

Clio's Psyche
*Call for Papers: The Relationship of Poetry and
Psychohistory/Psychoanalysis*

We would like papers 1,500-2,500 words on Poetry and Psychoanalysis with a
Longer Symposium paper of up to 3,500 words

Special Issue, Winter 2024

Submissions due October 1, 2023

Dear Colleague,

We invite papers from poets, scholars, therapists, and our readers who enjoy thinking about or writing poetry to join in moving from unconscious to conscious expression, including on the following subjects:

- What does the poetry you write or read mean to you?
- Why not write a poem on how psychoanalysis impacted your life?
- What is the therapeutic value of poetry?
- Why is the poetry of death, dying, and loss so helpful in the grieving process?
- Why did Freud recognize that the poets, as well as the philosophers before him, discovered the unconscious?
- [Why not write a poem relevant to psychohistory following the example by Inna Rozentsvit that is included at the end of the Call for Papers?*](#)
- How do trauma and poetic expression intersect?
- What is the relationship between poetry and politics and social activism?
- What poem has meant the most to you and why?
- Why not write a psychobiographical account of one of your favorite poets?
- How does poetry help people to confront their deepest unconscious desires?
- How do people connect through poetry?
- How can applied psychohistorical poetry contribute to scholarship without being “academic”?
- How does poetry make sense of repressed emotions, rendering the inchoate coherent?
- Why not compare the poetry of fear, love, hatred, patriotism, and war?
- Why is poetry so meaningful in the Russian tradition?
- Why is poetry so relatively insignificant in the American tradition?

We seek articles from 1,500-2,500 words—including your title, author name with affiliation, a 25-word abstract, 7-10 keywords, and your brief biography (3-4 sentences) ending in your email address. Send documents in Microsoft *Word* (*docx or doc) format by **October 1, 2023**. We urge you to share this Call for Papers with colleagues and lists.

This Call for Papers juxtaposes what Howard Stein calls “applied poetry” (that is, poetry meant to be useful, not abstract, clever, academic, poetry for its own sake, as is much modern academic poetry) and psychohistory. Applied poetry’s central contribution to psychohistory is

that it offers a different, complementary way of knowing, a method, about any topic, a perspective that deepens and broadens traditional narrative forms of inquiry.

This poetry draws upon the poet's countertransference, as well as the relationship between researcher/scholar and the "historical material," including interviews with live human beings. That relationship is transformed into a symbolic form called poetry, one that contains vital data at once about the scholar, the relationship, and the "object"/"subject" of inquiry. The psychohistorian's applied poetry emerges from the scholar's immersion in the "material," including the scholar's unconscious response to that "material." Of course, many submissions for this issue will come from therapists and others who just enjoy writing poetry that will fit within our general framework.

As a starting point, several questions and perspectives come to mind: What does applied poetry offer that other approaches do not? How do descriptive, evocative, and intersubjective (existing between conscious minds; shared by more than one conscious mind) thoughts about research data and interpretation come to be expressed in poetic rather than narrative form? How does applied poetry written by the psychohistorian "work" in research and scholarship? What is the role of the poet's countertransference in creating poems that evoke the historical eras and characters that took/take place in the external world?

The study of poetry has always been psychohistorical in nature given that the poet reflects the unconscious social and cultural determinants of his or her time, through a language of tropic and metaphorical association that on the surface seem arbitrary or inchoate, but actually, upon greater scrutiny, are artifacts, or mental representations, of memory and historical events. Throughout Western civilization, the poetic imagination is largely circumscribed by Western religious and cultural dogmas resulting in poets suppressing their own personal beliefs that might conflict with socially sanctioned ones. For example, in ancient poetry, the women poets attributed their lyrics to goddesses rather than themselves due to not having sufficiently individuated from the myths that regulated their lives. In the 19th century, Romantic poets like Keats and Wordsworth appropriated what was considered women's emotions into their works, as well as celebrated freedom and happiness for all, in sympathy with the Jacobians in the French revolution. Also, in the 20th century, the Beat poets reproduced the metrics of the improvisational jazz and blues musicians in New York City. Each historical epoch has produced poets who are in direct dialogue with social priorities and codes that they alternately imbibe or conflict with, as well as the unconscious idealizations that inform their poetry.

For this issue, we invite papers from scholars and readers alike who enjoy thinking about or writing poetry, apart from its historical or psychological implications. If you write poetry, please send us your reflections on what poetry means to you, and what therapeutic value it has had on you, given that poetry often emerges from unconscious repression. Also, you might want to look into the only paper Freud wrote about creative writers, "Creative Writing and Day Dreaming," and comment on the psychoanalytic insights he had about the tensions resolved in "play" and creative outlets. Additionally, we invite collaborations with other authors in conversation about poetry and interpretation, and how poetry should be interpreted. Finally, if you are interested in sharing a poem, please send it to us in an essay that comments on it theoretically, personally, or instructively. We are interested in that artistic dimension of you and what that contributes to your scholarly endeavors.

The Psychohistory Forum's Work-In-Progress Virtual Conference, "Poetry and Psychohistory/Psychoanalysis," on **November 4, 2023 (Saturday)**, from 10:30 am-1:00 pm (EDT), will feature papers and presentations by **Judith Harris, PhD, Juhani Ihanus,**

PhD, and Howard Stein, PhD. A webpage with registration directions will be set up for this meeting as well as the Forum's next regular virtual meeting on **September 30, 2023** (Saturday), when **Jeffrey Rubin, PhD**, will present "Shakespeare's Psyche as Revealed in His Plays."

***Clio's Psyche* and the Psychohistory Forum:**

It is the style of our scholarly quarterly to publish thought-provoking, clearly written articles usually based upon psychoanalytic/psychological insight and developed with examples from history, current events, and the human experience. We are open to all psychological and psychohistorical approaches and prefer that articles be personalized, without psychoanalytic/psychological terminology or jargon. At the moment, we are converting to a modified version of the latest APA citation system, which will have very few references and those overwhelmingly for direct quotes. We emphasize good literary style without referring to authorities except when essential. Indeed, we discourage citations except where there are quotations or they are otherwise essential. Submissions the editors deem suitable are anonymously refereed in our double-blind system. Once you have submitted your article, please **do not make any further edits** to the piece until we return it to you if necessary.

For those who are not familiar with our publication and its sponsor, *Clio's Psyche* is in its 29th year of publication by the Psychohistory Forum, a 41-year-old organization of academics, therapists, and laypeople holding regular scholarly meetings in Manhattan, at international conventions, and virtually. For information on our publication and back issues over a year old, go to our website at cliopsyche.org/archives. For more information on our style guidelines, go to cliopsyche.org/guidelines. Write to me for information on how to join our group and read our print journal.

Sincerely yours,

Paul

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Historian, Research Psychoanalyst, Online Professor, Editor, *Clio's Psyche* and author *The Making of Psychohistory: Origins, Controversies, and Pioneering Contributors* (Routledge, 2018) E-mail: cliopsycheeditor@gmail.com

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P.S. Many thanks to Judith Harris and Howard Stein for providing much of the text of this Call for Papers.

***The Embrace of Poetry and Psychohistory**

Inna Rozentsvit—*Clio's Psyche*

In the realm of *Clio's* gaze we stand,
Exploring poetry's illuminating hand,

Unveiling the depths of history's tide,
Where psyche's whispers in verses reside.

Psychoanalytical realms we tread,
Through poetic lines, our insights spread,
Dimensions hidden, unconscious themes,
In verse's tapestry, like fragmented dreams.

Poetry, a mirror to time's reflection,
Cultural echoes, a shared connection,
Norms and values, emotions bared,
In ink, the human psyche's layers aired.

From traumas etched in history's scroll,
Poets draw resonance from depths untold,
Collective wounds, the pain they weave,
In rhythmic verses, they grieve and believe.

In poets' lives, psychology's dance,
Shaping their words in rhythmic trance,
Experiences etched in ink and rhyme,
History's threads woven through time.

Archetypes linger, stories retold,
In verses ancient, and tales of old,
Cultural evolution, a tapestry spun,
In poetry's light, a narrative begun.

Politics wield power, ideologies they mold,
In poetic verses, their stories told,
Impact profound, dynamics' play,
In every line, shades of today.

Psychological landscapes, ink portrays,
Individuals' struggles, society's maze,
In poetry's mirror, reflections align,
Psychohistory's tale, in each verse's sign.

Comparative studies traverse the years,
Cultures and eras, emotions and fears,
Uncovering trends that span the globe,
In poems and histories, intertwined robe.

This special issue, a journey's quest,
Where poetry and psyche's dialogues rest,
Clio's call, a scholarly embrace,
Exploring together, in time and space.

Inna Rozentsvit, MD, PhD, is Associate Editor of the Psychohistory Forum who may be contacted at inna.rozentsvit@gmail.com.