

Political Caesura and the Analysts' Freedom of Thought

E. J. Rolnik¹

¹ *Tel Aviv University, Israel Psychoanalytic Society/Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute, Tel-Aviv/Frankfurt, Hesse, Germany*

Abstract Content (EN)

Psychoanalysis has focused on the power relations between mental structures and the minds' urges, fantasies and demands. Analytic therapy promotes the liberation of the mind from the tyranny of the super-ego. Our theories tend to neglect the political and social provisions that facilitate or impinge upon the analysts' ability to function. This paper examines the question of how much political reality can psychoanalysis bear. It begins with Freud's recommendation to Ferenczi to withdraw his libido from the fatherland and shelter it in psychoanalysis, and follows the political events in Israel. In times of political upheaval the psychoanalyst must not only help the patient to recognize their dependency, their idealizations, or help them make the connection between mental inhibitions and unconscious fantasy. In today's world we should take into account that attacks on democracy are akin to attacks on thinking. A functioning democracy is essential to the regulation of our deepest impulses and fears. In its absence the analyst and the patients' inclination and ability to accept internal reality and psychic truth are diminishing. The ideal of freedom of thought, which stands at the border between psychoanalysis and politics, is explored vis a vis the debate concerning a 'Psychoanalytic Worldview (Weltanschauung)'.