PSYCHOLOGICAL BIRTH AND INFANT DEVELOPMENT

A symposium in Sigmund Freud’s birthplace, Příbor, Czech Republic, directly following the IPA Congress in Prague, August, 2013


“…of one thing I am certain: deep within me, although overlaid, there continues to live the happy child of Freiberg (Příbor), the first-born son of a youthful mother, the boy who received from this air, from this soil, the first indelible impressions…” (from a letter from Sigmund Freud to the Mayor of Příbor-Freiberg, October 25, 1931).

Embedded in the experience of Příbor’s “air and soil”, the Symposium Psychological Birth and Infant Development will explore new data and contemporary psychoanalytic theory that expands and modifies Freud’s reconstructions of the first three years of his life. As we trace his first footsteps, little Sigmund’s childhood in Příbor becomes, like that of Little Hans, a prototype of aspects of early childhood and a stimulus
for discussion, study and further research. Symposium participants will have the unprecedented opportunity to discourse with prominent international colleagues while experiencing firsthand the culture and locale that helped shape the man and his work—the founding and development of psychoanalysis.

The unspoiled beauty of the Valašsko region of Moravia.

After decades of silence behind the Iron Curtain, the town of Příbor— the birthplace of the founder of psychoanalysis— can join his celebrated homesteads of Vienna and London. The picturesque town of Příbor is located in the strikingly beautiful Valašsko area of Moravia, one of the ancient historic regions of the Czech Republic.

The symposium will begin on Sunday evening with a reception and cultural program that will introduce participants to the rich ethnic folk culture of Valašsko, which inspired the world renowned composer Leoš Janáček, born two years before Freud just three miles away in Hukvaldy.

Opening remarks by Symposium Chair, Harold Blum, the Executive Director of Sigmund Freud Archives; Stefano Bolognini, President of the International Psychoanalytic Association; Martin Mahler, President of the Czech Psychoanalytic Society; His Excellency Norman Eisen, United States Ambassador to the Czech Republic; and officials from the Czech Ministry of Culture and Town of Příbor will begin Monday’s full day symposium, during which American and Czech psychoanalysts will present original papers on relevant issues.

Václav Buriánek, Czech psychoanalyst and the author of the book “Facts and Impressions: A Psychoanalyst’s Guide to the Birthplace of Sigmund Freud” (not yet translated), will present “Paradise Lost and Trauma Mastered: New Findings on Little Sigmund”. Eva D. Papiasvili, Chair of the Organizing Committee, fluent in both languages and cultures will introduce and moderate the discussion of his presentation.

Annie Bergman will present a new elaboration on “Pre-Oedipal dynamics of separation-individuation in light of contemporary attachment studies”, followed by a discussion moderated by Linda Mayers.
International speakers and moderators will include Harold Blum (New York), Stefano Bolognini (Bologna), Václav Buriánek (Prague), Haydée Faimberg (Paris), Jane McAdam Freud (London), Otto Kernberg (New York), Martin Mahler (Prague), and Eva D. Papiasvili (New York).

Martin Mahler will present with Eva D. Papiasvili on “Jewish Experience in Pribor, Multiculturalism, and the Birth of Psychoanalysis,” connecting the historical and sociocultural context with the complex and intensely personal links between Freud the individual, and Freud the creative thinker who launched the field of psychoanalysis.

Past IPA President Otto Kernberg will speak on “Early Object Relations and Mentalization,” examining his conceptual framework of pre-oedipal development in light of contemporary clinical and developmental theory of earliest mental processes, followed by a discussion moderated by Harold Blum.

After a buffet lunch, featuring regional specialties and international cuisine, Harold Blum will open the afternoon proceedings with “Reconstructing Freud’s Pioneering Reconstructions,” modifying Freud’s original formulations in view of current psychoanalytic thought. Haydée Faimberg will moderate and discuss his talk.

Following the formal presentations, three discussion groups will be chaired by Daria Colombo, Haydée Faimberg, Jane McAdam Freud, Eva D. Papiasvili, past President of the Czech Psychoanalytic Society Vendula Probstova, and Adele Tutter. Together with participants they will explore themes including Art in the Life of Sigmund Freud; Multiculturalism and Multilingualism; and Reconstruction.
The town square of Příbor, to whose church young Sigmund Freud was brought by his nanny.

At the close of the symposium, Mgr. Marie Šupová, President of the Příbor Sigmund Freud Society, will lead a private tour of the restored Sigmund Freud House, the Jewish Prayer House, and the Příbor town square, including the chapels and churches young Sigmund frequented on Sundays with his nanny.

Dream Art contributed by children participating in the annual “My Dream” International Art Competition, conducted by the Sigmund Freud Society of Příbor.

While taking in the town’s atmosphere, breathing in “the air and walking on the soil” of Příbor, participants will get a chance to get acquainted with the mission and initiatives of the Sigmund Freud Society of Příbor, which participates in international psychoanalytic research projects such as the ongoing study of the relationship between dreams and creativity recently presented by Eva D. Papiasvili and Linda A. Mayers in Lucca, Italy.
One of several accommodation options, Hotel Hukvaldy offers modern amenities and access to local attractions, including the Leoš Janáček Museum and the medieval ruins of Hukvaldy Castle. Transportation to Příbor will be provided.

Some of the magnificent gardens of the Archbishop’s Château in Kroměříž.

After the conference, participants will be free to discover for themselves the many world-class historical and cultural attractions in and beyond the Valašsko region of Moravia. One of several regional UNESCO World Heritage sites, the superb Archbishop’s Château in Kroměříž is famous not only for its formal gardens and Baroque library, but also for its Titian Gallery, which boasts important canvases by Titian, Cranach, Brueghel, Veronese, and Caracci. Visit Lednice, with its Lichtenstein Palace and many acres of gardens; the majestic ancient castles of Mikulov, Tišnov, Pernstein and Buchlov; and the Slavkov Château, near the historic grounds of the Battle of Austerlitz (Slavkov).

And don’t overlook the Moravian metropolis of Brno, with its many excellent museums and historical monuments, including the Brother Gregor Mendel’s monastery and gardens, where the modern study of genetics was born, and the important Paleolithic sites of Zlaté Zámky and Dolní Věstonice, where the Venus of Věstonice was discovered. Moravia is home to the picturesque spa towns of Rožnov and Luhačovice. Famous for its fine regional wines, the region’s many vineyards offer wine tastings to visitors. Last but not least, naturalists will appreciate the magnificent virgin forest of the Beskydy Mountain Nature Reserve. Maps and information will be provided.
The Psychological Birth and Infant Development Symposium is jointly sponsored by The Margaret Mahler Psychiatric Foundation and The Sigmund Freud Archives. The proceedings of the Conference will be published. Visit the Symposium web site for more information on the Symposium, a printable program and information regarding accommodation sites, travel, on- or off-line advanced registration, the Sigmund Freud Society of Příbor, and more: www.freudsymposium.eventbrite.com.

On behalf of the symposium faculty and organizing committee (Martin Mahler, Linda Mayers, John Munder Ross, Marie Šupová, and Adele Tutter), we invite you to join us in Příbor!

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