start of the restoration was timed to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Kristallnacht.

Today the Synagoge is a memorial, and houses a museum, a center for the study of Judaism in Germany before the Holocaust, and an archive of those once thriving Jewish communities. As can be seen in figure 1, by using very large panes of glass an outside wall was constructed out of what had once been the entrance to the sanctuary and the supports of two tiered balconies at the rear of the sanctuary. This wall was reinforced by a large structure, also made mostly of glass, which

defines an outdoor space where the indoor sanctuary stood. On one of those lower windows (see figure 2) a photo has been placed, so that the viewer standing within the outdoor space, semi-enclosed by glass, can look into the building and both view and imagine an indoor space, a sanctuary, where he is actually standing while outside. In a subtle way, my experience as the outdoor viewer involved a loss of spatial and temporal orientation, as I found myself both inside and outside, experiencing today and yesterday, in a way which is unusually fluid. In more familiar psychoanalytic language, standing outside looking into the structure of the Neue Synagoge, through a photo which depicts an indoor sanctuary which no longer exists, I experienced a blending of intrapsychic space, inner space in the form of fantasy, and outer space, in the form of my perception of a photograph, and of the space now outside where once the sanctuary stood. It was there that I had a spontaneous self-analytic experience.

As I became aware that my experience involved loss of the customary boundaries of inner and outer, concrete and imaginary space, and as past and present space converged within my mind, my emotions were intense. For while standing there I began to imagine what it might have been like for me to be a congregant of the Neue Synagoge during the rise of the Nazis, when so much of what I experienced created in me emotional turmoil, profound confusion, disbelief, and disorientation. I thought of how I might have worshipped there, and how I would have experienced a sense of community with others who a few years before had held positions of great and unchallenged importance in the cultural, economic, and academic life of Berlin and Germany. I realized that for all of us becoming societal outcasts, non-Germans, or even worse, non-humans, was unthinkable, unimaginable. From there I began to associate to my psychoanalytic work on war, which in the past focused on the Holocaust (Sonnenberg, 1974), the Vietnam War (Sonnenberg, Blank, and Talbott, 1985), and the United States–Soviet Union nuclear relationship (Sonnenberg, 1993a). I thought about the experience of Holocaust survivors I had treated, recalling that an important source of trauma in many who were lucky enough to escape internment and the loss of immediate family members was the experience of being designated an outcast, a person rejected by his own country and culture. I was struck at how, standing alone in that place, I felt a more powerful identification with those former patients, a more complete sense of unity and empathy with them than ever before. Despite years studying the Holocaust and working with survivors, my sense of their experience as their societies crumbled and their identities fragmented became far more vivid.

From there I thought about the trauma of war, and I focused on what are to me two familiar themes: The dehumanization of everyone connected with warfare, including non-combatants, and the ubiquity of what I see as an effort in



FIGURE 3. The Acropolis, showing ruins. Photograph courtesy of the School of Architecture's Visual Resources Collection, the University of Texas at Austin.

the survivor to reestablish one's humanness in the face of survivor guilt. Then I associated to a focal point in my ongoing self-analysis, my experience of oedipal conflict during World War II, when, as a small child, I was confronted with the frightening possibility of an oedipal triumph should my father be called away for military service (Sonnenberg, 1991). I reflected on how that experience had shaped my studies of war and the experience of the survivor, and how issues of survivor guilt and competitive advantage were ubiquitous subjects in my clinically related self-analysis. Some specific clinical situations came to mind, and I pondered them, though I will not elaborate on them here. I realized, too, that my thoughts about my childhood experience during World War II were intensified just then, because my father's ancestors had lived in Germany before migrating to the United States. I knew that my awareness at that moment of the role of survivor guilt in my life was directly catalyzed by my being in that indoor–outdoor space at the Neue Synagoge.

I left the Synagoge and reflected on what I had just experienced, and soon realized that it was similar to what analysts experience when they share with

me the intense intimacy of our analytic relationships. Like the Neue Synagoge, the analytic environment invites the analyst to abandon usual orientations in place and time, and move more fluidly among memories and imaginings about the past, present perceptual experiences, and transferences.

This brings me back to Freud at the Acropolis. As I noted earlier, little is made in the literature of the physical characteristics of where Freud stood, over what he walked, and what he saw. Using the lens of my experience at the Neue Synagoge, I now hypothesize that the openness of the Acropolis, its beautiful structures and the irregularities of its deteriorated state, and the distant vision of the tourist of an ever-shifting sea, all affected Freud as he tread cautiously over broken pieces of stone, and used his guidebook and his mind's eye to visualize frieze carvings now in a distant museum, and buildings once in pristine condition (see figure 3). Freud might have experienced a sense of the fluid interplay of inner psychological space and outer perceptual space, then a loss of temporal and spatial orientation, followed finally by the use of his imagination as he constructed a picture of what the Acropolis was once like. In that frame of mind, I suggest, we can understand how Freud, given the psychodynamics of his relationship with his father and, more broadly, his psychodynamically complex mind, was vulnerable to the disturbance of memory he described, which he was able to recognize as a false recollection of doubting the existence of the Acropolis while a child in school. Given that this was a disturbing and puzzling experience we can also intuitively understand why it became an organizer for an ongoing and intense experience of oedipally focused self-analysis. Finally, we can also hypothesize how that experience could serve an important adaptive function as Freud wished to pay tribute to Romain Rolland, a man toward whom he experienced both present admiration and a powerful transference, one manifestly involving his ten-year-younger brother, Alexander, but probably a transference infused with oedipal concerns, as suggested by the body of formulations concerning the reasons for Freud's Acropolis experience, and his motivations for writing about it to Rolland.

The Perspective of the "Informal": Chaos and Complexity

Now we can articulate a question which has important implications for our understanding of the process of clinical analysis, per se, and self-analysis, which is an important goal, and hopefully a part, of every clinical analysis: From the perspective of architecture and design, can we more precisely conceptualize what it is about the Neue Synagoge and the Acropolis that stimulated Freud's and my own self-analytic efforts, and what, if anything, these environments have in common? The answer to this question, in my view, underlies the answer to the

question proposed earlier as the central goal of this paper. That question, again, is, "What does an architectural perspective suggest to us about what in the analytic environment promotes effective inquiry?"

For help with these questions I shall turn to an examination of the thinking of Cecil Balmond, an engineer who has worked with leading architects in designing and constructing several important contemporary building projects. Balmond is described as a consulting engineer who is interested in the nature of form and its relationship with science, art, music, numbers and mathematics (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 394). Writing about Balmond's conceptualization of his work, the architectural historian and critic Charles Jencks notes that he believes that phase change takes place ubiquitously in nature, and that new patterns of organization emerge spontaneously. The result of this orientation, Jencks adds, is that Balmond's work is both biomorphic and free-form: "On every design on which he has collaborated he has pushed the structure in different ways, or allowed new assumptions to interact, so that surprising patterns emerge . . . Aesthetic and intellectual appreciation demands a minimum provocation, something that spurs us to see and think anew" (Jencks, 2002, pp. 5-8).

Balmond, reflecting on his own history as an engineer and designer working with architects, notes that he experiences buildings as more than simple spaces, but rather as opportunities to be in the world creatively, unshackled from old, routine, and rigidified emotional, cognitive, and perceptual aspects of human existence. The building is to him a vehicle opening up his mind to new, expansive ways of being, thinking, feeling, and designing. In explaining his approach to his work (Balmond with Smith, 2002), which he has named the "informal," he writes:

At first I assumed a certain subservience in engineering, as an enabling science to the act of putting up buildings . . . Then I began to question what these regular framings of closed squares and rectangles were; were they containers of an empty inanimate space? I looked again. I did not believe in this restriction . . . [I came upon] the contemporary idea of complexity as an unfolding, simultaneous and self-similar pattern . . . Chaos theory produced impossibly beautiful structure . . . surprising and ambiguous answers arise . . . As long as our brain kept to tramlines of reasoning the [old] model persisted. Now that the world is being accepted as not simple, the complex and oblique and the intertwining of logic strands gain favour. Reason itself is finally being understood as nascent structure, non-linear and dependent on feedback procedures. Beauty may lie in the actual processes of engagement and be more abstract than the aesthetic of objecthood. Ultimately it may really be a constructive process [pp. 13-15].

Balmond offers us specific reactions while collaborating with architects on design and construction projects. For example, "As one journeys through the building, structure reveals itself not as mute skeleton but as a series of provocations; sometimes explicit, at other times ambiguous. Structure emerges with different styles, in some locations graceful and flying, elsewhere awkward and stolid and rooted to the spot . . . in short chunky columns stuck to the roof and floor. The varying rhythms and ad-hoc strategies yield a hybridization that wraps around the visitor" (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 105). "The consequence," he adds, "is an architecture full of surprise. Now you can see it, now you don't. *Informal* is that chameleon, a change-artist . . . [this building is] a crucible of such elusive bad behavior" (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 107).

Balmond writes that "the *informal* steps in easily, a sudden twist or turn, a branching, and the unexpected happens—the edge of chance shows its face . . . Delight, surprise, ambiguity are typical responses; ideas clash in the *informal* and strange juxtapositions take place. Overlaps occur. Instead of regular, formally controlled measures, there are varying rhythms and wayward impulses . . . Uniformity is broken and balance is interrupted. The demand for Order! In the regimental sense is ignored: the big picture is something else" (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 111).

He then goes on to emphasize:

In the *informal* there are no distinct rules, no fixed patterns, to be copied blindly. If there is a rhythm it is in the hidden connections that are inferred and implied, and not necessarily made obvious. Order, in a hierarchical and fixed sense, is taken as furthest removed from the natural state of things. . . . Quite the opposite is the Formal, rigid, hierarchical. Its chief characteristic is analysis which needs reference, as the past comes with close grid of argument . . . it is a reductionist process . . . [Yet] The creative impulse jumping out of nowhere is scary . . . In the face of such turbulence, order is endorsed as the safe fortress. But it misses the point: that the nature of reality is chance and that "order" may only be a small, local, steady state of a much larger random [pp. 114–115].

Then, writing about the use of the spiral in a specific project, he notes that "A cherished symmetry and insistence of right-angled forms rejected, and the old paradigm of fixed centre left behind, the . . . Spiral vaults into new space. *Inside is outside* [italics added]. Floors are denied columns, and walls offer no vertical short cuts for gravity. Structure and architecture become one immediacy" (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 191). Significantly, he closes his comments on that project noting that "Perhaps intuition has an internal mapping of its own, of non-linear

algorithms. Testing this further is a task of the *informal*" (Balmond with Smith, 2002, p. 215).

Finally, he writes:

The *informal* is opportunistic, an approach to design that seizes a local moment and makes something of it. Ignoring preconception of formal layering and repetitive rhythm, the *informal* keeps one guessing. Ideas are not based on principles of rigid hierarchy but on an intense exploration of the immediate . . . It . . . [is] a methodology of evolving starting points that, by emergence, creates its own series of orders . . . The more subtle approach is to seek the notion that chaos is a mix of several states of order. What is an improvisation is in fact a kernel of stability, which in turn sets sequences that reach equilibrium. Several equilibriums coexist. Simultaneity matters; not hierarchy . . . The *informal* gives rise to ambiguity. This means interpretation and experiment as a natural course of events [Balmond with Smith, 2002, pp. 220–227].

I believe that Balmond is telling us that the *informal* environment promotes surprise and the potential for psychological state change in both the creator of a structure and a space, such as an architect or a design engineer, and the user of such a structure and space, such as the visitor to a museum or memorial, or the resident of, or worker in, a building. That is possible, Balmond suggests, because that environment is itself characterized by surprise and psychological and physical state change.

In my view, my description of what has been done to preserve the Neue Synagoge and memorialize those who once occupied it and their culture and community, and my experience of it, is consistent with Balmond's description of the *informal*. Balmond's emphasis on the surprising, unconventional pattern which promotes freedom of thinking, perception, and experiencing, with resulting psychological state change, is based on contemporary mathematical ideas about chaos and complex systems, and his notions of what becomes possible for a person within such an *informal* environment or structure certainly fits with my experience at the Neue Synagoge. Therefore, I think we now have a perspective, in the language of contemporary architecture and design, on what characterizes a physical environment which promotes freedom of thought, a capacity to experience surprise, and to perceive and experience oneself suddenly outside the box.

I believe the Acropolis, existing as it does with partially intact and partially crumbling structures, structures with parts removed and transported elsewhere, with ever-changing patterns of water in the distance, has evolved into an environment which is unpredictable, unconventional, and surprising, an environment which

the visitor experiences in a way similar to the visitor's experience at the rear, mostly glass wall of the Neue Synagoge. I believe, then, that the Acropolis is now an *informal* environment, and that it was that quality which propelled Freud to begin a self-reflective process which lasted for decades: The Acropolis was a place which stimulated Freud to experience a psychological state change, in the form of a disturbance of memory. I believe, too, that we have identified what the Neue Synagoge and the Acropolis share as environments which encourage self-analysis.

Discussion: A Psychoanalytic Restatement of the *Informal*

Galatzer-Levy (1995, 2004) has applied the mathematical concepts of nonlinear equations, chaos theory, and the theory of complex systems to the study of clinical psychoanalysis. He has explained that these concepts do not mean that what happens in the psychological world is simply not linear, nor is it chaotic in the intuitive sense. Rather, because of the complexity of human development and human existence, rigid and unimaginative formulations of normality do not help the clinician to understand the patient, nor the patient to understand himself: A more effective orientation holds that different people develop in different ways, and different end points can constitute the normal. He goes on to note that traditional psychoanalytic perspectives teach clinicians that development not only proceeds in predictable, small increments, with predictable outcomes, but that significant psychological and behavioral shifts do not take place at what would appear to be dramatic rates of change. This, he asserts, is simply incorrect, and he adds that surprising, abrupt psychological state changes occur in the course of normal development. Galatzer-Levy thus offers a message of great significance, which dovetails with much of my long experience as a teacher and consultant: Psychoanalytic shibboleths have created a clinical technique that emphasizes a kind of orderly and programmed inquiry, orchestrated by an orderly, programmed and only seemingly non-intrusive analyst, working in a very stereotypical way, in a very stereotypical environment. In effect, the agenda is set by an analyst who comes to the clinical enterprise with a preformed view of what will transpire, slowly, over time, and even with a preformed view of clinical outcome. That view then shapes the experience of both members of the dyad.

This oversimplified summary, and my own reaction to it, do not do complete justice to the elegance of Galatzer-Levy's ideas, but they do make the point I wish to emphasize here. Using the perspectives of Balmond and Galatzer-Levy, I believe that my powerful experience of empathy and identification with a group of victims of the Holocaust at the Neue Synagoge was possible because I was

placed in an environment in which I was encouraged to step emotionally out of a place fixed by the conventional boundaries of a room or a building, a rectangle or a sphere, an enclosure or a courtyard or a park, into a world where inside and outside, past and present, and imaginings and perceptions were permitted to mingle within me in a spontaneous, vivid way. I was encouraged to experience disorder and disorientation, even confusion, as I tried, for a split second, to figure out where I was as I looked through a window and a photograph, seeing myself inside and being outside, seeing myself in the year 1935, being in the year 2003. This was an experience of dramatic psychological state change, made possible by an *informal* environment. Further, that experience led me to reflect on it over time, and drew me back to it repeatedly. Long before this *Annual* called for papers on architecture and psychoanalysis, I found myself engaged in a self-inquiring experience, a self-analytic exploration of what had happened to me and why it had happened. I can assure the reader that this essay would have been written if the *Annual of Psychoanalysis* had never undertaken publication of this volume.

My hypothesis, already stated, is that the Acropolis, with its irregularities, its orderliness and its disorder, its missing frieze carvings and its remaining ones, and its view of a changing sea, promotes the same sort of experience in one who visits there. That visitor must negotiate a complex terrain with his or her eyes, legs, and mind. And at that point, if one is preoccupied with an aspect of one's own antique past, then those preoccupations may dominate that person's psyche. The Acropolis certainly does not promote in the visitor the kind of relatively predictable aesthetic response he or she would have within, or standing before, a pristine structure, or in a hall filled with polished frieze carvings at the British Museum. It evokes in the viewer an experience of the *informal*.

A Clinical Example and an Appeal for Analytic Listening with Shared Perplexity

I now want to conclude this essay by returning to what lessons might be learned from this investigation of Freud's experience on the Acropolis, my experience at the Neue Synagoge, Galatzer-Levy's ideas about psychoanalysis, and Balmond's ideas about design. The goal, of course, is to develop a deeper appreciation of what promotes both effective self-analysis and clinical analysis. I should add explicitly that, in my view, effective introspection and creative inquiry about oneself has much in common, whether it takes place with the help of a second person or is conducted alone. For that reason, I believe lessons from self-analysis shed light on how to conduct clinical analysis, and that the reverse is true, as well. Obviously, that belief constitutes a basic assumption of this essay.

This paper suggests that much is lost when the analyst works with the belief that he or she is possessed of certain knowledge about what is possible in human development, or in the effort to heal a patient: When that analyst cannot take seriously an analysand's assertion that he or she has experienced a sudden and helpful change in psychological state, especially when the analysand says that this has taken place as a result of analysis, the disbelieving analyst deprives both members of the dyad from embracing, understanding, and making further use of something beneficial. While we know that our theoretical biases inevitably influence what we hear and how we hear it, it seems to me that the analyst needs to try to approach each analysand in each analytic hour with a willingness to consider that he or she, and the analysand, will learn something new and surprising. That process requires a willingness to believe that new perspectives can emerge, and emerge rapidly, no matter what seems to have been happening in the clinical situation. Recall, for example, that at the Neue Synagoge I had a new appreciation of something I had studied for decades. It also requires that the concept of the continuity of mental functioning be modified to accept the idea that at times the nature of that continuity will be obscure or even impossible to discern, and even, in the way we usually think about continuity, not there at all. It means, and this is especially important, that the analyst should be prepared to share his or her surprise with the analysand. It requires the analyst to respond to disorientation openly and without hesitation, in effect to create an interaction in which both members of the analytic dyad share in the experience of confusion and perplexity. This, in effect, is the clinical equivalent of the *informal* environment that has been created by the combination of chance and careful design at the rear wall of the Neue Synagoge, and on the Acropolis.

I want to make clear that I am not proposing that the analyst abandon the interpersonal restraint reflected in the technical concepts of anonymity, neutrality, and abstinence, and the ways the physical environment of the consulting room incorporates those concepts. Yet I am proposing that those traditional guidelines be employed in a way that allows for the analytic environment to be more compatible with the goals of the *informal*: surprise, shared perplexity, and wonder at what sudden psychological development and change is possible. I am proposing that all of this should be encouraged by the analytic environment. Let me illustrate with a clinical example.

Many years ago I analyzed a very inhibited woman, who had grown up in a home where both parents were very rejecting of her and where both told her over and over again that she was basically incapable of successful interpersonal relationships. She had come to me after her husband had shocked her by filing for divorce after decades of marriage, and she felt desperately alone and hopeless. The subsequent analysis lasted for over ten years, and for the most part was conducted,

in a formal sense, in a very traditional way: We used the couch, she was seen four times each week, and I never lost sight of the usefulness of appropriate abstinence, neutrality, and anonymity. Much of the analysis focused on how lost this woman felt in the social world, how shy she felt, and how unknowing she was of how to enjoy others and how to determine whether they enjoyed her.

Something had happened very early in our relationship which troubled my patient for several years, and resulted in her feeling very inhibited and disconnected from me in the analysis. Indeed, for long periods of time she was barely able to speak, after lying on the couch. It had seemed to her that initially I was warm and friendly, and she very specifically reminded me that I had smiled at her a lot very early in the consultation, but not at the end of it. For several years I simply had no understanding of what she was talking about, was frankly skeptical that it had happened that way, and came close to insisting that all she was talking about was the difference between her experience of sitting in a chair and facing me during the consultation, and lying on the couch when the analysis formally began. But, in the face of this stereotypical analytic assumption and response, this shy, often silent, and always inhibited woman insisted that I was missing the boat.

From the start, this woman knew something about my family. The person who had referred her to me was an academic colleague, but not a psychoanalyst, and he felt that because of the configuration of my family I could understand this woman, and told her so. This was why she knew quite a bit about my daughter, and that at least in terms of academic achievement she and my daughter had a great deal in common. From time to time she would associate to my daughter, but I never connected these thoughts and feelings with her difficulties speaking on the couch.

Several years after this analysis began, my daughter's photograph appeared in a newspaper, accompanying the announcement of her forthcoming marriage. My patient saw this, and congratulated me. When she did this, I had a sudden insight. As I was picturing the photograph in my mind's eye, I realized that my patient and my daughter resembled each other in two ways: They were both high academic achievers, and they looked alike. And suddenly, I realized that because of her appearance, when I had first laid eyes on this patient, I had related to her, unconsciously, as if she were my daughter. Simply because of her facial features I had felt an immediate and very strong paternal concern for her. She was right, I realized: I had smiled very warmly at her over and over again when I first met her, with the warm smile of a father trying to soothe a troubled daughter. She was correct, too, that by the end of the consultation I had stopped smiling in that way, for without my being conscious of any of this, as the consultation process progressed and she settled down, I felt less of that fatherly need to soothe her. I decided to tell all this to my patient, and I did, and she suddenly felt relieved. She

felt that her experience in the analysis was now understood by us both. And then things began to change very rapidly, as the analysis took off and my patient was able to associate freely, analyze effectively, and begin a process that resulted in a greatly enhanced capacity to relate intimately to me and to others.

I believe this vignette illustrates how for several years after my analysand and I began a formal analysis our efforts to establish intimacy and an atmosphere of analytic inquiry had been stymied, because of my inability to consider that I had induced a surprising, sudden state change in my potential analysand, during the consultation. It also illustrates how, once I was able to experience a sudden and surprising awareness of my effect on my patient, and convey this to her, she was immediately able to undergo a major, responsive change.

This example suggests that an effective, *informal* clinical environment promotes an effective analysis, and that this is made possible by the analyst's mindset. It illustrates vividly that when the analyst is able to create an environment characterized by an openness to surprise and state change, especially his or her own surprise and state change, surprise and state change becomes much more likely for the analysand.

I will end with a specific suggestion about analytic technique. In recent years we have added ways of analytic listening to Freud's suggestion that evenly hovering attention is the order of the day. Today we listen, as well, with evenly hovering role responsiveness, a willingness to accept the patient's projective identifications, a desire to understand the patient's point of view, and an awareness of the importance of close process monitoring. We should add to those modes of experiencing the patient the need to listen in shared perplexity and curiosity as we hear about new and surprising ideas, and sudden changes in psychological state. In this way psychoanalysis can become, in and of itself, a different kind of developmental experience, which will make possible surprising and sudden growth in the analysand.

But there remains one more point to be made. As a clinician, I have attempted to use environmental experience and a perspective incorporating the disciplines of architecture and design to examine and enhance my understanding of interaction within the analytic dyad, and of psychoanalytic technique. I have also noted above that, as regards the physical environment in which psychoanalysis is conducted, I do not advocate radical change. However, I do have many questions about what in that physical environment might optimize the experience of both analysand and analyst. Answering those questions is beyond the scope of this paper, because it is beyond my expertise. Perhaps some of the contributions of architects and designers in this volume will offer insight into that area of inquiry.

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Architecture and the True Self

F. ROBERT RODMAN

Fostering the True Self

One lovely day in 1994, my wife and children and I had lunch at a café near one of the chateaux in the Loire region of France. The café was adjacent to an expanse of lawn with scattered trees. The usual gravel base lay beneath the outdoor tables that were shaded by umbrellas. For reasons I do not completely understand, I like the gravel in such settings; it brings me a kind of peace. It may be in part because the gravel absorbs surrounding sounds.

It was a sunny day, and I felt good. I drew the scene. In a state of relaxation usually associated with travel, I often sketch. The result, though amateur, is valuable to me as a memento of an event; it provides something personal. In sketching one has to take one's time, make observations, choose what seems to matter, make the marks on the page, and perhaps use a few dots of color from a watercolor box.

In such a circumstance, I feel free to express my true self. The main point I want to make in this essay is that certain architectural situations foster such expressions and are valued for that. What I have described is not a building; it is a space. But I suppose I could have found an example in the form of a building. What comes to mind are the book alcoves in a library where, as an undergraduate, I reviewed the semester's reading in preparation for final exams. It was a quiet location; the sound-deadening effect of the books may be analogous to the sound-deadening

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