

**Announcement for the IAAP/Catholic University Freiburg joint conference
In cooperation with German Society for Analytical Psychology (DGAP) and
International Network for Research in Analytical Psychology (INFAP3)**

„The Process of Transformation“

Catholic University Freiburg, Germany; 4-6 Oct. 2024

The basic idea of all approaches to psychotherapy is to create conditions which bring about therapeutic change. The different schools of psychotherapy differ largely in how they explain the coming about of therapeutic change and the factors behind it. In analytical psychology, the general idea is that the process of psychotherapy is directed by inner forces (e.g. the transcendent function, the archetype of the Self) which are activated in the meeting of two personalities in the therapeutic encounter. There is also the idea that this process has a universal shape and can be mapped accordingly. Moments of change or turning points in the course of therapy are facilitated by the appearance of archetypal patterns or symbols. This process is called the individuation process and its general form and stages have been described in Jung's works in detail. This process forms the core of Jung's psychology and continues to be the heart of analytical psychology. The attempt to map this process in its universal form is the reason behind Jung's interest in alchemy, mythology (see the hero's journey) and spiritual traditions, because in all of these fields traces of this process can be found. This process has been described again and again in publications from the field of analytical psychology and in a large number of case descriptions. Nevertheless, in spite of the outstanding importance for analytical psychology, there have been few attempts to investigate this process systematically and in accordance with the rules and instruments of scientific research. The aim of the planned conference is to bring together scholars and researchers who have developed research designs and approaches to systematically investigate this process and provide empirical evidence as well as to contribute to a more precise description of its course and its stages.

A major aim of the planned conference is to provide a forum for researchers to come together and have an exchange on how to approach the investigation of the process of transformation in different fields as well as to present their findings. The overall aim of the network as well as the conference is to contribute to a progress in the description as well as the empirical foundation of this process. This forum will, of course, be open to other experts and researchers (who we want to include by way of a call for papers). Fields of investigation – which will be presented in different sections during the conference including breakout sessions: dreams and dream series in psychotherapies, typical process patterns in sandplay therapy pictures, pictures and images, connections between psychodynamic complexes and symbol imagery, and the correlations of all these patterns and processes to psychotherapy outcome.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, this universal process of transformation can also be found in spiritual traditions, e.g. the exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, the Buddhist path etc. So, one section of the conference will provide a forum for investigations into these traditions, again with the aim to contribute to the description of a universal form of the process of transformation.

In this context, the idea is to include the place of the conference, the medieval city of Freiburg with its outstanding historical monument, the Gothic cathedral. The Freiburg Cathedral is an outstanding example for the Gothic cathedrals of central Europe. It's outside as well as inside is covered with symbols in the form of sculptures and paintings, which form an iconographic program delivering the Christian path to salvation and thus providing an example of a path of transformation (therefore called the *biblia pauperum*, the Bible of the

poor/illiterate). But this official symbolism is only one layer of the symbolism contained in the Cathedral as a whole. Beneath this official layer of symbolism are more secret layers, including signs and symbols attached to the church by the guild of stonemasons, who formed a secret society and provided a path of initiation; finally, there is the hypothesis that alchemical symbols are attached to the church which can be read as a path of initiation/transformation according to the ideas of medieval alchemy. These backgrounds will be explained first by a lecture in the course of the conference which will be followed by an excursion to the Cathedral.

A preliminary sketch of the program:

- Introduction into the findings of contemporary psychotherapy process research provided by an expert psychotherapy researcher pointing to universal process patterns which can be found in psychotherapies from different schools
- Panel on spiritual transformation processes, discussing the similarities as well as differences between different spiritual and religious traditions
- Panel on dream research and the findings regarding process patterns in dream series from different fields of psychotherapy
- Panel on sandplay therapy and research approaches as well as findings regarding universal patterns in sandplay pictures
- Final panel discussion aiming at formulating future research strategies as well as insights into the process of transformation.

The planned conference is considered to be a working conference in the sense that not only completed studies and findings can be presented but also research approaches and designs and these can be discussed together with other researchers regarding their applicability to the investigation of transformation processes. In this sense, the conference should also provide a space for discussion, cooperation and networking in the development of appropriate research approaches for analytical psychology in the future.