

## CONFERENCE REPORT FOR ARTSMETHODS@MANCHESTER

An international conference with the title 'Islamic Psychoanalysis / Psychoanalytic Islam' was held at the University of Manchester on 26 and 27 June 2017 with financial support from artsmethods@manchester. The conference was organised by the College of Psychoanalysts – UK together with CIDRAL and Manchester Psychoanalytic Matrix. There were speakers and participants from Brazil, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Turkey, USA and UK.

The conference brought together scholars and practitioners of psychoanalytic and group-analytic approaches to psychotherapy and counselling. We explored the relationship between the clinic and culture in the contemporary world focusing on the challenge that Islam poses for psychoanalytic theory and practice, and the response of psychoanalysts to Islamic theory and practice. The conference located this critical project in the context of a series of historical transformations in the development of Freudian and post-Freudian work, transformations that continue to underpin psychoanalytic debate. The first stage began with a question about the role of Judaism and Jewish history in the formation of Freud's own work and dialogue with his followers and co-researchers in central Europe. The second continues with a question over the supposed Christianisation of psychoanalysis after Freud and the secularisation of the practice in the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition in the West. The third stage follows a time of the globalisation and fragmentation of the psychoanalytic movement, resistance to colonisation and post-colonial critique, and is one in which we might either conceive of the end of psychoanalysis or its renewal with Islam. In each case the crucial questions concern the form of each rather than the content of their ideas about reality. The speakers addressed the following questions: In place of attempts to render Islam amenable to psychoanalytic interpretation, how might we understand the significance of Islam for psychoanalysis today? What might an 'Islamic psychoanalysis' look like that accompanies and questions the forms of psychoanalysis that developed in the West? What might a 'psychoanalytic Islam' look like that speaks for while perhaps even transforming the forms of truth that Islam produces? What are the lessons of the encounter between psychoanalysis and Islam for clinical practice and cultural critique in and beyond the West? What bearing does this debate have on the identity of those positioned as 'Muslims' or 'psychoanalysts' in times of Islamophobia and professionalisation?

The Keynote Speaker sessions in Mansfield Cooper Building of the University of Manchester were open to the public. These sessions were: Amal Treacher Kabesh (Associate Professor in the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, author of *Postcolonial Masculinities: Emotions, Histories and Ethics*, Ashgate, 2013 and *Egyptian Revolutions: Repetition, Conflict, Identification*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2017) who spoke on 'Itjihad: The necessity of thinking anew'; Gohar Homayounpour (Psychoanalyst, member of the International Psychoanalytic Association, training and supervising psychoanalyst of the Freudian Group of Tehran, lecturer at Shahid Beheshti University, author of *Doing Psychoanalysis in Tehran*, MIT Press, 2013) who spoke on 'Islam ... the new modern erotic'; and Andrea Mura (Lecturer in Comparative Political Theory at Goldsmiths, University of London, author of *The Symbolic Scenarios of Islamism*, Routledge, 2016) who spoke on 'Euro-Islam: Slanted Margins and Deflected Mirrors'.