Following pioneering efforts by Eder and Feigenbaum, during a period when young immigrants arrived in Palestine “with <Das Kapital> under one arm and <Die Traumdeutung> under the other” (Weizmann), the Palestine Psychoanalytic Society and Institute were founded in 1933-4. Freud’s hope that Eitingon will become a professor at the Hebrew University was frustrated, and Eitingon’s energy was directed towards organizing what became – after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 – the Israel Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

Gradually a new generation of locally trained analysts took over from the German-speaking founders. International ties evolved, mostly within the International Psychoanalytical Association, which held its 1977 congress in Jerusalem.

The psychoanalytic community was initially predominantly medical (non-medical analysts admitted ambivalently), quite involved in psychiatry (many institutions were run by analysts) and in education, especially kibbutz education – whose communal ideology involved a utopian interpretation of Freud – and work with immigrant children.

Later on clinical psychologists became the dominant group, and many analysts withdrew from social-institutional involvement, dedicating themselves to a
private practice of analysis and therapy, and to teaching in psychotherapy
training programs established at the Institute and at several universities. Israeli
psychoanalysis has a strong clinical focus, while rarely involved in the arts,
humanities or social sciences.
The Freud Chair of the Hebrew University, held by Sandler (1978-83) and
other analysts, initiated conferences, interdisciplinary seminars and doctoral
theses. Israeli analysts have been active in studying the impact of the holocaust
and other trauma.
Initially classical and ego-psychology oriented, Israeli psychoanalysis has
diversified, absorbing competing influences of Klein, Bion, Winnicott, Kohut,
and relational-intersubjective trends. As of 2001, the Society had 120 members,
training 80 candidates. [As of 2008: 180 members, 100 candidates]
Jungians and Lacanians established independent organizations [both of which
split into several sub-groups during the last decade]. In 2000, another
autonomous organization was initiated, the Tel Aviv Institute of Contemporary
Psychoanalysis.
The structure of training at the Israel Psychoanalytic Institute, modeled after
the Berlin Institute, came under heated debate in the 1990s. Many changes
were made in policies and rules to reduce authoritarian and infantilizing trends,
allowing candidates greater individual autonomy and personal expression.
References


