

Trigant Burrow

(Nicholas) Trigant Burrow, (September 7, 1875 - May 24, 1950) was an American psychoanalyst, psychiatrist, psychologist, and, alongside Joseph H. Pratt and Paul Schilder, founder of group analysis. He was the inventor of the concept of neurodynamics.

Life

Trigant Burrow was the youngest of four children in a well-off family of French origin. His father was an educated Protestant freethinker, his mother, however, was a practicing Catholic. He initially studied Literature at the Fordham University, Medicine at the University of Virginia, receiving his M.D. in 1900, and eventually Psychology at Johns Hopkins University (Ph.D., 1909). While working at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, he had the opportunity to attend a theater performance, during which he was introduced to two European doctors who were on a lecture tour in the United States: Sigmund Freud and Karl Jung. The same year Burrow traveled with his family to Zurich in order to undergo a year-long analysis by Jung. Upon his return to the United States he practiced as a psychoanalyst in Baltimore until 1926. The American Psychoanalytic Association was founded in 1911, and he acted as the president in 1924 and 1925. In 1926 Burrow founded the Lifwynn Foundation for Laboratory Research in Analytic and Social Psychiatry and published his first major work, *The Social Basis of Consciousness*. Until his death Burrow acted as the research director for the foundation and devoted particular attention to the physiological substructures of harmonious and rivaling participants within groups and societies, but also between states. His methods for measuring the electrical activity of the brain in connection with specific eye movements has led some to call him the father of neuropsychotherapy and trauma therapy [Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)].

Founder of Group Therapy

In 1921 Burrow was analyzed by one of his analysands, Clarence Shields. The student criticized the perceivable difference in authority during the analysis and demanded his teacher be more forthright. It came as a shock to Burrow when he realized, "that, in individual application, analytical attitude and authoritarian attitude can not be separated." When the roles of analyzer and patient were reversed it became clear that both displayed blind spots, adherence to social conventions and considerable utilization of defense mechanisms. In Trigant Burrow's eyes acknowledging this distortion of the analytical endeavor is indispensable to restoring relationships to normality. To Burrow and Shields, clarifying and ultimately diminishing the neurotic dislocation of emotions and cognition seemed possible only in a group setting. Both invited previous patients, relatives, and colleagues, including the Swiss Psychiatrist, Hans Syz, to sit in on some group sessions. Trigant Burrow coined the term group therapy and wrote three fundamental texts which were released between 1924 and 1927.

Psychoanalysis as a Social Science

Under the impression that Psychoanalysis should be further developed with more emphasis on the group, Burrow devised the concept of psychoanalysis as a social science.

Important publications

- *The Social Basis of Consciousness*, London 1927
- *The Structure of Insanity*, London, 1932
- *The Biology of Human Conflict*, New York 1937
- *The Neurosis of Man*, London 1949
- *Science and Man's Behavior*, New York 1953
- *Preconscious Foundations of Human Experiences*, New York, London 1964

- *Das Fundament der Gruppenanalyse oder die Analyse der Reaktionen von normalen und neurotischen Menschen, Lucifer-Amor: 21. 104–113*

References

External links

Trigant Burrow

<http://www.answers.com/topic/burrow-trigant>

A forgotten American psychoanalyst and pioneer of group analysis, Trigant Burrow was born in Norfolk, Virginia, on September 17, 1875, and he died on May 25, 1950, in Westport, Connecticut.

Burrow was the fourth child of John and Anastasia Burrow; his father was Protestant, his mother, a Catholic. His father was a scientifically-minded wholesale pharmacist. At the beginning of his higher education, Burrow attended Fordham University, where the dogmas of the Catholic church began to lose their significance for him. Following his graduation in 1895, he entered the medical school at the University of Virginia, 1899. One year was spent in post-graduate study of biology, one year touring Europe where he attended the psychiatric clinic in Vienna of Professor Wagner-Jarureg. Returning to America he spent three years in the study of experimental psychology, for which he received a PhD in 1909 based on his study of the process of attention. This was a subject that he pursued later in his psychoanalytic career when his interest turned back to physiological processes.

Burrow began to work with the Swiss psychiatrist Adolf Meyer at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, and was introduced to Freud and Jung who were in America for the Clark University Lectures. Burrow was immediately determined to study psychoanalysis and at the age of thirty-four moved with his family to Zurich for a year's analysis with Carl Gustav Jung. This involved considerable financial hardship, but he greatly valued his experience there. This was at the time when Freud and Jung were still closely associated. Burrow was proud of the fact that he was the first American-born person to study psychoanalysis in Europe. In 1910, he returned to Baltimore to work with Meyer at Johns Hopkins University. In 1911, he joined Ernest Jones and others to found the American Psychoanalytic Association (APA).

Between 1911 and 1918, Burrow published eighteen papers on psychoanalysis. His originality is shown in papers written from 1914 onwards. They anticipate much later work in infant development: He writes of the "preconscious" experience of the infant, which remains part of the psyche throughout life. He does not mean Freud's preconscious, that which is accessible to consciousness, but that which is prior to consciousness, when the infant is at one with the mother. For the infant the mother is the infant's love subject, not love object, and the preconscious mode is a feeling that goes out of the infant's primary identification with the mother. In the womb there is a primary physiological unity between infant and mother and a psychological union, a pre-objectless state. These manifest in later life as states of quietude and self-possession. The break in physiological

and psychological union with the mother through birth is restored when the infant nourishes at the breast, experiencing a semblance of organic unity, completion and satisfaction. This anticipates much later work, of Margaret Mahler on separate individuation, and Kohut and his self-object theory. Burrow saw resemblances between his ideas and those of Ferenczi.

Burrow's move into group analysis was preceded by his accepting the challenge of one of his analysands, Clarence Shields, to change places with him. Accepting the role of patient, Burrow was immediately impressed with the nature of his own resistances and an appreciation of the social forces at work in the analytic situation. Soon he extended his study to the group situation where he, his colleagues and pupils entered into an intensive study of group processes. Burrow's emphasis was on the analysis of the "here and now": "Group analysis or social analysis is the analysis of the immediate group in the immediate moment." Every member of the group, including the analyst, is both an observer of his own processes and is observed by all the other members of the group. The analyst does not have a privileged position.

Throughout his life Burrow thought of himself as being a psychoanalyst and a Freudian. He believed that he was extending the relational aspects that were already present in Freud and in correspondence tried to persuade Freud of the validity of his work with groups. He failed in this and in 1926 Freud wrote: "As far as the group is concerned an analytic influence is impossible." Some of Burrow's attempts to have his papers published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift* were blocked by Paul Federn and Sandor Rado.

Burrow saw the "I-persona" that is each individual's self-image as being derived from social influences. From infancy onward, society imposes concepts of what it is to be good and bad and each internalizes these social images and adapts to the demands of society. Thus individuals are divided from the primary organismic unity with society, the world; in group analysis individuals become aware of the strength of the social self-image and can begin to overcome its influence and to reunite with the group as a whole, with the wider society.

Between 1925 and 1928, Burrow published a further thirteen papers, nine of which were given to the APA. He tried to persuade his fellow analysts that the neurotic structures of the individual are replicated in the neurotic structures of society: society is hysterical too, has its own elaborate system of defense mechanisms. He was appointed president of the American Psychoanalytic Society in 1925, but continued his critique of psychoanalysts. "We need to rid ourselves of the idea that the neurotic individual is sick and that the psychopathologists are well. We need to accept a more liberal societal viewpoint that permits us to recognize without protest that the individual neurotic is in many respects not more sick than we ourselves." Burrow insisted that consensual observation is synonymous with scientific method and therefore it is only in the group "laboratory" situation that sexual fantasies, family conflicts, and the social mask become observable. At the annual meeting of the APA in 1925, he said that neurosis is social and that a social neurosis can be met only through a social analysis.

In 1933, when the APA reorganized itself, Burrow was asked to resign his membership. He accepted this with dignity and tried to remain on friendly terms with many of his former colleagues.

In the last phase of his work his interest turned back to the process of attention. Through physiological research and self-observation he described the process by which each individual experiences the tensions of being a member of society: that is, by muscular tension in the ocular and forehead regions, which he called "ditation." Through training it is possible to identify and to give up this process and to experience "cotention," an experience that restores the sense of unity with the social.

Burrow and his followers formed the Lifwynn Institute (Foundation for laboratory research in analytic and social psychiatry) in Westport, Connecticut, which has carried on his work.

Burrow's psychoanalytic and group analytic work anticipated the findings of much later workers. Sigmund Henrich Foulkes, the founder of group analysis, acknowledges his influence, having read his work in 1926. Many of the techniques of group therapy and of the encounter group movement originate from Burrow and his group laboratory. He wrote seven books and seventy articles, and had this comment: "Psychoanalysis is not the study of neurosis: it is a neurosis," but for Freud he was a "muddled bubbler" (letter to Sándor Rádo, September 30, 1925).

Bibliography

Burrow, Trigant. (1927). The group method of analysis. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 14, 268-280.

— —. (1949). *The neurosis of man: An introduction to the science of human behaviour*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

— —. (1958). *A search for man's sanity. The selected letters of Trigant Burrow, with biographical notes*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Syz, Hans. (1963). Reflections on group or phylo-analysis. *Acta Psychotherapeutica et Psychosomatica*, 2, 37-55.

—MALCOLM PINES

Read more: <http://www.answers.com/topic/burrow-trigant#ixzz20hLK1XAv>

© <http://www.answers.com/topic/burrow-trigant>