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International

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Editorial

The GASi Winter Workshop "Northfield Revisited" took us away from familiar NW3 comfort to what felt like a remote mythical destination of pilgrimage in south Birmingham. It was a journey back in time to a place where supposedly things began, in the long cold corridors of what remains of a psychiatric hospital on the edge of the city, twice charged with the care of young traumatised soldiers during two world wars. But what did we learn from this revisiting? Did it take us forward? Did we learn about our present?

My involvement in the event, from having the idea in the first place some two years before, to, along with Linde Wotton and Marina Mojovic, sharing the primary preoccupation of planning and hosting the workshop, meant that for the best part I was not in a fit state to relax into the experience. It is pleasing, therefore, to have a second opportunity to listen again to the four lecturers (Tom Harrison, Bob Hinshelwood, Dieter Nitzgen and Diana Menzies) through the GASi website (http://groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/winter-workshop-2018/).

The most moving moment of the two days for me occurred on the packed bus, returning from the visit to the hospital, my bones still frozen from having spent the morning in the severely under-heated median group rooms. Snow-flakes the size of white rose petals were falling from the sky, giving post-industrial Northfield, Birmingham, a surprisingly magical other-worldly atmosphere. The mood on the bus was peaceful, warm and reflective. I was feeling an intense sense of relief, partly because the day before I'd been on the phone for 30 minutes arguing with the bus company that we'd booked a 69-seater bus and not the 52-seater they were planning to send us. An event like this is made up of a regular flow of such minor snag-potential details.

This issue of Contexts, in combining word and image, including David Glyn's President's Foreword, takes us further into the experience of revisiting Northfield. There's a photo essay by Rob White, some poetry and a few reflective pieces. Many thanks to the authors who have shared their experiences with us: Malcolm Peterson, Cosmin Chita, Sean Cathie and Kevin Power.

This first issue of 2018 also has three papers from the XVI IAGP Summer Academy in Granada, June 2017: "The Transcultural Competence of Groups". I am grateful to Pam Kleinot for recommending these papers, each of which, including her own on the survival of Nelson Mandela's humanity despite the 27 years he was imprisoned by the apartheid state of South Africa, highlight the

profound challenges of surviving and working in contexts of war and extreme injustice. Laura Delgado Alcaraz outlines the challenges of working in the context of humanitarian crisis. Tamara Čavić-Đurić takes us into her work as a psychodramatist, working during the terrifying and criminal NATO bombing of Belgrade.

In this issue, I am also grateful to Earl Hopper, who has given us "a few personal remarks" by way of an obituary for one of the key contemporary thinkers and practitioners in the field of groups, Yvonne Agazarian.

Finally, Contexts is currently being redesigned as a digital publication. Brazilian designer Andre Pessoa, who designed GASi's new website as well as the publicity material used in Berlin to announce the next GASi Symposium in Barcelona, has started the work which will embed future issues in the website. By the next issue, we will no longer be using the Yumpu online publishing platform which we have been using to read Contexts since early 2016.

Peter Zelaskowski

President's Foreword

Ghosts of the Past, Spirits of Beginnings

Those of us, who travelled to Northfield for the Winter Workshop in January, made the pilgrimage for a variety of motives; looking to recover roots, to honour pioneers in our field or to give some concrete form to a place which has acquired legendary status in our collective narrative.

The Northfield Experiments took place in the latter years of WWII, between 1943 and 1946, when the war was reaching its climax and a post-war dream must have been taking shape. A generation of young men and women who had been mobilized in a great theatre of collective effort and shared trauma, would return home and demand something different from the world they had left behind. The experiments in community and group treatment, which took place in Northfield, were part of a far broader response to experiences of war-time suffering and collective struggle. Out of this 'soldiers' matrix' would emerge post-war social-democratic settlements. The history of Group Analysis in the UK has coincided with the lifetime of the welfare state and the return to Northfield was lent poignancy by the awareness that we are now living through a profound crisis in that post-war settlement.

This photograph of Northfield patients made me catch my breath, when Tom Harrison showed it to us – a reminder of the flesh-and-blood group members, whose courage and vulnerability created the possibility of the Northfield groups. I felt in touch with the way in which, within a group of people, a sense of possibilities is suddenly ignited - the alchemical moment. The journey had brought us, not only

to the founders of the group as a starting point, but also to its members.

To recover a founding moment, it was necessary to forget.

Writing this, I am in anticipation of Robi Friedman's Foulkes Lecture, in May, "Beyond Rejection, Glory and the Soldier's Matrix", which may pitch itself into similar territory to that in which Bion, Rickman and Foulkes found themselves when they were improvising those early groups. At any rate, something that emerges from states of war and mobilization seems to be promised.

Later in the year, in July, the 4th GASI Summer School in Ljubljana, has taken 'Between Generations' as its theme. This touches on the cycle of beginnings, on the one hand everyday, and on the other, full of a potential for transformation – a passing over and an overthrowing.

Finally, we will meet in November, in a Workshop which will invite us to both re-visit the Large Group as an established institution and to enter it, once again, as something new. As part of the attempt to pose questions about the nature of the LG, we have programmed the GASI AGM alongside the workshop LG's. We wonder whether this may allow the two forms to exercise an influence on each other.

when travelling back in time
take no hand luggage
no texts of any kind
travel light
leave your body in the lockers provided
forget the key - no-one will run off with it in your absence

the route we take is wide and long
but many find it short
as we approach our destination
you will begin to see the glow
emanating from that precious time
before we knew so much.

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Be a Contexts Writer!

"Substitute "damn" every time you're inclined to write "very"; your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be". ***Mark Twain***

Contexts welcomes contributions from GASi members and non-members on a variety of topics: Have you run or attended a group-analytic or group psychotherapy workshop? Are you involved in a group-analytic or group psychotherapy project that others might want to learn about? Would you like to share your ideas or professional concerns with a wide range of colleagues? If so, send us an article for publication by post, e-mail, or fax. Articles submitted for publication should be between 500 and 5,000 words long, or between one and ten A4 pages. Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, a reply to an earlier article published here, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

Articles are welcome from all those who work with groups in any discipline: whether practitioners, trainers, researchers, users, or consultants. Accounts of innovations, research findings on existing practice, policy issues affecting group therapy, and discussions of conceptual developments are all relevant. Group therapy with clients, users, professional teams, or community groups fall within our range.

Length: Full length articles; of up to 5,000 words, should show the context of practice and relate this to existing knowledge. We also accept brief contributions which need focus only on the issue at hand: brief descriptions, reviews, personal takes of workshops or events attended, humorous asides, letters and correspondence.

Presentation: articles, letters, etc. should ideally be in Word format and forwarded as an email attachment to the Editors.

Please don't worry about language, grammar and the organisation of your piece. We, as editors, receive many pieces from non-English speaking countries and it is our job to work with you to create a piece of writing that is grammatical and reads well in English. This

help also extends to English speakers who may need help and advice about the coherence and organisation of a piece of work.
Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

Now that Contexts is a digital publication only, the deadlines are different. We are now able to receive your writing up to only a week or so before publication.

- For publication at the end of March: March 15th
- For publication at the end of June: June 15th
- For publication at the end of September: September 15th
- For publication at the end of December: December 15th

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GASi New Members at Northfield

New Generation of trainee group analysts from the IGA, London:
Felix Korf (German), Karolina Maria Martin (Polish) and Georgia Costa (Greek Cypriot

GASi Winter Workshop 2018 "Northfield Revisited"

Exhaustion Centre – A Photo Essay

By Rob White

Asylum Map

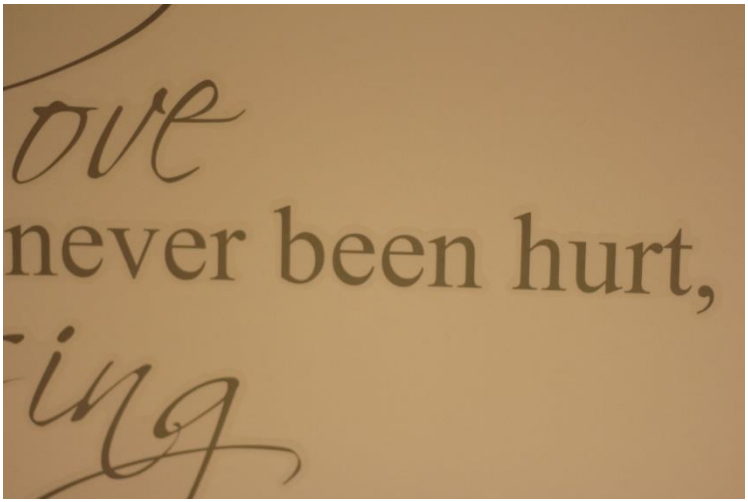
Arrival

Window

Scholars

Children

Median Room

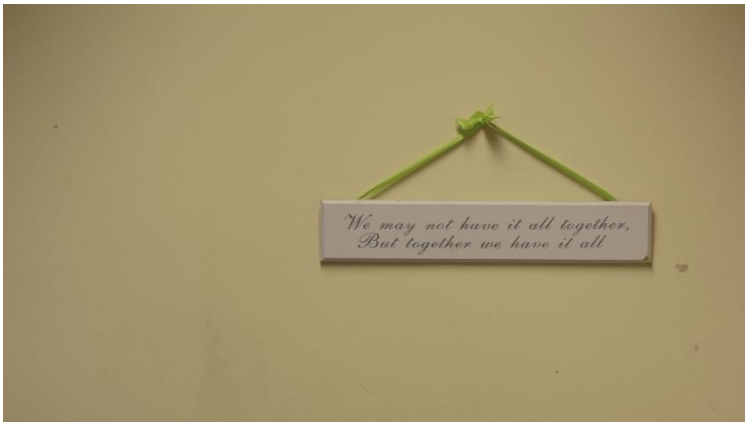


Hurt

Surveillance

Pilgrimage

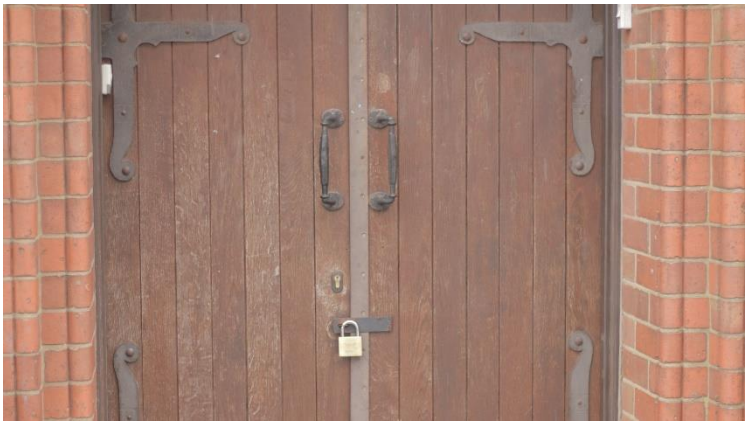
Nostalgia



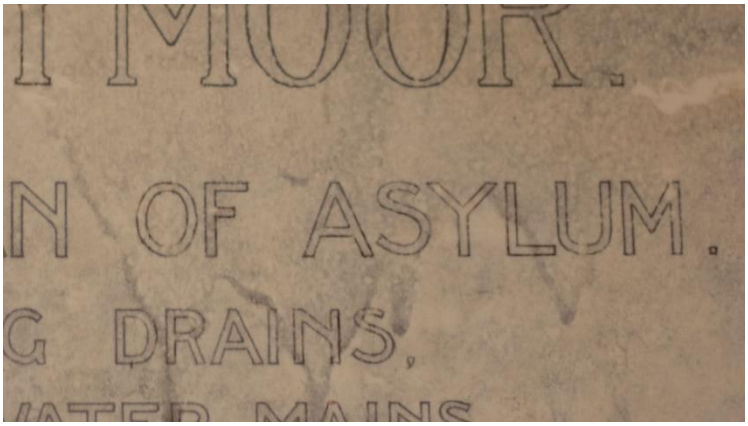
Hope

Old Wall

Leaving



No Entry



Asylum

Walking in a Winter Wonderland Reflections from the winter workshop "Northfield Revisited"

By Malcolm Peterson

I and my partner awoke early on the Friday morning to make the journey out of London for the winter workshop, a sense of excitement in the air about what awaited us in Birmingham. My partner and I have both worked in therapeutic communities, mine were in the NHS and prior to this in an addiction service for a national charity. My partner currently works in an all-female addiction treatment centre that is a concept based therapeutic community. I am a full clinical member of GASi, my partner is not a member of GASi so I guess some might refer to her as "general public" though she does have a Diploma in group work practice from the IGA. There is also a history of my family members in the past serving in the military, coming from Yorkshire I recall someone saying to me as a younger man about future career prospects "it's either the army or the pit".

So, as we set off in the car, there was a mixture of excitement, nostalgia and anxiety in the air, the anxiety was more related to the car I think as we had a problem with it the day before. However, the old girl made good progress up the M40 (the car that is). We stopped on route for breakfast at Beaconsfield, the crisp clearer air clearly marking our exit from London, which we both were grateful for, having the opportunity to be away from London for a few days.

Once we left the services and headed back on the motorway we were surprised how quick it was to get to Birmingham, despite a near miss of a van pulling out in front of us with no warning on the M40.

We arrived at the Beeches fairly early, so spent some time milling around in the foyer of the hotel, and after registering we were invited into one of the rooms to watch a short film about Northfield, this was in the company of only a few others who had also gathered early. We were really pleased that Tom Harrison was talking us through the film, it felt like a real treat, what a lovely way to start off. Someone so experienced who carries so much history yet is so humble. After this and a short break we had the lecture by Tom Harrison as well, closely followed by the lecture with Bob Hinshelwood.

In between the lectures we had been to check into our room at the Beeches, which was rather disappointing, as it was rather smelly when we went in there. This left us with no option, but to leave the

room and book into another hotel closer to the centre of Birmingham, which was a bit of a shame, though not too much of a hassle.

In the large group I was surprised when I looked around the room, although fairly full, there weren't as many there as I'd expected. This left me wondering about the future of group analysis in the UK, it seems to be slowly slipping away, like an elderly relative who has seen better days, and who clings on to the past for solace in old age.

In the large group there was a few challenges to some of the military culture and to British Military history. A "young man" passionate to tell us about the part of Northern Ireland where he comes from and of the impact of having a British military presence in that part of Northern Ireland, an area referred to by troops as "bandit country". There was also talk of bombs, the Birmingham pub bombs, and references made to current terror threats, warnings that are present in train stations about "unattended luggage", though the nature of the threat was not discussed, only the past atrocities carried out by the IRA. I was thinking about my own family history, the impact of murder on my family by the IRA who shot and killed a relative in Northern Ireland, whilst at the same time my mind was flitting back and forth to atrocities committed by people in the military in Northern Ireland, as well as terrorist groups that might have called themselves loyal to the crown, such as the "Shankill butchers".

The following day we were again up early, this was the big day, the trip out to Northfield, the actual place, I had passed by it some weeks earlier whilst on a train to Redditch on a work related trip, itching to get off the train and have a look around, though I managed to abstain from this. So, as we set off from the Hotel in the cold rain, the excitement was palpable, we were heading to the place where it all happened, and not only that we were staying and experiencing being in some of the buildings whilst partaking in a group, well two groups actually with a short tea break in between. The nearer we got to Northfield the weather got more and more wintery and the rain was turning to snow. We arrived early again, though took the opportunity to have a walk around and take some pictures of the place. I felt a bit sad as we walked around the back, seeing a new housing estate where the larger part of the hospital would have been, though I pressed on taking a few more pictures. A lady who works at the centre, greeted me, directing me to where the groups would take place. I had a brief conversation with her, she had lived in the area for many years and remembered well when the Hospital was in use. I wanted to talk more, but the coach arrived, with the troops on it, well not troops, but you know what I mean, the raiding party from the beeches.

Once inside the building I was shocked at the lack of heating, it felt more like a cold storage cellar then a children's nursery which it is currently being used for. I thought a nice cuppa would warm me up before our median groups started. I was pleased that I was going to be in Chris Scanlon's group. He can initially seem cold and harsh, though is a warm welcoming chap with a lot to offer people. Once in the group room it soon became clear that the room was also freezing, and the heating not adequate. During the time in that first group I thought about soldiers' minds, the minds of those soldiers who had been to Northfield, frozen with fear, the horrors that they might have experienced, the deprivation of days, weeks, months in cold dark wet trenches, whist being attacked/bombed and preparing to attack. After a short break, we were back in the group again, same room, though the conductor had been very active in the break, acquiring more heaters. Had he gone on a clandestine mission and got us more, or had he discussed our plight and negotiated more heaters? Had he done this through fear of a mutiny within the group? I personally felt cared for, that he had gone and got the heaters, and didn't leave us sitting and freezing. Sitting in the group I noticed the snow getting heavier and heavier outside, though when we went in the snow wasn't settling. Upon leaving the building I was pleasantly surprised that it had settled, and was still snowing and, with the biggest snowflakes one could see, it did give it a rather magical surreal feeling. The drive back to the Beeches for lunch was rather treacherous and exciting, though I was so grateful for the heating in the car, I've never been so pleased to feel the heat kick in once we had been driving a bit.

After a well-deserved lunch we had another couple of lectures. I was really pleased to hear Diana Menzies speak about her time at the Henderson Hospital, again so much experience yet so humble, though again for me a sense of sadness as the Henderson Hospital was closed, in such a cruel way. I had worked with people who had been staff there when It closed, a trauma that will never leave them.

The last large group the "young man" was back in full force, today no fighting talk, he wanted to fuck. Young men, hey, they're either fighting or fucking, as I once heard an old Yorkshire man say. The young man aroused the group, though maybe not in a way he hoped for, some strong language was used, "cunt" not discussed often in large groups, I thought it sounded rather phallic, like cock I suppose, more phallic then pussy. I am not sure if he had the luck of the Irish on that day, though I wish him well.

We left Birmingham on the Sunday morning, via Oxford,

taking a look around Oxford in an attempt to keep our excitement alive. It felt for me a real privilege to have had the opportunity to visit Northfield and be in a group there, despite the freezing cold.

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Northfield by the Sea

By Cosmin Chita

Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann (1926 – 1973) spent many years living in the shadow of depression and drug addiction. In 1964, she travelled in the company of a younger admirer to Prague, where she wrote one of her finest poems in a brief moment of light. "Böhmen liegt am Meer" ("Bohemia by the sea") is ultimately about the power of artistic creativity capable of liberating an entire landscape (Bohemia) from its geographical constraints and moving it to the edge of the unforgotten freedom of the sea.

This year's GASI winter workshop in Birmingham and Northfield has certainly raised the expectations that usually arise when we visit places where others have gone before us in search of a connection that creates identity. The four lectures tried to consider this connection from different angles.

Tom Harrison (who wrote the only book about Northfield 18 years ago and led us through the site on the second, snowy day of the workshop) and Bob Hinshelwood (who described Northfield in the preface to the book as "one of those myths of creation") addressed the subject from a historical perspective. Dieter Nietzgen was able to tell exciting stories about another moment in history when Patrick de Maré was working with exhausted soldiers directly behind the front. Diana Menzies then helped all of us who had travelled from far and wide to learn more about what happened after Northfield, with a look at the Henderson Clinic and the British tradition of therapeutic communities.

The encounter with the site itself, where the median groups took place on the morning of day two, remained ambiguous. In the rooms, the radiators had been turned off, there were water stains on the corridor ceiling (like a leak in this historic, half-decommissioned container), and the smell of the canteen reminded me of an archive I have not visited for many years. Even the once proud chapel seemed abandoned, the glass windows perforated. But we found our way through these circumstances and the dialogue that followed replaced the lack of heat.

The large group was dominated by topics brought up by our British colleagues: the crisis in the National Health Service, the destruction of the culture of therapeutic communities, and repeatedly the relationship of a waning empire with its neighbours near and far.

In a certain sense, I think the large group was replicating something that was a reality 75 years ago and what Robi Friedman has called the "soldier matrix": a combination of tired, selfless heroes looking for an objectifiable enemy. What can be done when old enemies become friends and even overtake us? Will the vanquished win in the end? Have we actually freed ourselves from these radical structures of enmity?

In retrospect, I believe that the large group was suffering from a sense of guilt from having come too late to this place. This guilt also prevented a closer look at the resistance that led to this long-overdue visit.

But groups do work in their way. And this not only reproduced a historical matrix of young rebels who do not want to sacrifice themselves, of experienced and exhausted soldiers, or even veterans persisting on a long-pacified front. I also think that our strange group managed to bring Northfield to the sea, and perhaps nearer to the present, with its specific opportunities, obstacles, and challenges.

As Bachmann wrote:

"Liegt Böhmen noch am Meer, glaub ich den Meeren wieder.
Und glaub ich noch ans Meer, so hoffe ich auf Land."

(“If Bohemia still lies on the sea, then I can once again believe in seas. / And if I can believe in the sea, then I can hope for land.")

The landscape exists only dialectically in the contemplation of the sea and vice versa. The workshop gave me the idea that group analysis is not primarily concerned with the concept of difference, but affinity, connection to the stranger, transforming the enemy into a confidant by the difference revealed in the group.

Foulkes told the soldiers in Northfield that they could say anything in the group because there they weren't in the army. I personally drove to Northfield tracing the steps Foulkes shared in an anecdote in his introductory book of 1948. Presumably, the story of the conflicts in the orchestra later led him to regard the group leader as the "conductor".

How lucky we are that Northfield is now by the sea, easily accessible to us all.

"Kommt her, ihr Böhmen alle, Seefahrer, Hafenhuren und Schiffe unverankert. Wollt ihr nicht böhmisch sein, Illyrer, Veroneser,

und Venezianer alle. Spielt die Komödien, die lachen machen
Und die zum Weinen sind. Und irrt euch hundertmal,
wie ich mich irrte und Proben nie bestand,
doch hab ich sie bestanden, ein um das andre Mal."

("Come here, all you Bohemians, sailors, wenches in port, and unanchored ships. / Don't you all want to be Bohemians, Illyrians, Veronese, and Venetians? Play the comedies that make you laugh // and make you cry. And if you get lost a hundred times / like I have gotten lost and never withstood the tests, but I did withstand them at one time or another.")

I often use metaphors related to sailing in groups. The sea represents the field, the shores the limits of how far we can unfold ourselves. But there are other forces in the field at work here: the changeable wind conditions, insidious underwater currents, and the hidden sandbanks and rocks. The ship (our group) cannot simply stay the course but must take the conditions in the field into account. The most efficient way between A and B is not linear, but instead requires well-planned manoeuvring where the crew works together as one. In building up the group's ability to navigate change, the role of the group leader becomes clear.

Fluctuat nec mergitur!
("The ship is heaving to and fro but isn't sinking.")

Ahoy! And on to the next port!

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Northfield: The Short-lived Charisma of the Hospital as a Therapeutic Institution

By Sean Cathie

The question that hovered unasked, at the Winter Workshop, was how has the glorious story of Northfield, and the innovation that it represents, led to the heirs of this innovation, particularly the therapeutic communities and group analysts, to become so marginalized. My title is a nod both to Tom Main's well-known lecture about the Northfield experiment and also to Max Weber's concept of charisma. (Main: 1989; Holmberg: 1978). Both references point to the social and contextual dimensions of the Northfield experiments which contain clues for answering that question.

Weber's concept of charisma had social as well as psychological dimensions although it is the latter that has been most widely used. Both identify a form of authority that was not legitimated in the usual formal and traditional ways because it was a novel response to a crisis situation to which the usual forms of authority were failing to respond to effectively. Often such innovations do not last beyond the crisis. The challenge for them is to develop institutional forms that will preserve and continue the creative discoveries and insights of the original charismatic leader.

The Charisma of Northfield Hospital as a Therapeutic Institution

I am suggesting that we consider the Northfield experiments in terms of Weber's concept. Ben Shepherd's *War of Nerves* opened my eyes to the significance of the innovation that Rickman and Bion initiated (Shepherd: 2000). He placed the Northfield experiments in a larger context, namely, the ongoing struggle that doctors and soldiers had to work together during the First and Second World Wars. In neither War did this collaboration go easily. Soldiers, not surprisingly perhaps, did not want to have to deal with psychiatrists and the latter had a real struggle both to relate to the soldiers in charge and also to devise effective and appropriate treatment rather than repeating what they had done in civilian life. What was developed at Northfield is significant, then, because it transcended these tensions and was a fruitful collaboration between soldiers and psychiatrists. As such, it is an example of charisma in terms of Weber's concept.

With this in mind, then, I shall review the Northfield history highlighting four specific factors, that enabled Northfield to develop

into the institution that we continue to remember, and three key stages in its development.

These four factors are: The Second World War, the informal friendship network to which Rickman and Bion belonged, the preparatory thinking they and others were doing at that time, and finally, those authority figures who were their allies.

The Second World War

The nation being at war, and the Army being faced with a continuing sequence of unprecedented challenges, provided the context in which Rickman and Bion developed their ideas. Strikingly, even before the first Northfield experiment, the Army was creating the conditions which would encourage psychiatrists to think "outside the box" by drawing on their expertise for a range of training issues, such as how to prepare soldiers for battle. It was in this advisory role that they came to contribute to the innovative project that preceded Northfield and which gave them credibility with the Army, namely, the War Office Selection Boards which used the 'leaderless group method' to identify those soldiers who had the potential to be trained as officers. Significantly, this need, for a new selection method, arose because the existing practice was failing seriously. In other words, the Army was also having to innovate, or to think "outside the box". In using the psychiatrists in this way, it was providing the institutional framework within which their creative thinking could find effective clinical form, and also the institutional processes that would continue their work even after they had been killed off, metaphorically speaking.

In other words, there was a synergy between the thinking that Rickman and Bion had started to do before the war and how the Army approached the massive task of training large numbers of new soldiers when the fate of the nation was under threat. To put it in terms of Weber's concept, the creation of a new kind of hospital was an innovation done in partnership between the medical innovators and the existing authority, the Army. What distinguished their thinking from that of their colleagues was their ability to transcend their professional expertise and to think creatively, or from first principles, both about what kind of treatment was appropriate and effective in war time and also how those same principles could inform responses to other issues.

The Friendship Network

However, Rickman and Bion were not lone pioneers. They were part of a network of psychiatrists centred on the Tavistock Clinic and

influenced by psychoanalysis and the left-wing movements of the time. This combination of influences was the basis for their interest in social psychology and the application of psychoanalytic thinking (Harrison: 2002). It was this that helped them to think in terms of the total situation of the nation being at war and the challenge this posed to them as psychiatrists.

Preparatory Thinking

Similarly, the thinking that Rickman and Bion generated bore the marks of their time and of the various movements of social change that responded to the poverty of the time. Many of these aimed in different ways to create or work with community. The Peckham Experiment was one example. This was "an unintentional therapeutic community" which developed out of an experiment by doctors to study and promote the health of local residents. The attraction was membership of a swimming pool and members were given information and resources to help them develop the health of their families (Bridger: 2000). This was one resource that Bridger drew on for the design of the second Northfield experiment. As we heard at the Winter workshop, they were particularly influenced by Kurt Lewin's social psychology and thought about the role of social systems. This led them to examine their own role as psychiatrists at a time of national emergency, considering how to relate their professional practice to this crisis situation and not simply pursue the goals of psychiatric or therapeutic practice. Its influence can also be detected in the insight behind Bion's contribution to the leaderless group and how he described the qualities that an officer needed, namely, that they needed to be able to balance their own ambition and anxieties with the welfare of the group and fulfilling its task.

Allies with Authority

Perhaps even more important than the professional network was the presence of two 'remarkable' senior Army officers. Sir Ronald Adams was the Adjutant General during the whole of the War. He did more than anyone else to further the schemes put forward (Trist: 1992). "He … had the foresight, sense of strategy and breadth of vision to encourage and maintain these developments" (Bridger: 1992). The other officer in a key position was Ronald Hargreaves, "a rare psychiatrist with initiative and administrative and political sensibility who initiated, supported and nurtured key projects until they got off the ground" (Bridger: 2000). A third helpful figure was Tommy Wilson, who had been a close colleague of Bion's in the pre-

war Tavistock and later became its Chairman, after the war. Bridger reports that it was he who, having followed with interest both Northfield 1 and the new officer selection boards, convinced the War Office "that any therapeutic organisation developed to cope with the problems of repatriated POWs could not be medically based. It had to be regimental. The army had been responsible for getting them into 'the bag', it had now to accept responsibility for getting them out of it in as good shaped as when they went in." The fact that the eventual decision was taken at Cabinet level underlines the role that authority structures play (Bridger: 2000). Wilson, then, was a significant go-between, helping to secure the support of authority at the highest level.

Institutionalising the Charisma

The challenge for a charismatic innovation is to find appropriate institutional housing for the new idea or practice so that it can survive the passing of the creative leader. As I have already noted, this was partly met by the innovators working within and responding to the concerns of existing authority structures. As a result of that and the support of the friendship network and their allies among the authority figures, it was possible for the second Experiment to be set up with new leaders who understood and were sympathetic to it. It is also the case that this framework provided the time necessary for this. This context provided opportunities for Bion's and Rickman's key insights to be absorbed by others and also to shape further projects including the civilian re-settlement programme and the POW repatriation programme. Unusually for psychiatric issues, the authorities re-framed clinical issues in social and military terms and a significant number of people understood the point of this. The Army, in other words, shared in the creation of this charisma.

The Loss of the Charisma

Following the ending of the War, the institutional situation changed radically. There was no longer one unifying authority structure, as the Army had been for Northfield. All those who had been involved in the charisma were discharged from the armed forces and had to find their place in the new post-war, civilian situation. This led to a process that was both diversifying and fragmenting; old affiliations and alliances and new ambitions took those who had been part of the charisma in different directions. This is reflected in what the key players went on to do. When Main reshaped the Cassel Hospital into a therapeutic community unit he gave a key role to psychoanalysis

which in turn provided psychiatrists training to be psychoanalysts an ideal institutional setting. This gave such trainees a double strand of institutional backing but reshaped the Northfield practice within the institutions of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, two well-established and institutionalised practices. Foulkes, on the other hand, put his energies into developing group analysis and, later, the Institute. This was seeking to develop the institutional housing for a key part of the Northfield practice but not for its whole. Bridger, who was not a doctor, went on to work in the Tavistock Institute tradition of consultancy to business and other organisations. Post-war, then, the institutionalisation of the original charisma came to an end as the structures needed in war were dismantled. What was lost in this diversification was an overarching institutional framework that enabled the administrative and clinical aspects of the hospital to be intentionally organised in harness with each other and with a social purpose that embraced the clinical one.

Reflections

Reviewing the history of the Northfield experiments in terms of charisma has helped me to appreciate its significance in terms of its very particular context of time and place; perhaps only a crisis on a national scale could have created the conditions in which the usual compartmentalisations were overcome. But what about our time?

Northfield has a role, I suggest, as an interpretive lens, enabling us to critique on our own situation more deeply. For me, doing so highlights the loss of shared common purpose and the growth of social inequality that has contributed to our present unsatisfactory state of affairs in terms of health and social care as well as to the marginalising of the therapeutic community model. It also challenges our tendency to think in narrowly professional terms and to ask what it would mean, to emulate Rickman and Bion in thinking in societal terms too.

I make this suggestion having used it, in my doctoral research, as a conversation partner, researching and critiquing the Church's practice of pastoral care and authority and found it very helpful.

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Visiting Northfield Hospital January 20th 2018

By Kevin Power

The brick and stone-built water tower looking
As though displaced from Florence: the chapel
Crouching amid the tarmac, sheltering over
The years many prayers of hopeful compliance:
The remaining snow-sugared buildings at the end of
A lawn-bordered path; all hunkered and waiting this latest
Intake of temporary residents…

As we unpacked from the crowded red coach
We gazed at what we were unsure of,
Photos from yesterday an uncertain guide…
The snowy chill herded us towards the cafe –
The morgue of past days.
Then warmed with coffee from canteen ladies,
As analysts we sought unbidden our rooms for groups.

Once heated and tightly packed the meeting, barely noticed, began;
We fell to the task of talk. At the steamed-up windows,
Rivulets ran down the glass, and eighteen people uttered
Thought and feeling, affect and response, entangled with
One another in ways not understood. Through ninety minutes,
Hearts and voices struggled with histories and origins,
Sickness and distress, misconstrued pasts strewn among the
Detritus of the present.

Then out to be decorated by snowflakes the size of
Fifty-pence pieces! A tour of what remained led by Tom Harrison,
Warm chronicler of the hospital.
We stood and followed like visitors to a camp
Preserved from the gulag.
His remark, "And here was found a man hanging
From this tree…", quashed some part of hope in this foundation place; not all
Those stories ended alive.
The photo from yesterday of six young soldiers
Acting 'grown-up' from days of Foulkes and Main appeared in mind
to wonder if any had been so tempted?

Then back inside for our second meeting where
Once more was tackled what this place had meant and stirred in
Each of us.
For we had come to sniff the scent of a myth that might be
Now in decline, so we might imbue the heady days of those
New ideas enacted round these walls and rooms. For
Right here was the message initially enacted
And this brought worth to our visit and us.

We came out again to the snow in relief and regret, leaving behind
New sounds of children's shrieks and movement.
The place still lives! Though held now by different hands.
Aboard our coach we spoke halting immediate responses -
While our hidden hearts struggled with what we had seen and said.

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Papers from The XVI IAGP Summer Academy in Granada, June 2017: "The Transcultural Competence of Groups"

The value of being human in contexts without justice – an approach towards pain and hope using Nelson Mandela[1]

By Pam Kleinot

'As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison'

Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long, must be born a society of which all humanity will be proud
1994 inaugural speech

Introduction

Nelson Mandela came out of prison after 27 years without bitterness. Throughout his life he showed an unshakable belief in humanity and in the dignity of all people. He was even able to regard his own prison guards with compassion. The essence of Mandela's greatness was to change himself fundamentally during his period in jail and emerge as a potent leader and example for all humanity.

He puts into context that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. Mandela, who spent 27 years in jail for his terrorist activities, is testimony to how his fight for freedom won the day. He became one of the most venerated world leaders. South Africa was ruled by terror and met with resistance that gained world-wide support, so that ultimately, through international sanctions and

[1] A version of this paper was given at the Summer Academy in Granada entitled "Groups Between Worlds and Cultures" in June 2017

negotiations, the country was able to hold its first democratic multi-racial elections in 1994.

The South Africa story is remarkable because of Mandela and without him it could have turned out very differently.

I am a white South African. It was scary growing up there with the constant fear that a violent revolution was inevitable. I first became aware of the problem when I was 7 years old after what became known as the Sharpeville Massacre, where police had opened fire on an unarmed protest march. I shall never forget my pale-faced father returning home after leading the surgical team that tended the victims. He was shocked at finding the dead and injured had been shot in the back. It had been a peaceful protest by thousands of blacks against the pass laws which controlled every black person's move. That event provoked international outrage and fuelled anti-apartheid feelings. I later became a journalist and covered many political trials where those who were charged with attempting to overthrow the state said peaceful change had failed.

Mandela changed South Africa and brought hope to the world. In this paper I will explore some of the key lessons which are helpful with our patients, groups and communities who often feel unfairly treated and struggle to find healing. They feel stuck, bitter or even vengeful and are unable to move on with their lives. I will outline his early history which shaped his life. He was an extraordinary man. He rejected the idealisation of him as a saint, saying, "I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying". He, like all of us, was not without his personal struggles. He had a turbulent youth, tempestuous relationships with woman, a son who died from Aids. He acknowledged his weaknesses openly which humanised him.

The early years leading to political awareness

In 1918 Mandela, one of 13 children, was born in a small village in the Eastern Cape province near Mtata. He grew up in an era when rural communities were divided into clans ruled over by powerful chiefs or 'kings'. He was born into the Madiba clan and given the name *Rolihlahla* which means "pulling the branch of the tree". His father was principal counsellor to the acting King of the Thembu people. After his father died when he was nine, the young boy was taken into the chief's home where he was raised in the traditions of Xhosa practices and beliefs. He observed the operation of the chieftaincy and sat in on tribal meetings held to receive complaints against the regent or to resolve various issues. It was these meetings where Mandela

learnt that listening precedes understanding, which precedes true resolution.

Mandela was the first child in his family to receive formal education. He had been schooled in religious institutions and later spoke of how important faith had been for him, particularly during his long years in prison.

His first encounter with politics was at Methodist College where he learned about the African National Congress (ANC), which had been formed in 1912 to represent black interests. It remained 'something vague' for him until he went to Fort Hare College in 1939, a small university for about 200 Africans, which was a hothouse for the black intellectual elite and it had a profound influence on Mandela. He met political activists including Oliver Tambo, later to be his law partner and his successor as ANC President.

He had wanted to become a court interpreter or civil servant and studied law, politics and English, but was expelled from the university when he rebelled against the authorities for not allowing the student representative council to be representative of the students over complaints about food. He gradually became politically aware and radicalised.

By 1951 Mandela had completed his law degree and invited Oliver Tambo to join him in setting up South Africa's first black legal firm. When he moved to Johannesburg, he was subjected to the many humiliations that all black people bore, which ignited his fighting spirit. He lived in an area known as 'Dark City', which had no electricity, water, or sanitation services. The first mass protest he helped organise was a bus boycott. Soon his leadership qualities and fearlessness in the fight for people's rights earned him higher positions in the ANC.

In his 1995 autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* Mandela wrote:

> "Africans were desperate for legal help, in government buildings it was a crime to walk through a Whites Only door, a crime to ride a Whites Only bus, a crime to use a Whites Only drinking fountain, a crime to walk on a Whites Only beach, a crime to be on the streets past eleven, a crime not to have a pass book and a crime to have the wrong signature in that book, a crime to be unemployed and a crime to be employed in the wrong place, a crime to live in certain places and a crime to have no place to live."

From a young age Mandela displayed not only courage but compassion, humanity and the sense of 'collective good'. He was motivated as he became aware of how the humanity and dignity of black South Africans was being violated. He set out on a path from which he never wavered and worked with fellow South Africans to win full citizenship for black people and restore not just the humanity of the oppressed majority but also that of the oppressors.

Racism in South Africa

Ever since Europeans arrived in South Africa, indigenous people were treated as slaves and then later as labourers. Discriminatory land ownership was formalised with the result that 70% of the population occupied only 13% of the land. In 1948 the whites-only electorate voted in the National Party, to take colonial racist legislation to unheard-of extremes. The disempowerment of black people increased significantly.

By the 1960s the National Party's formalised system of separate and unequal development for different races, better known as 'apartheid', had been steadily intensifying for more than a decade. Mandela in his legal practice had witnessed black people's lives being ruined, their land taken away, their families torn apart, their parents and grandparents treated with the utmost disrespect and inhumanity.

Forced removals of black people were a feature of the South African landscape and would remain so for the next 40 years. Under the National Party, South Africa's major cities and most of its towns were declared 'whites only' urban areas. Blacks could live only in certain parts of the city and had to carry a 'pass book'. Failure to produce a pass book meant jail.

The Sharpeville massacre 1960

A turning point in South Africa's history came about on 21 March 1960, which South Africans now observe as Human Rights Day. In the small settlement of Sharpeville in the Transvaal, a peaceful protest against the Pass Laws turned into a bloody massacre when police opened fire on the unarmed crowd, killing 69 innocent black people. The government responded by declaring a national state of emergency and issuing a decree outlawing both the ANC and the PAC.

Mandela later described his response:

> "My colleagues and I, after careful consideration, decided that we would not obey this decree. The African people were not

> part of the Government and did not make the laws by which they were governed. We believed in the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that 'the will of the people shall be the basis of authority of the Government', and for us to accept the banning was equivalent to accepting the silencing of the Africans for all time."

Political radicalisation

Given the increasing violence of the state and its use of legislation to close down legitimate avenues of protest, Mandela confronted Albert Luthuli, the ANC president at the time, respectfully telling him that the movement's non-violent policy was no longer having any effect. Change was essential. Luthuli did not agree.

Mandela and the Youth League of the ANC then came to a difficult decision that the time had come to accept militant action against the apartheid state. The movement's half century of peaceful protest had not succeeded. Until this time the ANC had maintained a policy of non-violence, so this small new organisation called *Umkhontho we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation) initially operated alongside rather than within the ANC.

Much of Mandela's thinking about this situation was made public at his ultimate trial at Rivonia and it is mainly from this source, plus his autobiography, that many of the quotes here have been taken. Mandela was an inspiring orator and built up a picture of how South Africa's racist regime was undermining and destroying the future for black people:

> "The complaint of Africans, however, is not only that they are poor and the whites are rich, but that the laws which are made by the whites are designed to preserve this situation. There are two ways to break out of poverty. The first is by formal education, and the second is by the worker acquiring a greater skill at his work and thus higher wages. As far as Africans are concerned, both these avenues of advancement are deliberately curtailed by legislation."

"Whites tend to regard Africans as a separate breed. They do not look upon them as people with families of their own; they do not realize that they have emotions - that they fall in love like white people do; that they want to be with their wives and children like white people want to be with theirs; that they want to earn enough money to support

their families properly, to feed and clothe them and send them to school."

It should be apparent that Mandela insisted on the common humanity of all people. His so-called terrorism was about healing not hate. He was a realist, but never lost his idealism. The only way to remedy the situation, he said, was for all races to have equal rights. This reasonable demand was regarded as dangerously revolutionary.

What distinguishes Mandela from most other world leaders (except perhaps Ghandhi) was his drive to do things for "collective good" as opposed to bolstering his self-interest and narcissistic needs. He genuinely sought equality. He had a commanding presence and treated everyone the same whether a cleaner, typist, professor or president. When he later met the British Queen, she asked him if she could call him Nelson, he said yes, can I call you Elizabeth? They developed a close friendship. There are many other examples including one told by a journalist colleague, John Carlin, which I think encapsulates the essence of Mandela: Shortly before the post-apartheid elections in South Africa in 1994, Mandela had learnt that the one-time top-ranking officer in the SA Defence Force, Brigadier Viljoen, had planned to wage war on 'Mandela's terrorists'. The Brigadier had been head of the army, navy and airforce, an arch-enemy of Mandela. Although he retired he was summoned to join the ranks of the extreme right wing. Viljoen was to lead the 19 right wing organisations involved who had been setting up clandestine cells. Mandela heard about this.

The silver-haired military man told John this story: Mandela approached him to have a talk. He went to Mandela's house with two big burly generals. Mandela himself opened the door and greeted him with his big smile and spoke to him in in his own language. Mandela had made a point of learning Afrikaans in prison as he believed to speak to a person in their own language reaches their hearts. Mandela suggested that he and the general should have a conversation alone beforehand. Mandela took him to his sitting room and poured the general's tea.

Mandela then said: "I know you are planning on going to war. I understand your fears -- I see where you are coming from. I can put myself in your shoes. But if we go to war we are just going to end up with a piece of the cemeteries. The general agreed and they set up a series of top secret meetings. The general abandoned his plans for war.

The general told John he fell into the Mandela trap. Mandela was seductive and persuasive. He was a pragmatist, a cunning fox as well as a generous man. On the 1st day of new South African

parliament, when Mandela entered the room, the place erupted as though it was Bob Dylan concert. Mandela went across the floor to see General Viljoen. John (the journalist) remembered that vividly and some time later was giving the general a lift home. Recalling the event, he said to Viljoen: You looked at Mandela with love. Is that right? Viljoen nodded and said: "Nelson Mandela was the greatest of men."

Mandela had elegance, integrity, self-confidence, clear principles. He was generous and empathic – he thought it important to put himself in other peoples' shoes, to know his enemies, to understand their fears and vanities, which was useful when negotiating with his rivals.

The Rivonia Trial and the prison years

The apartheid government had become a police state. Many people had already died in the fight for survival and in the years to come thousands more would die, some in state prisons, others shot by police, and others as a result of being denied a livelihood.

Inevitably the fight against this led to arrests. Mandela and nine others were charged with recruiting people to commit sabotage and overthrow the state. When the trial at Rivonia began, he was already serving a five-year sentence for leaving South Africa illegally and inciting worker strikes. The trial essentially was a showcase of apartheid. In his closing statement at this Rivonia, the last time that Mandela was permitted to speak in public, he made it clear that he was prepared to stake his life for the freedom of all South Africans:

> "During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die".

In 1963 he and seven of his co-accused were sentenced to life (thirty years) in prison. From that point onwards, the government did its best to ensure that ordinary South Africans forgot about Mandela. It was a crime to quote Mandela and to propagate ANC ideas. This did not work. International support for him built up and the Anti-Apartheid cause became mainstream with an increasingly high profile. Mandela was a 'prisoner of conscience'.

Mandela would later say that his time of getting to know Afrikaners face to face helped him to work out a negotiated settlement with the government. In an interview for the documentary film *The Long Walk of Nelson Mandela,* American writer Richard Stengel, who collaborated with Mandela on his autobiography, said "He (Mandela) realised that the relationship between him and his Afrikaans guards was a microcosm for the whole South African experience. If he could somehow come to some *modus vivendi* with his guards, then he could maybe bring South Africa to the promised land."

The National Party's formalised system of separate and unequal development for different races, better known as 'apartheid', had been steadily intensifying for more than a decade. Mandela in his legal practice had witnessed black people's lives being ruined, their land taken away, their families torn apart, their parents and grandparents treated with the utmost disrespect and inhumanity. In his autobiography Mandela describes the time thus:

Forced removals of black people were a now feature of the South African landscape and would remain so for the next 40 years. Under the National Party, South Africa's major cities and most of its towns were declared 'whites only' urban areas. Blacks could live only in certain parts of the city carried a pass book. Failure to produce a pass book meant jail.

Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in jail, 18 of those years on Robben Island, a high security prison off the coast of Cape Town. During those years he did hard labour in a stone quarry along with his fellow black political prisoners. He realised that in order to survive he had to learn to understand the white prison guards and warders, who were mainly Afrikaners. His daily contact with them allowed him see their humanity and vulnerability. They in turn began to respect Mandela for his courage and steadfast values – he even offered some of them legal advice. In prison he studied the Afrikaans language and history and realised that black South Africans had much in common with white Afrikaners, many of whom were still resentful of their oppression and defeat at the hands of the British in the early 20th century. While by now many black people felt that whites should be "driven back into the sea", Mandela believed that South Africa could only succeed as a nation if its people learned to live together. He was quite clear that the ANC's ultimate aim was to end all forms of racism.

Negotiation and release

At the same time as Mandela was developing and sharing such views things were coming to a head in the country. Apartheid was taking a

heavy and intolerable toll on the lives of black people. In 1976 an attack on peaceful students in Soweto horrified the world. Students from numerous Soweto schools rallied against the edict that Afrikaans be the language of instruction. It is estimated that 20,000 students took part in the protests. They were met with fierce police brutality. Hundreds of students were killed. The haunting photograph of dying schoolboy Hector Pieterson being rushed to a clinic personalised and symbolised the horror and was sent round the world.

By now the ANC had a well-networked structure in exile with access to governments and pressure groups at an international level. From 1983 onwards various attempts were made by both the National Party government and Western countries to talk to ANC leaders and get them to accept minor reforms to the apartheid structure. As early as 1985 South African President PW Botha told parliament that the government was thinking about releasing Mandela on condition that he renounced all forms of violence and confined himself to his home village of Qunu. Mandela refused the offer.

Although he worked alongside many others it was Mandela alone, who, when secretly approached by government representatives while in prison in 1989, made the strategic decision that it was the right time to begin talking to the apartheid government about a negotiated settlement. His comrades were against him doing this but Mandela knew that in order to bring about a democracy that would not be wracked by violence, he needed to be sensitive to the psychological make-up of all South Africans, including his white oppressors.

Mandela had been transferred in 1982 to Pollsmoor prison in Cape Town and then to Victor Verster prison near Paarl, where it was discovered that he was suffering from tuberculosis, for which he was treated in hospital. Following sustained domestic and international pressure, secret negotiations began in 1989 between Mandela and President PW Botha, and later with his successor President FW De Klerk. In Parliament on 2 February 1990 De Klerk made the momentous announcement: Nelson Mandela would be freed, and the ban lifted on the ANC, the PAC and the South African Communist Party.

On 11 February 1990, after 27 years as a prisoner of the apartheid state, Mandela walked out of Victor Verster Prison and was driven 60 kilometres to Cape Town along a route lined with thousands of cheering supporters. The first images of the president-to-be walking out of prison were relayed live via satellite to ecstatic audiences across the globe.

From the balcony of Cape Town City Hall Mandela spoke to a crowd of about 50,000 people, who had waited for many hours to see him. He started by expressing his sincere and warmest gratitude to the "millions of my compatriots and those in every corner of the globe who have campaigned tirelessly for my release."

There was now hope for South Africa's future.

Mandela said that his time in prison had given him "time to think". He realised that "thinking is one of the most important weapons in dealing with problems" and that it was possible to channel anger against one's adversaries into compassion and reconciliation.

Mandela as President

After his release, Mandela plunged himself wholeheartedly into his work, striving to attain the goals he and others had set out almost four decades earlier. In 1991, at the first national conference of the ANC held inside South Africa since the organization's banning, Mandela was elected President of the ANC.

At talks named the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), Mandela led the ANC in negotiations with the South African government which culminated in the adoption of the country's interim constitution in November 1993. Much of this constitution reflected the kind of democracy Mandela had envisaged in the 1960s: a parliamentary system, a Bill of Rights, the doctrine of separation of powers, and the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, which Mandela said, "never fails to arouse my admiration".

In 1993, Mandela, jointly with President FW de Klerk, accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of all the people who stood against racism and worked for peace, including Mandela's fellow members of the ANC and the people of South Africa.

In 1994 the ANC won the country's first non-racial elections with an overwhelming majority.

Mandela as President

Mandela's inauguration on 10 May 1994 brought together the largest number of heads of state since the funeral of former US President John Kennedy in 1963. In his inaugural statement Mandela said:

"Today all of us do, by our presence here, and by our celebrations in other parts of our country and the world, confer glory and hope to newborn liberty. Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long, must be born a society of which all humanity will be proud. Our daily deeds as ordinary South Africans

must produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity's belief in justice, strengthen its confidence in the nobility of the human soul and sustain all our hopes for a glorious life for all."

Mandela's first task as President was to address the poverty and living conditions of black South Africans, millions of whom still lived in informal settlements with no services, in self-built shacks made of scrap materials. He appointed Communist Party member Joe Slovo as his housing minister, who succeeded in building more than a million low-cost homes in five years. Mandela entrusted tasks to his deputy while he concentrated on the immense task of reconciliation and nation building.

There was a sense during Mandela's presidency of the importance of moral integrity, of not humiliating those with opposing views, of allowing dissent whilst seeking unity (these qualities have been less evident under his successors, with many feeling that the first few years of democracy under Mandela represent a 'golden age'). He put his principles into practice and established the visionary Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was crucial to the transition of South Africa to a full and free democracy. It is based on the African concept of Ubuntu often translated as "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity" – I am what I am because of who we are. Restorative justice principles were used to focus on the needs of the victims and offenders, as well as the affected community, rather than legal principles or punishing the offender. The emphasis is on victim and perpetrator as people rather than viewing a crime as a wrong against the state.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), was chaired by the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The terms of the TRC were that perpetrators of human rights abuses could receive amnesty in return for full disclosure of their actions. The aim was that victims of abuse, or their families, could reconcile with their persecutors.

However once full disclosure was made, the commission did not have the right to further prosecution. As a result, many felt that justice was not done.

Similar views informed his choices as President: he went out of his way in his political appointments to include individuals from groups who might have opposed him. I had friend whose brother was killed by the security police and he then found himself working with those same policemen. He strove to act in the interests of the nation as a whole rather than leaning towards interest groups, whether these were business organisations, or tribal or political elites.

His consistency and integrity was carried over into foreign policy. Mandela was deeply critical of the invasion of Iraq, led by the US and the UK, saying that the United Nations did not sanction the action and that these countries had abused global institutions. He highlighted the hypocrisy of countries demanding that Iran dismantle its nuclear programme while maintaining their own. Translating this into action, South Africa under Mandela became the first country to voluntarily dismantle its nuclear arsenal, which had so defiantly been built up by the apartheid regime.

Challenges

Mandela's ANC had not been the only group seeking an end to apartheid. While in prison, he was confronted with divisions and factions among members of the ANC, Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), PAC and the Communist Party. After a leader for the South African Student Organization was assaulted with a garden fork in prison, the authorities planned to put the attacker on trial. Mandela urged the victim not to lodge a complaint, stating, "I wanted these young men to see that the ANC was a great tent that could accommodate many different views and affiliations." Because of that wisdom, many members of opposing political group chose to join the ANC. Although the attackers deserved to be put on trial – rather than seek revenge and punishment, thought was given to the bigger, broader goal and choices were made consistent with that goal. In a negotiation, it's very easy to allow emotion to expand the importance of objectively minor concerns. Winning everything becomes an impediment to winning the important thing.

The ANC has made significant progress in the provision of housing, water and sanitation services, as well as social grants for those most in need. But despite aiming for economic equality, South Africa is hampered by the terrible epidemic of corruption, particularly within the public service.

Mandela's struggle to free South Africa took a personal toll of his family life. South Africa became his extended family, but at a cost. While in jail he faced major threats to his health including severe tuberculosis and prostate cancer.

Mandela, who always saw poverty as the single biggest threat to society, stepped down as president in 1999 and became South Africa's highest profile ambassador campaigning against HIV/Aids and working on global issues such as climate change and human rights. He retired from public life in 2004 and died in 2013.

Conclusion

Mandela had the intellectual depth to transcend historical rifts that in many countries have led to war. He was a man of profound self-respect whose pride as a young man was deeply hurt by the way he and his fellow black South Africans were being treated. He respected his tribal elders and drew inspiration from the dignity with which some of them managed to conduct themselves despite their compromised position.

The power of Mandela's leadership was rooted in the fact that at key moments in his life he acted independently of the movement to which he dedicated his life and to which he deferred as a "loyal and obedient" member. He could tolerate conflict and ambiguity, internal and external, and was guided by principles and values.

What are the key lessons from Mandela?

1. **Be better, not bitter** - Mandela put the greater good over his own ego;
2. **Forget the past** - living in the past makes one suffer for nothing.
3. **Get educated** - education is the most powerful weapon and can be the best tool for reaching our goals;
4. **Dream big** - Mandela refused to give up because he had one impossible dream in mind and accepting anything less was not an option.;
5. **Make things happen** - "It always seems impossible until it's done," said Mandela. Being a dreamer was part of his success, but he also had a plan and actionable strategies to stay on track;
6. **Create an image** - Mandela was not only a symbol but he was a brand. He represented himself smiling, well-dressed, polite, and educated at all times. People are only starting to realize now that he was one of the first thought leaders to heavily rely on his public appearance, image, and reputation to achieve his goals;
7. **Know your opponents** - this not only refers to the tactics and strategies your competitors have in mind but also to their mindset; especially if your success depends on the actions of others. Fully understanding where the other one is coming from was an essential part of Nelson Mandela's success;
8. **Be likable** - Nelson Mandela sent gifts to his rivals on a regular basis. He invited them for dinner and consulted with them, even though he never trusted or relied on them. His

charm and likability was a tactical weapon as much as it was a magnet for his followers;

9. **Empower people** - Mandela lead his people from behind, valuing them and letting them believe they were in front. He was able to persuade people to do things and make them think it was their own idea;
10. **Listen to others first before pressing one's own opinion**;
11. **Optimism is not optional** - "I am fundamentally an optimist. Whether that comes from nature or nurture, I cannot say. Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lay defeat and death.";
12. **Everyone has a "core of decency**; and
13. **Persevere.**

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Collective Trauma: Challenges of Interventions in Humanitarian Aid

By Laura Delgado Alcaraz

> "6:45 am; the cell phone alarm is ringing; time to start the 85th day in the field. I open my eyes and look around for a few seconds, just to take a deep breath and hoping to find some energy on it. Around, the usual. My bended mattress, struggling to not to absorb me; and my mosquito net, hold by four old wooden poles that are already damaging it. But I found it! I found the little hole on it. Anyway, I wasn't the only one... mosquitoes did as well; and they made my night. I will try to fix it later.
>
> I stand up and see the other nine mattresses of our tent; half of my job mates already went for their coffee. Another rainy day in this tropical place. What to wear today? My new high-hills with my office costume? Well... better I take my daily uniform; gum boots, raincoat and our corporative vest. It is all muddy around, just some wooden platforms around the tents to be able to have a coffee in a somehow wet area. The team is leaving already! I take my radio, call the operator to announce my movement to the campaign hospital and quickly join them. One more day in the field is just starting."

Humanitarian crisis intervention is not an area of intervention you can be well trained for in advance. It is not something you can imagine until you are standing in the field, feeling the atmosphere, smelling the air of the needs. No matter how many manuals or how much guidance I could have read beforehand, I could not figure out what I would find there and how I would intervene until I placed myself there.

The first time I went to an emergency intervention I remember that my body landed on the field... but my mind did it one month later. So much chaos around, so many necessities to meet, so much of everything one can think of.

As it is known, humanitarian aid response aims at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity wherever the need arises – if governments and local

actors are overwhelmed, unable or unwilling to act – (European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, 2007)[1], but where to start or whom to address!

Furthermore, humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality (United Nations General Assembly)[2]; concepts that, among others, lost their meaning to me in between those contexts of fatality. There is not just physical and psychological exhaustion, someone needs to fight within the field; those ones pass once at home. The harder battles to deal with are the internal ones, when moral, values and elements of the basic pillars of your own life are shaken and damaged. That remains the hardest healing process in my case.

As a field worker, the main crisis contexts in developing countries which one has to face are natural disasters, armed conflicts, ethnics minorities at high risk of exclusion, nutritional crisis, deadly linked and highly stigmatized diseases (HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis) or outbreaks (cholera, Ebola). To the difficulty of each of these situations "per se", we have to add the challenge of the coexistence of several of them at the same time. We just need to go back to the experience I started this paper with, where during a tense civil war situation – with its own consequences – a nutritional crisis and several outbreaks of cholera took place among thousands of internally displaced people.

In those type of situations there are many basic demands related with survival needs, therefore we cannot design a mental health intervention as we would do in our regular consultations. In all cases, the objective from a mental health and psychosocial (MHPS) point of view is to reduce the suffering and the psychological consequences occurred due to the mass violence, facilitate the reconnection of the person with his/her environment, culture and community, support an environment that facilitates the integration of the affected people and restore the functionality and the dignity of the survivors.

In a humanitarian crisis, though the affected population faces situations that can cause significant psychological and social suffering, not everybody is affected in the same way or to the same extent. We, mental health field workers, find ourselves in need of designing different types of strategies and interventions which can cover the demands of different situations. A key to organising mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) interventions is to develop a layered system of complementary supports that meet the needs of different groups (IASC, 2008)[3].

How do we intervene in the field with such demanding situations? The pyramid bellow (Figure 1) represents the most recommended strategy to intervene in emergencies and humanitarian crisis settings:

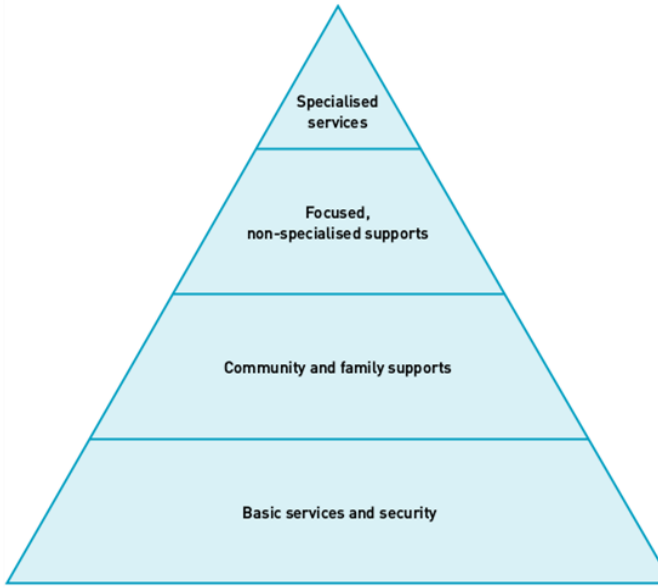

Figure 1: *Intervention pyramid for MHPSS – mental health and psychosocial support – in emergencies*

First of all, and at the base of the pyramid, there is a fundamental need of re-establishing security and services that provide the basic physical necessities (such as safe drinking water, food, shelter, basic health care, etc.) to the entire affected population. When addressing the mentioned needs, a psychosocial perspective should be integrated in this response. How do we integrate it? Ensuring that those services are delivered in a way that promotes mental health and psychosocial well-being preserving people's dignity, enhancing the population's sense of control over the situation that is taking place and strengthening social local support; for instance, one of the effective ways I have seen in the field is to establish them in a participatory way, in a culturally and socially appropriate way and in a safe setting.

The next layer we need to intervene with is at the community and family level. In most humanitarian crises we see significant

disruptions of family and community networks due to heart-breaking stories of losses, displacement, family separation, etc. Therefore, to help people to keep coping up and to maintain their psychosocial well-being, it is essential to ensure they get key community and family support as a protective factor. In this layer, we put in place in the field all type of strategies that activate social networks, promote mutual support and that strengthen community self-care mechanism. The most powerful ones I have witnessed are family tracing and reunification in armed conflicts, assisted mourning and communal local healing ceremonies in the after-mads of a natural disaster, mass communication on constructive coping methods leaded by key community leaders or supportive parenting programs and women's groups in malnutrition intervention settings. Seeing how a child can enter to the malnutrition center emaciated and with an emotional abyss with his mom – whom is exhausted and gave up in feeding and taking care of him – and seen, several weeks later, how that child is leaving the center walking by himself as he held his mom's hand is something that leaves a lasting mark.

These two levels of the pyramid represent the response of the people that are able to cope. People, despite the adversity they are facing, remain resilient. The more effective and, especially, the more accessible we deliver the support at these two levels, the less people will develop further psychological consequences.

The third layer represents the part of the affected population that shows significant suffering and that are at risk of developing severe or chronic mental health problems. At this level, we provide basic and more focused – individual, family or group – support. Some of the strategies I usually conduct in this regard are individual and group psychological first aid (PFA), psycho-education group activities related with the main disturbances reported by the community, mutual support groups, discussion groups with key members of the community, psycho-stimulation groups in malnutrition settings, expert patients' groups in HIV interventions, psychodrama or art therapy.

The top of the pyramid refers to specialized services. Represents the additional support required for the smaller percentage of the population whose suffering creates significant difficulties in their basic daily functionality. This assistance includes specialized psychological support and/or psychiatric care for people with mental health disorders. Collective trauma intervention at this level of treatment put me through many cases of multiple trauma and repeated losses which I never ever faced in my professional career, previous to the humanitarian aid work. It is worth to highlight that even if this

proportion of people that requires specialized support is small, it can represent thousands in big humanitarian crisis. Hence, we find ourselves in need of taking into account that these services are in place, accessible and available for the community from the very beginning.

We cannot think of an effective intervention without taking into consideration a transcultural approach in the design of each level of intervention. Even though, many are the challenges I have faced day by day in delivering this type of assistance. Personal adjustment to the culture and context is not always easy; specially when we have to balance it with our own vision of the word – having to wear an abaya and hijab for security reasons can confront oneself with personal boundaries.

To be accepted and well perceived for the community and the authorities as well as demystified ideas related with mental health preconceptions are issues that can take longer than expected and therefore have an impact in the results of the intervention. For instance, a disrespectful perceived behavior can jeopardize the implementation of a program. Fluent communication and a well-developed network with key local actors and institutions is always needed throughout all the intervention process.

The lack of qualified staff is another reality we need to face in developing countries. In many of the contexts I have worked in, there was almost no or insufficient specialized mental health staff available. In those cases, at the beginning of a MHPS intervention, we organize trainings for the workers in order to provide them with basic psychosocial intervention skills and to build capacity in the community. Those potential mental health staff can be primary health care professionals, community health workers or even key members of the community; the reason behind is that in some of the layers of intervention pyramid, the staff required to deliver basic care and counseling does not need to be mental health specialist. The mentioned lack of qualified staff can lead to challenging situations; for instance, when the translator that will be hired from a community with a minority dialect will be simply the one that speaks better English. I will always remember the experience with one of the interpreters I worked with. After my question to one patient and her one-minute time answer, the interpreter translated the speech with a movement of head followed by a guttural sound (which locally symbolized a “yes”). My shocked face and further explanation after the session were not enough for her to stop using that guttural sound when she considered that the summary of the answer listed was rather

positive. No question those types of challenges do not bring just difficulties but many related anecdotes.

Creating access to the affected population in contexts such as armed conflicts remains one of the biggest challenges; front-line movements have prevented us from delivering further assistance in areas were programs were already on-going. Finalizing with safety issues, how to start the working day at 6:30am when the bombings around and the shaking of the bedroom windows did not let me close my eyes during the entire night? How me – and my mates – developed coping mechanism to keep doing this type of work without falling into exhaustion is sometimes my main question.

Notes

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Bombing of Belgrade: How to approach trauma and the conspiracy of silence in groups?

By Tamara Čavić-Đurić

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"For everyone native country is the strongest feeling and the greatest science. Hence the longing for other, distant lands".
Nobel laureate Ivo Andric

Inspired by these words, I will try to take this opportunity to tackle the topic important for me and my people, believing that its content is ubiquitous and important for all societies and cultures. During this presentation I will refer, first, to the basic facts about the bombing of Belgrade. Then, I will describe my work with the groups of refugees who arrived in Belgrade during the bombing, incorporating the theoretical framework and practical implications. I will talk about psychodrama in Belgrade during air raids, and how the life and work of therapists and clients had changed. After that, I will deal with the views of society towards trauma in general, including the attitude of the psychotherapeutic community towards this particular event these days. Finally, I will discuss the possibilities of psychotherapeutic approaches to trauma in the light of new scientific discoveries.

The bombing of Belgrade

"We live in a world of technical brilliance and cultural barbarism", Patrick De Mare (1983)

After the 1991 breakup of Yugoslavia into several smaller states, Serbia and Montenegro remained united. In the following years, they sustained a burden of more than half a million refugees from Croatia and Bosnia who were expelled from their homes. After the war in the Balkans and the Dayton peace agreements in 1995, it seemed that the sufferings came to an end.

On 24th March 1999, NATO launched a "humanitarian" military air operation "Noble Anvil" (Merciful Angel) the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, without the consent of the UN, with the

explanation that, in this way, it protects the Albanian population in the south of the country, in the autonomous province of Kosovo. Targets throughout the country were bombed. Besides the military facilities, the targets were business and civilian infrastructures, bridges, schools, hospitals, media (Belgrade TV, Avala TV tower), an Embassy (China), cultural monuments, churches and monasteries. It is estimated that about 3,000 people were killed (2,500 civilians, of whom 89 children), and about 6,000 were injured (2,700 children). NATO called it "collateral damage". During the bombing around 15T of depleted uranium was dropped. Since then, the number of malignant diseases has doubled, and in 2015 Serbia was ranked the infamous first in Europe for mortality from malignant diseases.

It was the largest military conflict in the territory of Serbia and Montenegro since World War II. It ended on 10th June 1999, by the signing of the Military Technical Agreement between the International Security Forces (KFOR) and the FRY, followed by the withdrawal of state military forces from the southern province of Kosovo, exiling more than 200,000 non-Albanians and placing Kosovo under the international protectorate. Since then, an American military base Bondsteel has been stationed in Kosovo. In February 2008, Kosovo declared independence. Montenegro also declared independence in 2006, and in 2017 it became a full NATO member. During the 79 days of military operations, Belgrade was bombed for 76 days.

Work with refugees

"I learn by going where I have to go" - *Theodore Roethke*

In the spring of 1999, during the NATO aggression, patients and staff left the Psychiatric Clinic at Avala near Belgrade. Shortly thereafter, displaced persons from Kosovo were allowed to move into the Clinic.

In the building of the former Psychiatric Clinic lived more than 130 refugees. All of them were from the same village in Kosovo. They fled to Belgrade to escape bombs and threats, in one wave. They shared many traumatic experiences: disappeared, kidnapped or murdered family members, constant fear, threats and pressures to leave their homes, final departure from the homeland, arrival under the bombs and new uncertainty. Their psychological traumatization problems and mourning were complicated by isolation, collective life, having the label of refugees and finally, carrying the stigma of "psychiatric patient". They were saying, self-ironically: "We live in a

loony bin."

My work with refugees at that time was part of research into the psychological reaction to the bombing and the applicable and effective therapeutic approaches. It included the testimony method with elements of cognitive restructuring.

The testimony method was created by Danish therapists Soren Buus Jensen and Inger Agger and their associates during their stay and work in the field with victims of the dictatorship in Chile. A method was later widely applied in the work with asylum seekers in Scandinavia. During the 1990s, I was a member of the team that, under the leadership of Soren Buus Jensen, worked on the WHO program for Mental Health in the region of the former Yugoslavia, which was primarily focused on education of professionals on therapeutic approaches to post-traumatic conditions and work with refugees.

Until the bombing of Belgrade, dealing with large numbers of refugees was mainly psychosocial, epidemiological and phenomenological. Resolution of the problems was located outside, in the state institutions, humanitarian organizations. Thus, passivity of refugees was enhanced. Solving of existential difficulties was extremely slow and psychosocial functioning became more complicated. It affirmed the conviction of refugees about their helplessness and hopelessness. This was a project that aimed to provide specific assistance in emergencies, to prevent complications and to document the period of time.

After the initial phase of contact, introductions, establishment of trust, presentation of the method of work and informed consent, clients were divided into two male and two female groups. With each of them, sessions took place once a week for an hour. Protocols were written down and completed. A cognitive work-through followed. After that the evaluation was done and clients were delivered a written record of their work. Groups were closed after a year.

Testimony is a method during which clients are creating a written document about their traumatic experience, through successive sessions with their therapist(s). In such a way, they are disclosing out loud their history in front of themselves and others. In the initial meetings with a therapist, they become familiar with the proposed method of work, they understand it and accept it. Through regular sessions, clients communicate severe aspects of personal experiences in pace and in a way that is possible and acceptable for them, in a safe environment of professionals with whom they have established a trusting relationship. The statement is recorded in

writing. The therapist is there to listen, record, help, support, contain, and testify. Testimony does not take place under any form of pressure. In work with traumatized people, as well as with refugees, there are always topics for which there are no words, zones of silence. At the end, the testimony is formed, read, checked and supplemented with details and, finally, printed and delivered to the clients. The document is safeguarded. Testimony is one of the ways to give a voice to silent victims. It is also a document of social memory. Social memory and testimony require everything that happened - both good and evil - to be preserved in the minds of those very people and in our collective memory. Thus, the evidence gives a voice to the ordinary people, who are always the victims of human rights violations. It can become an important part of the process of reconciliation, restoration of trust and dialogue among the divided parties. It can also make at least a small step towards changing the demonic image of the opposing sides, toward a more realistic shape. In a way, it is a quest for truth and justice. Experiences in the social memory, that have been ignored, hidden, cut off, repressed or dissociated for a long-time - but never fully forgotten - represent latent triggers for new conflicts and traumatic experiences. Therefore, the testimony method is a part of the preventive social process.

According to Seligman, traumatization often results in passivity, which is a part of inhibitory processes, where individual reactions are followed by either a positive or negative reinforcement (Peterson & Seligman, 1984). The concept of learned helplessness refers to a characteristic assembly of cognitive disorders, affective and motivational defects that occur as a response transferred from earlier, similar situations. Thus, a person who was helpless in some situation, in a similar situation will believe in his/her helplessness and behave accordingly. In this situation, there are three types of behaviour disorders: 1) motivational, where there are a reduced number of voluntary responses; 2) cognitive, where the recognition that the action controls the outcome is delayed; and 3) emotional, where depression occurs due to the recognition that the reaction does not affect the outcome, often with an expression of aggression. Emotional, cognitive and motivational components are the result of understanding that outcomes are uncontrollable. Motivational defects are the result of discontinuity between actions and results. Cognitive defects are contained in the aggravated learning that there is a link between individual actions and the outcome of events. Regardless of any individual predisposition, trauma and uprooting among the refugees often result because of distorted beliefs about themselves and the

world they live in.

In working on cognitive restructuring with refugees, we dealt with these altered basic beliefs. After discovering what they looked like before and after the traumatic experience, the fundamental assumptions were affirmed. In this way, clients were encouraged and they acquired the ability to replace extreme reactions with more balanced ones. The therapist's role was to help group members to discover these inner assumptions, making them accessible to modification.

Systematic work on distortions using cognitive restructuring, establishes a more realistic view of the events and their own abilities, neutralize negative emotions and maladaptive behaviours. Talking about powerful negative feelings makes them understandable to refugees and has the positive effect on the overcoming of everyday problems (coping). Also, conversation about the causes and the development of present mental health problems significantly relativize powerlessness and helplessness. Information and explanation of mental and physical ailments prevent the formation of negative images supported by adequate coping. Analysing everyday experiences with others provides insight into a good socialization, avoidance of unpleasant and creation of the pleasant situations. Finally, stimulation of the social aspects of human existence provides a meaning and opens up paths of hope…roads to the "third individuation" (Akhtar, 1992).

Psychodrama in bombed Belgrade 1999

"Life seems to be a never-ending series of survivals, doesn't it?" - Carroll Baker

With the first bomb that fell on Belgrade there appeared disbelief and the question of "why?". So typical. But only when it happens to others. Now it happened to us. To make matters worse, it happened again, the fourth time in the twentieth century. And this time again, in the spring. Thus, each generation in Belgrade witnessed at least one bombing. Senior citizens have recalled that the city was shelled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire after the announcement of the ultimatum to Serbia in 1914. After that, it was Hitler who did it without announcement in 1941. At the end of that, World War II, in 1944, Anglo-American allied forces bombed Belgrade from Easter until autumn, repeatedly, for a final showdown with the occupiers (apart from the numerous buildings destroyed, a large number of people were killed, including

prisoners in the concentration camp at Sajmiste, as well as 22 mothers and 22 babies in the maternity hospital in Belgrade Krunska street). And then, at the end of the century, in 1999, another bombing. It would be unfair not to mention that, apart from Belgrade, many wonderful cities, bridges and people were devastated during the military air campaign.

Serbian psychodrama therapists were all living in Belgrade at that time. Most of them are psychiatrists, one psychologist and they are all working in psychiatric institutions. Coming to the clinic during a state of war is a working and military obligation. One of my colleagues was mobilized and is in a military unit. Belgrade is a city at the confluence of two rivers: the Sava and the Danube, and many people come to work by crossing bridges. The bridges were declared military targets. You would never know whether and when the bombs would fall. Travelling to my workplace I crossed two of them, and two on the way back home. Patients are happy and calm. Obedient, like children aware of the dangers. The hospital is their refuge. Every night around 7.30 we hear a siren announcing the air raid, we call it Shizella. The bombs are falling all night long. In the morning, the sound of the siren announces the termination of danger, it has a calming, descendant tone, and we call it Calmella (Smirela). Victims and damage are summed up, information exchanged, feelings shared. In the evening, while many people are preparing to go to the shelters, I am putting on my pyjamas and I go to bed. I am having the sleep of the just, with the dawn I am rested for another day, and so on ... I do not feel fear. From my womb the blood is leaking. I do not pay attention to it, I and my body silently understood each other. I get an invitation to participate in the European Conference on Traumatic Stress in Istanbul in early June. I manage to go, with the approval of the clinic. The country is under sanctions for years and there is no air traffic. During the evening, under the bombs, I am traveling to Budapest, where I have a flight to the destination. We are crossing the border and while getting to the airport, I notice that the bleeding has stopped. In Istanbul, my hotel is near Taksim Square and every day passenger aircrafts are flying overhead. I have a startling reaction every time. We joke about that and laugh endlessly, I feel the breath of freshness. I returned to Belgrade with the cessation of the war.

During the bombing of Belgrade, two psychodrama groups had worked continuously. They were held in the city centre, in the Clinical Centre where I work, in regular setting, until the evening hours. Nearby is a gynaecological and maternity clinic. The building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is 30m down the slope, completely

destroyed, with two unexploded bombs. The buildings of the Government and the General Military Headquarters are 100m further, also badly damaged…500m further is Belgrade television building flattened during the night shift. All the members were coming to the groups at their own risk, aware of the dangers. During those 10 weeks, therapists and protagonists often just sat in a circle and talked, cocooned in the safety of the group matrix. Sometimes, reassured by the authority of the therapists, the members brought on the stage their personal work, which was transfused from the social context...the group in regression, with feelings of threat and endangered life. But, capable to contain the evil that comes from the sky and integrate the broken fragments of its members in a new perspective: the group mind. The content of the individual is contained and integrated into the group mind. Unconscious contents, hidden fears, memories, fantasies emerge into consciousness and relieve the symptoms. There is a group-echo from the individual content, the group measures it, compares, understands and thus enriches the group context. In that way, the group creates a new meaning from each resonating content.

Immediately after the bombing, a psychodrama workshop "War and me" was organized. During sociodrama work, on the stage appeared S. Milosevic, NATO, Monika L., Media, Money, People ...Milosevic as aggressive, dominant and self-satisfied...the people extremely submissive, helpless and hopeless, with the active part completely split and disintegrated. NATO regarding all others as mere figurines and doing as it pleases...media who consider themselves No 1, the most powerful and controlling...money says it is spinning everyone around its finger. Monika, who knows that women are those who control the world...the atmosphere of mixed feelings, confusion and loss of boundaries…group flooded with despair, as a child neglected by an authoritarian father (leader) and helpless inhibited mother (society). A part of the group is **silent**, does not take part, does not share feelings, is frozen. Therapists encourage the silent group. A voice appears. Speaking we cannot influence anything. A girl is coming to the psychodrama stage. At the stage, the dialogue between the former and current "I" is taking place. The former "I", which held that she is the only one that affects her own life and that things we cannot influence cannot hurt us, died with the first bomb that fell on Belgrade. The current "I" is wondering what to do with it and where is it now? In surplus reality, they conclude that nothing in our lives is happening outside the external influences. The group is warmed-up and works with a new protagonist on the personal problem of the absent father and loneliness.

Social circumstances and the large group are constantly resonating. The group is a reflection of social consciousness and determines the individual consciousness. Feelings that are created in a large sociodramatic group represent the matrix for feelings of the individual - he/she feels the determinant of the group and transfers it to the personal experience. After sociodrama, the protagonists are condensing all the group feelings and they express them through individual psychodrama as their own. A large group provokes strong feelings (of disbelief, anger, sadness, grief, fear, vulnerability, pain, helplessness), but also it opens the space for them to be expressed. It contains, processes and returns them in an acceptable, nutritious form. Resonance between social events, large groups and individuals is always extremely strong. This group was the story of neglected children, in search for protection.

The group is a caring, holding environment...or should be...

Silence of the society

"Every time something is said, there is something else that has not been said" - Kirsten Hastrup

Trauma is a fundamental social experience, which is mentioned in written documents from Gilgamesh up to today. The wars of the twentieth century became the basis for the study of psychological trauma. But the constant increase of violence in many countries and different cultures, moved psychotraumatology from the borders of military psychiatry to civilian casualties. What does it mean for society? According to Croq (2000), persons with a history of severe trauma have 2-12x increased risk for a range of physical and mental illnesses and behavioural disorders. In addition, trauma has an enormous potential to reorganize cultures and societies (Wilson, 1989). Many authors believe that mental illnesses are sociological phenomena (Javis, 1993). Thus K.G. Jung says: "In astonishing ratio, we are threatened by wars and revolutions, which are nothing else than psychic epidemics. Mental is a powerful force that many times exceeds all other forces of the Earth. Therefore, the soul is not only personal, but also a global problem."

The cultural milieu is one that filters the human experience, analysis and interpretation. However, what is universal is the fact that man-induced trauma has the highest weight. Because the unfairness makes the trauma more severe. Due to the need not to accept it and not to forget it. Since the symptoms are long-lasting and resistant to

therapy. And because it reaches the level of collective character, so the treatment must be collective, as well.

The modern global culture of violence (culture of war - Seyom Brown, 1994; culture of complaints - Robert Hughes, 1992; culture of victims - Kecmanović, 2000) prevents the progress of mankind.

On one side there are victims, with their illusions destroyed, seeing themselves as insecure and helpless, and the world as dangerous, with repetition of traumatic experiences as a cognitive effort to process successfully new information (theory of victimization - Janoff-Bulman & Freeze, 1983). Victims lose their ability to articulate their feelings and needs. Trauma becomes contagious transpersonally and transgenerationally. It is potentially transmissible to the next generations and interferes with the psychological development of children (Albeck, 1994). The most common carrier is, paradoxically, the silence. However, some cultures, despite deep traumatization, have shown remarkable resilience: two meta-analytical studies of Sagi-Schwartz et al (2008) found no evidence for tertiary trauma in the families of Holocaust victims.

On the other side, there is a society in resistance. Its illusion of security and predictability is shaken. The victims remind the society how security can be fragile. The reaction of society is the result of conservative impulses serving to maintaining the belief that the world is basically just, that good people manage their lives, and that bad things happen only to bad guys (Van der Kolk, 1989). The suppression, dissociation and denial are phenomena of social and individual responsibility (J. Herman, 1992).

What does trauma mean to the society? Victims of trauma are subject to social care. They are sources of shame and/or social tragedy. The moral and financial burden is hidden. Victims are, due to helplessness and unusual symptoms, often unfairly blamed for simulation and beneficiary motives. They can be politically and socially instrumentalised (embraced/idealized or rejected/ stigmatized). Therefore, the eligibility of trauma to the society has always been conditioned by the social and political dynamics. While the personal significance of trauma, therefore, is always conditioned by the social context in which it occurs.

Finally, the question is: whether the responsibility for the trauma is individual or divided?

Experience teaches us that in groups under stress operate primary processes and the principle of delegated responsibility is activated. According to Bion (1961), the phenomenon of scapegoating

is a phenomenon in which a member or part of a group is perceived as the cause of group or organizational problems, but most have the illusion that the exclusion of such a member will resolve the problem. While the conflicts in the Balkans lasted, during the NATO bombing, and even today, such an "argument" is easily reached for. For the love of the truth, it must be said that the media are heavily modelling the attitude towards the bombing of Serbia and Belgrade. And what the media says, in the consciousness of the group, is accepted, without checking. But, denial has its costs, as well as benefits.

In the light of that, as a group, we are again faced with the question: shall we learn from the past, or remain silent about the meaning?

Over the past years there was almost no chance to talk about the bombing of Belgrade at international psychotherapeutic conferences. In the previous years of sanctions, during the 1990s, professional contacts have been already obstructed, even experts were labelled by the media and foreign colleagues as evil and wrong-doing, our papers have all been rejected by journal editors, as if we did not exist. Immediately after the bombing of Belgrade, the opening of these painful issues in some international psychotherapeutic meetings ended in sociodramas whose content was a repetition of stereotypes, with some rare low voices of embarrassment. And we kept silent. The media had created a black-and- white world, new violence gave birth to some new favourite victims who became a burning issue in large groups and a task for the peacekeepers. And we wondered, don`t you know that something similar happened to us, why don't you mention it? And still kept silent, overwhelmed by a mixture of feelings. In large groups, transgenerational trauma and the helplessness of some members are always active...and the pattern repeats. Under the burden of stress, the experience of the other is splitting into a god and bad part. So "theirs" are either very good or very bad, while "ours" are always absolutely good. Fear of loss of collective identity is equal to annihilation.

When facing the traumatic content of the group, acting-out may happen, as an expression of somebody`s projective identification, which also has a reparatory function. Such an acting-out usually begins by denying someone's trauma and ends with a triumph because the member of some other group is a container for all the negative aspects of one's self: contact with one's own unacceptable experience is lost, it belongs to someone else. In this way, the justification for further aggressive acts is acquired.

When the situation is unclear, prejudices come into play.

Those are intolerant, irrational, hostile attitudes towards other groups and individuals. They differ from the stereotypes in the added affective component. In the time of crisis, prejudices and latent racism emerge with violence. Racism is the residue of prejudice. This is not a simple aversion to the people different from us, but also differences are intended to be used against the other. Racism can manifest itself at the individual and institutional level. It derives from the tendency to preserve one's own cultural and physical identity, values, habits and beliefs. Parson (1994) under the term "ethno-cultural self" implies the enclosed narcissistic elements rooted in deep psychological and physiological processes and structures.

In addition to the *dynamic matrix*, a network of verbal and nonverbal communication is created by the group, Foulkes (1964) also mentioned a basic (*foundation*) matrix. The f*oundation matrix* represents the social conditions necessary for discussion in the group to take place at all! This refers to the common denominators of group members, even before the group is created! In addition to language, Foulkes included the basic cultural and ethical values, as well as the interpretation of relationships. It is the *social unconscious* that is expressed through the foundation matrix, and then transferred into the group by its members. It serves as a means of communication in the group, but also as the basis for the formation of hierarchies, the constellation of conflict and the creation of informal subgroups in the dynamic group process. Thus, the dynamic matrix remains in the background, limited for changes, because it is determined by the overlapping social context. In today's era of global violence, migration and multiculturalism, it is inevitable that we consider the foundation matrix in groups.

Thus, in the traumatic encounter with the topic of the bombing of Belgrade, I wonder whether we, as individuals and a psychotherapeutic community, will find a way to use this, to touch the truth, to feel what we are talking about, to recover?

Unlocking the trauma

"In the midst of winter, I finally realized that in me is invincible summer" - Albert Camus

As far back as 1937, at the University of Chicago Illinois, Girden & Culler, during experiments on dogs, using the psychoactive substance curare, discovered that certain (painful) memories can be invoked only if the participants are in the same state of consciousness (state-

dependent memory). This served to further research the impact of consciousness in unlocking traumatic memories.

In new studies, on mice, conducted at Northwestern University in Chicago, Prof Jelena Radulovic and her research team discovered for the first time the mechanisms through which state-conditioned learning frees memories of fear, hitherto inaccessible to consciousness (fear-based memories, 2015). The findings indicate that there are numerous ways in which frightening memories are stored, and an important one is identified. The study showed that the best way to reach these contents is to return to the same state of mind as when experience was stored. This could lead to new ways of treating patients who find it difficult to revive memories of the trauma. Namely, the GABA (gamma amino butyric acid) is the main inhibitory neurotransmitter in the brain, which soothes and sedates, and the activation of its receptors is widely used in the operation of all of tranquilizers. Beside the synaptic GABA that is with other neurotransmitters involved in maintaining the balance of the affect, there is also so-called extra-synaptic GABA active in the brain. In addition to its numerous functions, well-known to the science, this research found that extra synaptic GABA is also used to encrypt the memories of those events that provoke fear and store them away, hidden from consciousness. If the traumatic experience happens while these receptors are activated, you cannot summon it to the mind, until they are re-activated (J. Radulovic, 2017). Something like tuning the frequency on the radio. Waiting for science to discover a magic pill that will unroll the tangle of traumatic memories, we are reiterating the power of sociodrama, psychodrama and other expressive psychotherapeutic methods in which we experience the reality of trauma "as if" it is happening "here and now".

In addition, there are discoveries about the double functioning of the hormone oxytocin, famed for its merits enjoyed in contact, bonding, breastfeeding, sexuality, love and socialization (amygdala). Namely, its operation in the lateral septum mediates enhancement of fear-conditioning, during social defeat. The septal oxytocin system increases the memory of social interactions independently of their number, reducing fear after positive, and increasing fear after negative, social encounters (Guzman, Radulovic et al, 2014).

This testimony about the bombing of Belgrade should interrupt that chain of fear caused by scapegoating, humiliation and destruction, to make its mark in the social memory and initiate a wave of re-examination in individuals and groups in order to become aware

of the answers to the question "why?".

I will quote the words of my lady friend, a survivor of the devastating bombing of Belgrade TV station that killed 16 of her colleagues: "...I feel, at the same time, some kind of injustice of the main actors of that violence, a lack of any honour, because the war is more bearable when there is a code of honour, and in that bombing there was simply nothing like that...and this thinking through like yours, if it is replicated in various fields, may lead to a resolution, to the point where the innocence will win, in which that weigh on a civilizational scale will outweigh for the benefit of all of us that are starving for justice and that are tormented by suffering for injustice...it does not matter that we know that they are still stronger, that all the levers of power are in their hands, it is important that we continue to strive, as if their crime has never stopped, because as long as we fight, as much as we know and can, there is a meaning…"

In the light of the previously mentioned, my hopes are directed towards: *Koinonia* in the *Large group*, as the source of thought and *Dialogue* that changes the structure of the Super-Ego into a syntonic ego-ideal; *cultural cultivation*, as well as to *Idioprosopia* - the integration of therapeutic interactions in creative ways of being.

"Others cannot be taught anything. They can only be assisted in their discoveries ". Galileo

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BOOK CORNER

BOOK REVIEW

Group Therapy - A Group-Analytic Approach. Nick Barwick & Martin Weegmann. Routledge, London 2018

The epigraph to Foulkes' first book came to mind as I thought about how to tackle this review:

> "I do not expound my teaching to any who are not eager to learn; I do not help out anyone who is not anxious to explain himself; if, after being shown one corner of a subject, a man cannot go on to discover the other three, I do not repeat myself". Confucius. (Foulkes, 1948: iv)

I read a little further and discovered that I was starting to write this review on the same date that Foulkes had written the Preface to this first book, 6th January 1948.; 70 years later. In that Preface he is quite clear about one thing:

> "Although the Group is the field of operation, it is the optimal degree of liberation and integration of the Individual, which is the ultimate aim of the Therapy." (Foulkes, 1948: vii)

Foulkes is clear about his clinical aim – liberation and integration. From here I felt I had something against which to gauge this book. This volume shares a very similar concern. Despite the large number of books published over recent years on group-analysis, concern has been expressed for the relative absence of books concentrating on clinical matters and this volume strives to fill this absence. While it has two named authors it is mainly Barwick's book; his name is against 9 chapters, Weegmann for 3 and jointly for 2. It is worth noting that its sub-title is "A Group-analytic Approach": one of several, so no claim to be definitive: good.

It is divided into 2 parts, **Mainly Theory** and **Mainly Practical**. An opening chapter on historical development leads to four on **Core Concepts** - two for **What goes on in Groups?** and two for **What does the Conductor do?** Theory ends with a chapter on the

Mother Approach followed by the '**Other' Approach.** In these theory chapters Barwick goes into some detail about what happens in groups from a group-analytic understanding, stating where psychoanalytic concepts hold (**Mother Approach**) or are modified and where they give way to group-analytic concepts (**Other Approach**).

This is a well written and easily read volume packed with examples and theoretical considerations strung through the whole book. It is a good read. Barwick moves through a definite plan of approach in clearly laid out chapters that progress at a digestible rate. I do recommend this book to anyone who seeks a refreshing text on group-analysis having tasted stale ones for a while, and for students it will stimulate interest that may have been flagging due to pressure of work and expectations. I recommend especially chapters 10 and 11 which edgily describe Barwick's initial training group and the battering his presumptions took when battling with the experience of keeping this group together. Telling it 'as it was', it will remind many readers of their own training experience when nothing seemed to happen like it says in the textbooks, supervision tended to diminish self-esteem and competence seemed beyond one's grasp. It is these qualities that we need more of in all writing about group-analysis: provisional, edgy, uncertain, doubtful, a lack of knowingness.

Do read it. How easy to create the review! how demanding to write the book! I have some reservations – I feel there is a lack of critical appraisal of at least some of the many terms introduced to the reader. The volume is a presentation of theory and practice without a large sceptical voice that queries: all is presented and the reader asked to make a choice. Much is taken on trust and this suggests the intention of producing a textbook that lacks a questioning, enquiring voice which may look critically at what exactly is meant by the terms described.

Here are some which niggle me. The first is at the start of the Prologue (there is also an Epilogue and a dialogue: these terms from Greek drama, Socratic conversation and Plato's Academy) where Context is immediately mentioned, both to discuss this essential concept of group-analysis – and to place the book in the context of other group-analytic books. Hopper's explanation of its etymology is used to place this volume among the 'fabric' of an earlier volume of Barwick's (see later). Omitted is any mention here or in the bibliography of Sheila Thompson's book, "The Group Context" (1999, JKP) which seems strange for such a large bibliography; she is sceptical, provisional and has more belief in doubt perhaps than our

two authors here.

Why such semantic confusion in recent volumes when addressing the Condenser phenomenon (p.40)? In this volume, in both the text and the index it is referred to as Condensation; is this a manual for window fitters? ***Condensation*** is the meeting at a window of warm air and cold glass so that water vapour 'condenses' into water. The ***Condenser Phenomenon*** is when a group process, analogous to the physical one, can be considered to happen, when 'primitive material' is suddenly 'discharged' in the group meeting. At the recent Northfield median groups (2018 winter workshop, GASI) I did notice it happening both on the windows (condensation) and in the group ('Condenser Phenomenon') as members responded to the setting's total meaning. It was my fantasy that perhaps such a setting had been where the analogy had first occurred to Foulkes.

In his Epilogue, Weegmann states one of his favourite Foulkes' quotations:

> "I do not think we should always understand… In this connection I tend to leave things unresolved, in mid-air, incomplete ('no closure')."
> (Foulkes, 1964, p 287)

However, his favourite quotation is not correct: the final parenthesis should read "… (no 'closure')" – a small yet vital alteration. Foulkes' intention is to avoid the false ending of a type of therapy that places the individual back onto the same rails from which he fell, rather than allow him to leave those rails and live differently. 'Closure' means, 'I have now got rid of what bothered me, and I can lead the rest of my life untroubled by my symptoms, or by this or that relation'. With low-key irony, Foulkes emphasises "…(no 'closure')" as he does to highlight its insufficiency as a goal - its conventionality and its poverty. In contrast, ('no closure') emphasises, well, nothing. It is repeated at the very end of the book lacking the quotation marks, which again diminishes meaning from how Foulkes used it.

On p.123 is the story of Nick's job interview and having to answer, "What would you do if a group walked out of the room due to there being no heating for several weeks?" Four paragraphs later his answer is, 'To this I had nothing to offer only the hope' that earlier he might have made a 'useful intervention' to fend off such a walk out. Why the breast-beating? As dynamic administrator the facilitator is responsible for the immediate physical environment also – get an electric heater! It's what I have done through this last winter; no walk

outs yet. *The communication is the walk-out*; "it's too cold to work, Mr Analyst!" When words aren't heeded, take action.

On p.33, "Can the group really have a mind when it doesn't have a brain?" (Hopper, 2001); this remark that there can be no group mind when there is no group brain goes unquestioned. The authors hide behind another quotation from another expert – but what do *they*, with their brains, think? There is an expected correlation between one brain and one mind: one hat for one head. No group has a brain; instead it has the brains of all its members. Via voice and body these brains are transmitters of communications both linguistic and non-verbal that pass invisible yet powerful communications across the space held by the group, communications that may happen beyond group meetings. The brain of an individual is powered by the invisible yet verifiable pulses of electricity that allow data to cross from one cell to another in the brain's universe of 100 billion cells.

Another mis-spelling (a Freudian slip? … let's have *Foulkesian* slips from here on) is when quoting Foulkes' famous A Basic Law of Group Dynamics; this text states;-

The deepest reason why patients … can enforce each other's normal reactions … etc (Barwick, 2018: 46)

Can you spot the slip? 'enforce' is wrong. SHF used 'reinforce' (SHF, 1948) and this produces a strong contrast in meaning. To *enforce* is to compel, impose, bully, as in Law enforcement. To *reinforce* means to strengthen with new force already existing abilities. Is it merely a misprint… or something that lurks in an attitude of mind…? The authors here also alter 'Norm' in the original to 'norm' instead. Why? No explanation. When quoting this Basic Law the authors call it '*the* Basic Law of Group Dynamics …', whereas Foulkes named it as '***A*** Basic Law… '; Foulkes (1948:29) used the indefinite article and shunned the definitive voice and article, avoiding a clarity that subsequent authors have imposed on his text. I note that Dennis Brown mainly kept to *The* in his Foulkes' lecture (1998: *Group-Analysis*): Pines got it right (Pines 1983: 270). Foulkes' stance is provisional and not definitive. This may well be annoying when readers and other authors seek certainties.

The tripartite **Structure - Content - Process** is explained in one short paragraph, whereas this cornerstone of group-analytic theory needs direct quotation from the 1957 volume along with an enlarging discussion, and not a gloss (Foulkes & Anthony, 1957: 31). Also, how it was left out of the second edition (SHF: 1957/1965) and resurrected by De Mare (1972: 153). There is a history to these matters that requires acknowledgement.

The volume has a list of eminent persons who have apparently read through and checked the text, only how closely? There are also several paragraphs of pre-publication praise printed opposite the title page. For me there is something about the book which feels complacent and uncritical, and that much of what is written here we are told (Barwick 2018: pp. xv – xvii) has already been printed recently elsewhere in Barwick's earlier book (Barwick: 2015) and then expanded for this volume - but by how much? Is it close to a 2nd edition of the first book? I wonder about how writing in this manner might influence future student writing, in what may become a well-referenced textbook, a self-conscious self-plagiarism? Foulkes' 1964 publication did gather papers scattered through various journals, a regular practice. Here much has already been published in a volume that hit the bookstands a mere three years earlier.

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Reviewed by Kevin Power

The Foulkes Collection

By Elizabeth Nokes

Database enhancement of the Foulkes Collection having been completed, the next area of work is to complete same for all clinical papers. Those received since my arrival at the IGA, or those requested and supplied on loan, have already been addressed, but, as demonstrated in carrying out this work for dissertations/theory papers of IGA students, valuable material exists.

Another project has been the sorting out of the old reading list papers, hard copy photocopies of papers cited for IGA student reading lists and supplied as sets of photocopies for the various modules. This has now been overtaken by a legitimate and legal provision under the CLA licence, in the VLE, making the paper copies redundant. Many will now not be cited, and others, still cited, will be on the VLE, but it seemed a shame to destroy this material, so it is being offered to students, with the proviso that currency cannot be assumed. As well, other members of the IGA have offered papers on a similar basis, and they have been, and will be, offered to students in the same way. Win-win situation! The Library gets to clear space, retaining only what my predecessor described as 'hard to replace' items – i.e. where we did not hold the original [and which cannot of course therefore be considered for the VLE] and the ready clearing of the table in the front hall, where the papers are put out for students, has demonstrated that this initiative is welcome.

Elizabeth Nokes
IGA/GASi Librarian

Request for Foulkes Letters and Documents for Society Archives

We are appealing for letters, notes, and correspondence from Foulkes that Society members may possess. This will add to our already valuable society archive that contains much interesting material, papers and minutes and that is a significant source of information on our history and development.

Please contact Julia in the GASI office if you would like to donate any original or copied documents:

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Fax: +44 (0)20 7443 9576
e-mail: admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

EVENTS

Group Analytic Society International
Quarterly Members Group

Current members of the Society are eligible and invited to attend this group. Interested non-members may attend once.

The next QMG will take place on Saturday 21st April 2018

at the Guild of Psychotherapists, 47 Nelson Square, London SE1

There will be three 90-minute sessions with a 90-minute break for lunch; the day will run from 9.30am - 4.30pm with the first group starting at 10.00

The conductor for the group is Ian Simpson.

The venue is a three-minute walk from Southwark Underground station. In addition to the large group room, we have the use of a kitchen - morning refreshments will be provided. For lunch, the Guild is in an area where there are many good, inexpensive places to eat

The fee for the group is £30 per day

You can pay on the day by cash or preferably by BACS to GASI (tel. +44 20 7435 6611)

Account name: **GASI** Sort code: **40-03-02**

Account no: **11100408**

If BACS, **ref 'QMG April 18'** and notify transfer by email to: office@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

2018 dates: 7 July, 20 October

We look forward to seeing you.

QMG Organisers: Joan Fogel, Derek Love, Jud Stone

THE GROUP ANALYTIC SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

42nd S.H. FOULKES ANNUAL LECTURE

Friday 18th May 2018 at 7:00pm

Lecture at 7-8.30pm. Drinks afterwards till 10pm

Beyond Rejection, Glory and the Soldier's Matrix: the Heart of my Group Analysis

Foulkes Lecturer: Robi Friedman

Respondent: David Armstrong

Please Note **New Venue** for this event:

SENATE HOUSE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU

(nearest tube stations for **both events**: Goodge Street, Russell Square, Euston Square)

Study Day to follow on Saturday 19th May 2018
From 9am to 5pm

Respondents: Tove Mathiesen and Holger Brandes
***In dialogue with* Robi Friedman and David Armstrong**

Large Group Conductor: Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Please Note **New Venue** for this event:

UCL - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

Full programme to follow

Group Analytic Society	Phone: +44(0)20 7435 6611	Contact:
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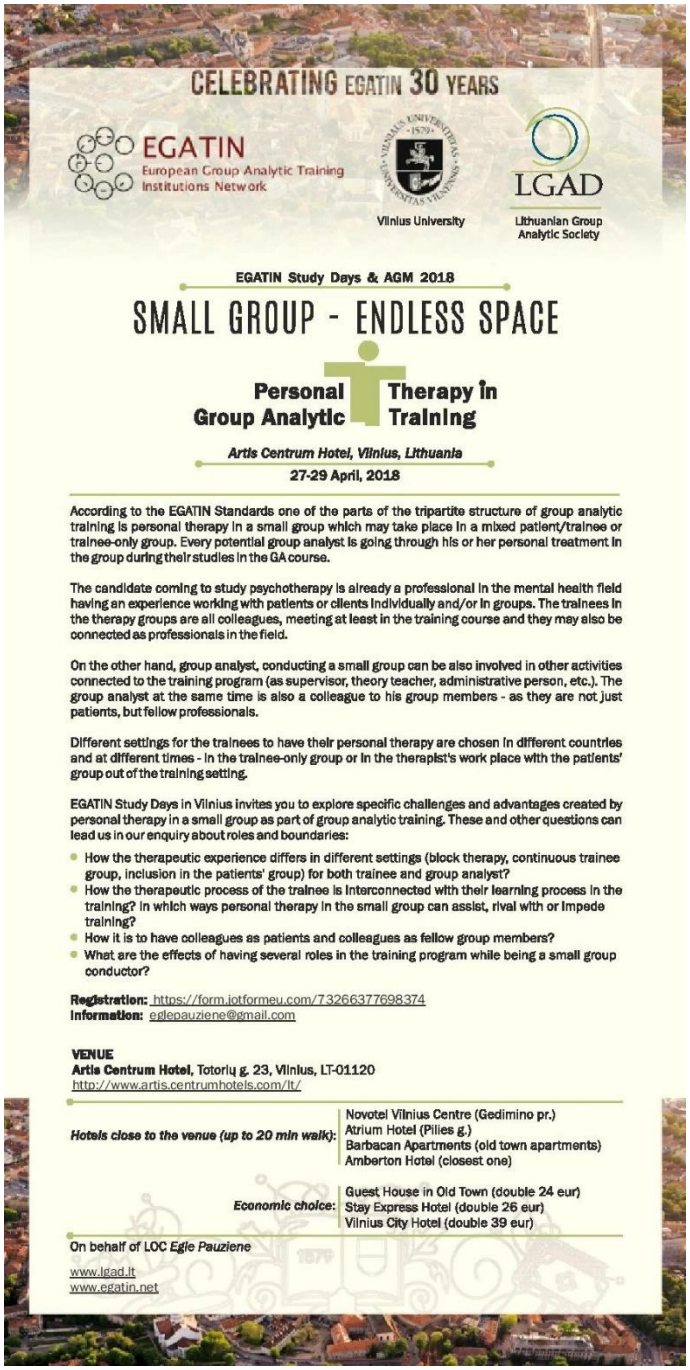
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SMALL GROUP - ENDLESS SPACE
Personal Therapy in Group Analytic Training
Artis Centrum Hotel, Vilnius, Lithuania
27-29 April, 2018
According to the EGATIN Standards one of the parts of the tripartite structure of group analytic training is personal therapy in a small group which may take place in a mixed patient/trainee or trainee-only group. Every potential group analyst is going through his or her personal treatment in the group during their studies in the GA course.
The candidate coming to study psychotherapy is already a professional in the mental health field having an experience working with patients or clients individually and/or in groups. The trainees in the therapy groups are all colleagues, meeting at least in the training course and they may also be connected as professionals in the field.
On the other hand, group analyst, conducting a small group can be also involved in other activities connected to the training program (as supervisor, theory teacher, administrative person, etc.). The group analyst at the same time is also a colleague to his group members - as they are not just patients, but fellow professionals.
Different settings for the trainees to have their personal therapy are chosen in different countries and at different times - in the trainee-only group or in the therapist's work place with the patients' group out of the training setting.
EGATIN Study Days in Vilnius invites you to explore specific challenges and advantages created by personal therapy in a small group as part of group analytic training. These and other questions can lead us in our enquiry about roles and boundaries:
How the therapeutic experience differs in different settings (block therapy, continuous trainee group, inclusion in the patients' group) for both trainee and group analyst?
How the therapeutic process of the trainee is interconnected with their learning process in the training? In which ways personal therapy in the small group can assist, rival with or impede training?
How it is to have colleagues as patients and colleagues as fellow group members?
What are the effects of having several roles in the training program while being a small group conductor?
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PRE-CONGRESS 31 JULY 2018
CONGRESS 1-4 AUGUST 2018

The Congress is planned at a time when we hear almost daily about a suicide attack or an act of violence somewhere around the world. Wars and warlike situations are ongoing and recurrent. There are now more refugees than ever before. In 2015 the UN estimated 65 million displaced people in the world. The world we grew up in – post WW II - is changing dramatically and often violently. We as group psychotherapists and group processors are being called to bring our expertise to help us all cope with these Rising Tides and to instill 'realistic hope'.

http://www.iagpcongress.org/

IAGP
International Association for Group
Psychotherapy and Group Processes

2nd IAGP International Research Congress on:

TRAUMA & CRISIS

Save the Dates:

14-17 June 2019 I Thessaloniki Greece

Sulzburger Dialoge: Sulzburg Dialogues

In association with the Group Analytic Society International

14 to 16 September 2018

The Uncanny in the Neighbourhood
Das Unheimliche in der Nachbarschaft

In his essay *The Uncanny* Freud ruminates about the meaning of this word, *Das Unheimliche*, in the original German. He plays with the derivation of *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich* and decides that *Unheimlich* or Uncanny is something that is both familiar associated with 'feeling at home', and unfamiliar or frightening associated with 'not feeling at home'. In the process he discovers a more subtle and important meaning for *Unheimlich*. It is the name given to everything that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light.

Encountering the Uncanny has the effect of making Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway always feel "that something awful was about to happen". Increasingly we are confronted with similar feelings that something awful is about to happen both close to home and not so close to home. The uncanny in our neighbourhood and in the world. Refugees fleeing from violence, oppression and poverty are arriving in unprecedented numbers. Our neighbourhoods that once felt familiar and safe now feel strange and unsafe while we are also being subjected to many forms of external terror. We are at once suffering externally and internally from feelings of dread and persecution.

How can we cope with these new emotional challenges? One way to cope is the tendency to think about the unbearable present as an aberration – a 'momentary disturbance' that will eventually return 'normal'. But, will it? What if this is the new normal?

In and through the Sulzburg Dialogues we would like to explore the emotional impact of the current situation on each of us, individually and collectively. We would also like to address the historical influences shaping our actual thinking and feeling, investigating together how these might motivate our attitudes and actions.

Convenors

Teresa von Sommaruga Howard, UK and Dieter Nitzgen, Germany

Who for?

This workshop is for anybody who would like to explore these issues.

Cost

Early Bird until 15 June: €220, 00 for GASI Members; €240, 00 for non-Members.
After 15 June: €260, 00 for GASI Members; €280, 00 for non-Members.
Non-returnable cancellation fees: €50.00.

To pay fees click on the link below:
http://subscribercrm.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/Event-Search/Event-Booking/EventId/13

The Place

Sulzburg is a village south of Freiburg im Breisgau, half-way to Basel in Switzerland. Beautifully located on the foothills of the Black Forest, it can easily be reached from central Europe by direct flights to Euro Airport Basel/Mulhouse), by train and by car (A5 exit Heitersheim). The village offers a variety of accommodation and restaurants, from local to high class. The workshop is located in the former synagogue of Sulzburg, which is now a cultural centre.

Language

Primarily English and German but we are willing to work with any of the languages that participants bring to the group.

Working Method

Inspired by its location, the former synagogue of Sulzburg, the workshop makes use of the so-called 'group analytic' method of free-floating group dialogue. In addition to verbal exchange, a space will be provided for Social Dreaming and exploration through drawing.

Maximum Number

18 – 20 Participants

Accommodation

http://www.sulzburg.de/Willkommen-in-Sulzburg/Ihre-Gastgeber-in-Sulzburg-freuen-sich-auf-Ihren-Besuch

Further Information

Please contact Teresa on:
Teresa@JustDialogue.com

OBITUARY

A brief Obituary for Yvonne Agazarian

By Earl Hopper, Ph.D.

Yvonne Agazarian was born in London on 17th February 1929 and died in Philadelphia on 9th October 2017. A Memorial Website for her will remain online until 24th October 2018: http://memorialwebsites.legacy.com/yagazarian

To this basic information I would like to add a few personal remarks. Yvonne was my friend, a mentor in my professional life, and a highly valued colleague in the International Group Analytic Society, the International Association for Group Psychotherapy, and in the American Group Psychotherapy Association. We planned several programmes for the IAGP and facilitated the presentation of one another's work at meetings of AGPA. She supported my early work on systems thinking, and we began a correspondence and discussion of sociological, group analytical and psychoanalytical aspects of living human systems.

We admired each other for being prepared to speak out about various aspects of Group Analysis. We agreed that it lacks an overarching general theory of group dynamics, but disagreed over the importance of this, which I continue to feel is actually one of its strengths. Nonetheless, for us two aspects of Group Analysis were especially important: the emphasis on the sociality of human nature and its connections with the axiom that the individual person and the group were two sides of the same coin; and the emphasis on parallel processes, equivalence, and isomorphism in systems theory. She appreciated the concept of the tripartite matrix, as recently outlined by Dieter Nitzgen and me, but she insisted that systems thinking took priority.

In recent years we tried to integrate her's and Susan Gantt's version of systems thinking and group analytical approaches to work in organisations and societies, but we found this to be difficult, not so much theoretically and conceptually, but personally. I did not always find it easy to oblige the wishes of an older sister. I also objected to her tendency to exploit the naivety of some of the large group convenors at various conferences. Although she participated in these large groups with a degree of admirable humility, the democratic styles of the convenors allowed her to proselytise her own way of working. I once interpreted this as an enactment of taking over a

government in the context of a democratic election. She acknowledged that although there was truth in my interpretation that she had personified this socially unconscious process, the basic dynamic was failed dependency on convenors who she regarded as boys who had been selected to do a man's job! I suggested that this was a manifestation of processes in the programme committees and their contextual organisations, which was a matter of equivalence. She said "No, this was a matter of isomorphism". And so it went on, more or less to the very end.

Yvonne and I were comrades. We enjoyed good food and drink, and indulged ourselves once a year in London, and in various other capital cities of the world in connection with conference life. She preferred mature Burgundy rather more than Claret, and Single Malt Whisky rather more than Dry Sherry; she loved smoked salmon, with brown bread and butter and a few capers, followed by grouse with bread sauce. In London we finished with Stilton and Port, but during the last few years we declined the Port.

Although Susan often joined Yvonne and me in our meetings and machinations, we valued our private time together gossiping, plotting and formulating theories and concepts, which tended to be rather more abstract than our empirical examples could possibly illustrate. We were hardly ever troubled by reality. We acknowledged one another's respective attempts to make creative use of our deepest and most painful traumatic experiences, some of which we shared.

I grew to love Yvonne Agazarian, and I miss her very much.

Earl Hopper, Ph.D.

Free Associative Gifts

Edited by Marcus Price

For this issue, we have poems by Peter Zelaskowski, Angelika Golz, and Ann Westley.

Peter Zelaskowski has generously let us into a period of his life where poetry took on a special importance for him. Angelika Golz's poems are preceded by a short introduction about her work and the way she composed verse in a small poetry group. If you have poems that evoke special memories of any kind, please feel free to send me a short piece about this experience for publication.

As a teenager I was lucky enough to befriend Ann Westley, artist and author of "Relief Printmaking", Printmaking Handbooks (2002). Ann encouraged me to carry on writing poems, during my difficult teenage years at time when my self-esteem was fragile. This taught me how important recognition can be for all of us, no matter how ordinary our efforts. Ann has recently sent me some of her own poems, some of which I am delighted to include in this issue of Contexts.

By Peter Zelaskowski

Most, if not all, of my poems were written during my twenties (so no teenage angst here, okay!) at a time when I'd just moved to London, was squatting, on the dole, scavenging food from New Covent Garden, a wholesale fruit, vegetable and flower market in Vauxhall and, as always, looking for love, some way of escaping from the girlfriend I couldn't un-attach myself from (although she tried her best to move on) and some clearer idea of myself. Poetry, was a means of expressing and articulating, giving some shape and form to, things I couldn't otherwise express. I had real trouble knowing what I felt, let alone expressing what I felt. I wasn't interested in the traditional forms of poetry. In fact, I enjoyed the anti-establishment subversive thrill that went with spontaneously free associating in the only way I could. I just didn't have it in me to learn the higher arts of poetic form. I wanted rhyme and verse to come and go. I could just about insinuate structures without fully using them. Clarity of meaning and the freedom to express myself meant more to me than structure. I'd knock off a poem in minutes. I remember I used to regularly travel between Finsbury Park and Vauxhall and try and start and finish a poem in the

time it took the Victoria line train to stutter and start me to my destination.

Through Mike (crazy, hippy, macrobiotic and comfortably middle class) I got involved in the London performance poetry scene and quickly became a troubadour, hanging out at the Troubadour Coffee House in Earls Court, where every Monday evening a group of us, plus small but shivering audience, would gather in the cafe's damp cellar and chuck our latest offerings at each other.

Legend had it that Bob Dylan, amongst other greats, had performed at the Troubadour, so we (Jeff the fish, Mad Sam, lisping Dave...) felt part of a great historical tradition, despite the fact that much of what we performed was total crap! I had a repertoire of poems I performed regularly, to which I would add new untried scribbles and rants. Here's a couple from the repertoire that I enjoyed performing then and still like now. I like them because they're verbally playful, combine food and philosophy and seem to touch themes of the search for love and identity that dominated that period of my life.

Ratatouille

If you were my fad
and I your fancy,
we could eat each other
and it wouldn't be chancy.

I could be cauliflower,
to your cheese.
You could be salad,
to my dressing.

Then I, Courgette!
and you, Aubergine!
rataTWOeeee!!

Then we could be rhubarb
in a crumble
and sweet tender lovers
in a pie.

Paper Tigers

I'm adept at adapting
Adopting styles, guiles
And paper-tiger smiles.

I am whatever I think you might want.
I'm not whatever you think I might be.
I am, I think, therefore
Adept at adapting
Adopting styles, guiles
And paper-tiger smiles.

I sometimes say I am
When I'm not.
I sometimes say I don't
But do
Or in-between the two.
In fact, I do and don't
When it is my wont!
AND I believe I'm sincere.

I'm adept at adapting
Adopting styles, guiles
And paper-tiger smiles.

By Angelika Golz

I started writing my memoirs when I was 15years old. I thought it was time to capture my life from the very beginning, and to help those who struggle like I did, through those difficult years between 13-15. So....here we are. But poems only 'happened' later. I don't read a lot of poems, but some I love, and they will stick in my mind. So, when I wrote in distress, sometimes it just happened to sound like a poem. The poems here have come about in a small poetry group (3 people, 3 psychotherapists). At the end of our sessions we would randomly choose a line from a book, and that would be our title for the next poem. Mine would usually just pop out of my mind, and I would be surprised that it sounded like a poem, and that I liked it.

You're Off

You're off and I am here
still talking to you.

You're off and I am waking up
to the empty bed.

You're off and I am waiting
to eat with you.

You're off
and I am still eating.

You're off
And I have the bed all to myself.

You're off
And the air is fresh and clean.

You're off
And I feel free to move.

You're off
And I am free to love you.

Fingertips Tipping

Only three fingers tapping the table
as if playing invisible scales
with the story he didn't tell.

He did not notice the gaze of his son
filling the air with curious expectation,
watching familiar fingertips tapping the table
like war drums calling for service.

How could he slip into that world long gone,
and visible only with two fingertips not tapping,
stiff and motionless stuck to the table.

And the father kept the silence,
answering questions as if on duty.

And the drumming noise of fingertips just tapping,
And the hand with stiff fingers
like a war memorial with plaques and no story
made him ask his burning questions:

"How did it feel dad when you got shot?"
and "Did you ever kill a human being?"

And the fingertips were just tapping like the war drums calling for service:
"Who could have known what happened when everyone followed their duty?
I pointed my gun but my eyes were blind.
I felt the wound but my heart was numb.
I wrote letters to mothers but all had to be done."

And the boy imagined the soldierland
and the shame his father would feel.
He listened to the fingertips tapping the table
like war drums calling for service.

Taking Turns

One turn
and lost in the maze
of omnipotent self accusation.

As if I had created the world
and the misery,
and purposefully mislaid my instructions to happiness!

I had forgotten that you are there,
not sensed your look on me,
still and waiting for me to speak to you.

And with another turn
I bump into you.
And we laugh and play the game of hide and seek.

And it's only when I can't find you that I feel dazed.
And sometimes feel happy
just as long as I keep turning.

By Ann Westley

SPIRIT

somewhere
high upon a mountainside
there is a nature spirit
dancing her magic
in the morning sunshine

she dazzles
shimmers
makes the light
as if to move
flickers rhythms
flutters trees and grasses
makes the undergrowth alive
just below a regular track
so seldom seen
this rare view of a spirit
dancing in spring time
then, just as she exclaims
"oh, did you see that?"
a rabbit hops across the space
vanishes from view
and in her place
she returns
to dance again as light

A CONFERENCE

She was a small child when they brought her to the conference table.
"What has she done?" asked one man.
"Nothing," replied another, "except to be here, like us all."
"She ebbs and flows," said another, "ebbs and flows.
She swims a shallow stream and a flooded field
then recoils when a weir appears to suck her down... down."
"What am I supposed to do?" she cried.
"Go with it," shouted another voice, this one coming from a woman's mouth.
"Go over the edge, is that what you mean?"

"If necessary," she said, "for the alternative is to keep returning to the same weir."
So the girl left the conference and returned to her dream.
It was just a dream, the stream, the flooded field, the weir,
none existed
so there was no need for fear.
She let the water carry her towards the weir
where a great machine churned all to frenzy.
Like a fallen autumn leaf she slipped over the edge
and was instantly turned to froth and foam.
Oh, the exhilaration
of being no thing but the substance of bubbles was her pure delight.
She sparkled in sunlight,
her surface reflecting all the scenery about her
until she burst her bubbles and vanished.
This is the stuff that dreams are made of.

MORNING

At first she thought the vision was a man and his dog,
a vast creature with an ancient, ugly face,
for there was the man sitting on the beach
while his dog moved slowly about him
He appeared to be sitting upright
gazing at the sea,
as the view that morning was spectacular,
light dappling on rippling water,
sky and clouds shredding gentle wisps,
a perfect semi circle cobalt blue.

Then the vision looked different.
First, the man and his dog were gone
and another shape shifted into place,
an outstretched head
some great seal reared up
with a giant bird sitting on his back

Then there was just the movements of gulls
strutting about, performing their usual gaits
But this was no beast nor bird,
only a marvelous log
drifting into view
It was all these things

and could have been many more
she saw that morning
as the tide gently sucked the shore and slipped away again

She realised that no thing remains as it appears to be
all is myth and in due course is credible
either for a few moments or a life time
in her view

Beyond is the space where creation begins
where man, his dog and the great seal
are woven in a tangled ebb and flow of memory
while light spreads diamonds on the water
and gulls fly across an endless sky
until she sees the clouds disperse again.

Please send your poems for publication in future Contexts' issues to **Marcus Price** e-mail: lbwplumb@gmail.com

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The Visitors

A Psy-Fi Tale

By Mike Tait

Part VII

1. Desire

'By an instinct is provisionally to be understood the psychical representation of an endosomatic, continuously flowing source of stimulation, as contrasted with a stimulus which is set up by single excitations coming from without. The concept of instinct is thus one of those lying on the frontier between the mental and the physical. The simplest and likeliest assumption as to the nature of instincts would seem to be that in itself an instinct is without quality, and in so far as mental life is concerned is only to be regarded as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work.' [From 'On Sexuality,' p.82 S. Freud] [13]

What would stop him getting in touch with the nurse when they returned to civilization? The politician felt drawn towards her - towards whatever it was that had touched the murderer. She had redefined 'seriousness' as a quality of interaction rather than as a judicial activity which prioritized safety or justice. His secretary slipped out of his mind – almost as if he'd never planned to marry her. Desire had been re-directed. Political aspirations were losing their allure. Another energy glimpsed above – or was it beneath - the parapets of his public profile.

He thrived on adrenalin, difficult to sustain if he stayed in a relationship for too long. Surely that was normal: it was just that some men had more opportunities! He'd been a successful businessman before he'd moved into politics. He thrived on the conflict of politics. Women were drawn towards alpha males. It was all about fertility and offspring. Power was sexual. Was there a defensive curtain wrapped around this train of thoughts? When such questions bubbled up through his explanations he looked suspiciously towards the Visitors.

However, after the Visitors' relentless questions concerning the evolution of impulse, he was no longer so certain what sexual attraction was. The Visitors made it difficult to experience anything – even something as simple as feeling turned on - without wondering about: where the physical met the emotional, where the personal met the social, how the present was fuelled by the past. Previously such

things had seemed obvious: desire was an individual, testosterone-driven thing. But - he'd barely noticed the nurse at first – he hadn't thought she was attractive. He had dismissed her as an immature irritant to his political realism, but now, her status had changed – at least in this group. Was it how she was seen by others, hence competition for a desirable commodity, that had aroused him? Was it what she'd done? He'd been impressed by her fearlessness and command of the violent men who had been near his feet – but he didn't think that was erotic. She'd moved quickly - he'd liked that – but it was more the way she'd spoken that created a ripple of heat across the skin under his eyes. Only when their eyes met did the heat become overtly sexual.

Desire: his first wife had asked him what possessed him each time he had an affair. Was it a form of possession? Could he have stopped himself? Was possession by voices, by ideology, wealth, status of a different order? In all of them, some kind of hungry energy took over. Other considerations, including the effect on others, became small in comparison. He had never felt that he belonged to anyone: marriage had not remedied belonging. He didn't think he'd been deliberately cruel – not like the murderer or the terrorist. He believed what he said when he spoke about the public good. Sustained relationships were just elusive.

What was it that the nurse had said to the murderer whilst she'd been calming him? Didn't she care about what he'd done? She even found out his name. When he'd ranted about his mother, she had wanted to understand how powerful his experiences had been. Had anyone ever been that interested in 'his' experiences? The politician imagined himself lying on the floor despite his flickering attempts to distance himself from the three criminals.

The Visitors hadn't criticized the fraudster, the murderer or the terrorist but the questions they asked seemed to involve everyone examining their life journeys more deeply. The politician tried. His mother and father had led separate lives. Had that influenced his attitude to his wives? His parents hadn't been around that much but that was hardly a crime. They'd provided him with everything he needed and taught him independence. He'd learnt to stand up for himself from an early age – which surely was a good thing. Boarding school had helped. He doubted whether he would have risen so high if he hadn't learnt to fight his corner. He quietly congratulated himself on his success.

He tracked his emotional reactions in the group. He'd felt enlivened by the murderer's attempt to attack the therapist - although

publicly he would have condemned it. He'd admired the speed of the terrorist which disquieted him. Was it contradictory to enjoy both the attack and the rescue: immoral when both were performed by criminals? He'd found the therapist's reluctance to act infuriating – as if she needed shaking up. Was that why he'd been too slow to defend her? Had a memory of his mother's unavailability been brought back by the therapist's refusal to conduct the group?

Where had that thought come from?

If he'd taken charge of the situation would the nurse have been alongside him as quickly? He could feel the urge to punish the terrorist returning. He'd been an impotent bystander – as he felt by living with anyone for too long. Bootlaces, a random thought; incongruous images of a hillside he'd never been on. The image hovered. What was it that Jason had said about that therapeutic community? The warm emptiness of the criminal sitting alongside permeated him.

The Nanny he'd adored had rescued him from his misery after a previous nanny departed. They'd built towers of sand on the beach together. He'd loved that nanny, but she hadn't stayed around for long. Rescues: like the first rush of a relationship: what followed less substantial. Were rescues sexual? And what was being rescued? It wasn't just about being cheered up. He revisited the interaction on the floor. The murderer's attack had removed his irritation with the therapist. The terrorist's intervention had spared him from the guilt he would have felt if she'd been badly hurt. The nurse had diffused the rage of the murderer and the terrorist thereby easing the fear in the group. Rescue from anger, guilt, fear and isolation: was this what he sought in a relationship – over and over again? Did desire involve moving towards or away?

What was it the Visitors had asked about crime and symptoms as 'moments of hope'? What about psychotic voices that repeated old messages - or moods that required treatment? What about desire? Were they all looking for someone who could stand the strain of impulses that could be explored between rather than within people? These ideas were little more than excuses. Surely a murderer didn't imagine that the politician could change his world? Crimes had to be paid for. He looked at the fraudster with whom he had shared so many glances. Was 'spin' a way of disguising desire; legislation a protection against the uncertainties of interaction? Was he really getting closer to these criminals? Where were these questions coming from?

All the questions about emotions and how they were coped with made humanity sound like a nursery. Did they not think anyone

had grown up? Why didn't they ask about respect; success; achievement; ambition? He'd refused to come out of his room when a nanny had left but that was half a century ago. He hadn't thought about her for years. Why think about things that just made you unhappy? He preferred to focus on the positive. He admired strength. On cabinet committees, he'd usually been the one to present the case for firm action - rather than protracted negotiation which frustrated him.

His wives had complained that he never stayed around when things got difficult. He'd said that he was 'busy with important matters' – the same phrase his father had used. Of course, he identified with his father. He was proud of him – as he was of his own achievements. Were identifications choices? Unsolicited questions: was 'he' now hearing voices? He could feel his energy receding. Why was the hollow feeling in his stomach intensifying?

It was Jason who brought them back into the room. He seemed to have resonated with the politician's musing about possession and begun talking about the woman he'd killed. The politician pointed out that you couldn't own a woman, but immediately realized that, coming from him, this sounded like a justification for promiscuity rather than a condemnation of murder. If he wanted to attract the nurse, who suspected him of being responsible for more deaths than anyone else in the group, he was going to have to tread carefully. He thought about putting his arm around Jason but realized that this would be a similar gesture to the manager's attempt to support a patient she had never previously tried to understand. He caught the group conductor's eye and both resonated with the other's difficulty in distinguishing between instinctively warm gestures and political manoeuvres. They felt like awkward children. The manager felt in uncomfortable alliance.

She had been moved by the exchange of looks that had replaced the wariness. She liked the politician. They had common ground. Instinctively she'd found his impulse to act less alien than the therapist's inaction – even if currently she felt warm towards the woman who had supported her. She felt a pang of jealousy when she saw the politician looking at the nurse. She had experienced a similar sensation when the nurse had been speaking to Jason. Both feelings had surprised her. She barely considered herself sexual. Longing had to be buried. Unreciprocated desire was humiliating. What was it she wanted from the nurse – or from the politician? What motivated her impulse to protect others from sexual risk? Was management sexual? Where were those thoughts coming from?

She'd felt fear - but also excitement - when the terrorist had

moved so quickly, despite her aversion to violent criminality. She'd quickly shut down both feelings and returned to the familiar ground of safety, control and policy. Was that how she related to others? She thought about the physical sensations of managing: the arousal and energizing focus of planning and the satisfaction and control of implementation? Sometimes she had to be ruthless. Control could be as cruel as desire. Had she thought that? She looked at the Visitors.

Several people in the group, after recovering from the initial shock of Jason's ramblings, began wondering about their own relationships. How much of familiarity involved erosion – death by a thousand drips? The warder had thought that he knew how his wife's mind worked but was reconsidering. What would she be saying if she was exposed to these questions? He realized that he had no idea. Why had he not invited her? He watched the politician watching the nurse who seemed to appreciate the effort he was making - but not to reciprocate his desire. He recognized the look - often directed by prisoners at attractive warders. He was grateful that look rarely came his way. He hated the frustration that could accompany desire. Was that why he led such an organized life? Even sex was planned with his wife and fitted around their busy lives.

The nurse was thinking about the way she'd displaced her anger towards her father into the fights with her sister and the vitality that had also been drained away. The men she liked most were patients. She disliked the self that emerged in relationships with men when desire was involved: fractious, judgemental, controlling, uncertain – draining.

The therapist was more comfortable studying the politician's driven behaviour than her own thoughts. As if following her train of thought, the Visitors had asked about the nature of the sexual impulse and whether bodily experience could be represented in words. Were there aspects of arousal that could never be articulated leaving only intellectualized modes of description which were incompatible with the complexity of experience? She had replied that trying to explain bodily arousal and eroticism fully risked becoming too close to the sensation itself. Novelists and poets provoked excitation but she created room to think which dissipated sexual energy. Her patients could use raw language but her task was to translate it into a more thoughtful discourse.

Could intense bodily sensations and understanding exist simultaneously? Did one displace the other so that they never actually met? Were images unreliable stepping stones between sensation and thinking? Sexual sensation could begin with an image or a memory.

She remembered a passionate but unreliable lover before she'd met her husband or begun training as a therapist. After she left him she had cut contact. She'd explained to a friend at the time that she needed room to develop her relationship with her husband. But it wasn't just that. She couldn't be sure that she could predict her bodily responses if she met him again. It was impossible to articulate the arousal she'd experienced – she had lived in her skin, not her words – or the desolation which had flooded through her when he disappointed yet again. Now she rarely spoke about those sensations. Mostly she spoke about family interactions, attachment styles and the social dimension of experience. On the rare occasions she thought about desires, she encapsulated them in diagnoses.

Was it only possible to speak in the simplest of words: a child's language – if experience was to be approximated? Was abstraction always a shield against impulse? Could any words authentically describe eruptions and yearnings? Were guttural sounds more accurate? Did words inevitably lose their vitality and gather unthinking debris: habits of usage, assumptions based on the view that the concept was a fact rather than a barely comprehended experience?

Was there a mode of thinking less likely to seek solutions or reduce experience, that could tolerate intense and fluctuating impulses, more capable of holding in balance both mind and body? Was it the fragility of this mode of thinking – and the inadequacy of the words that accompanied it - that necessitated professional boundaries – to manage impulsivity? In her replies to the Visitors' questions, she'd highlighted the absence of physical gratification and the toleration of frustration as enabling reflection. They'd asked whether more intimate relationships could be reflective. Could she reflect with her husband and children with whom she'd had so much action and gratification over the years? [It got more difficult each time they expanded the frame.] She had tried to explain the difference between a professional and a personal relationship.

She revisited her explanation in the light of the nurse's intuitive engagement with impossible people. Was it closer to impulsivity in its immediacy? Badness lost its defining edges when it was engaged with so empathically. Common humanity had burst through the structures designed to divide it up. She realized with a sinking heart that the professionalism she advocated would rebuild the walls. Spontaneous behaviour risked being deemed unprofessional. The nurse would most likely become drained by the implementation of formulaic interventions or envious complaints - pushing her towards risk-avoidance or leaving the caring professions. Was safety

more corrosive than risk? The therapist felt a sad affinity with the manager sitting next to her: both older sisters, professionals from familial necessity, enviously curtailing the spontaneity of younger siblings. Responsibility had become confused with maturity.

The woman whose voices were currently no more than a dim murmur wondered whether the terrorist liked her. Had he ever had a girlfriend and would that fit in with his religion? Was he like her father who'd shouted a lot? Was it better to have someone who shouted than no one? Why was he no longer shouting? She felt liberated and frightened by the absence of her protectors and the shifting of roles within the group. The terrorist noticed her glances. There were other faces he tried to shut out. His mood was dropping. The desire to proselytize had evaporated. He wondered whether he was crawling under the childhood bed that she was coming out from. He found himself remembering the loneliness of his mother.

Part VIII will be in the June 2018 issue

CONTEXTS' COLUMNISTS

Quantitative Unease

By Susanne Vosmer

A column dedicated to demystifying psychotherapy research – love it, hate it, or both…at least try to know what it's all about!

'The Times, they A-changin'

Dissatisfaction with quantitative research and its methodologies in the field of Group Analysis has been prevalent ever since its inception. We have heard criticisms about their limitations in examining the psychotherapy process for decades. More recently, Dalal, who in contrast to our Scandinavian colleagues, holds a more dismissive stance towards the 'number crunching paradigm' (that is what quantitative methods are all about, aren't they?), drew our attention to the fallacy of statistical analyses and their interpretation.

I sympathise with Dalal's critical view - to a certain extent. Admittedly, over the years, quantitative methods have become increasingly more complex. It is challenging for clinicians, particularly those who are not attached to university settings, to catch up. Even reading the plethora of articles, which come out every month, would require 24/7 robotic scanning. And then there is the issue of understanding the often bewildering analyses. They are getting so complex! It does prove difficult, or impossible, for the lay clinician to unpick their methodological and statistical flaws, and to understand their implications without the help of a friendly statistician.

So, of course, Dalal has a point. But this should not deter us. We need to know the effects of different compositions of groups in terms of culture, gender, sexuality and socio-economic background. How do group analysts influence group processes? These are but a few examples and there are so many other pertinent questions in terms of group processes that require answers. Quantitative research methodologies can help to answer these questions. I don't want to minimise the limitations of quantitative methodology and the inherent difficulty that arises when we want to capture the essence of group analytic interventions (e. g. encouragement of free floating communication and dialogue, interpretation and analyses of what is

being un/consciously communicated). But I contend that they do have their place in Group Analysis, and research by Scandinavian and German group analysts supports this.

Perhaps we also need to make those, who are dismissive of quantitative research, aware of the shift that has taken place over the decades. Yes, comrades, we have moved forward and Kiesler's old cynical saying: "If you can't count it, it doesn't count; if you can count it, that ain't it", no longer holds. Times have changed. Borrowing from education, anthropology, architecture and psychology, to name but a few, we have seen the rise of exciting new mixed methodologies and mixed-methods. This enables us to examine clinically rich data, which would make mixed-methods the research method par excellence in Group Analysis. Wouldn't it?

In my view, it doesn't suffice that group analysts succumbed to the promise of quantitative research to help demonstrate the effectiveness of Group Analysis. Sure, it put Group Analysis on the agenda, which was long overdue. But what did it tell us about the group analytic process? Are we much wiser than we were when Foulkes founded Group Analysis? I don't think so. We still do not know the nitty gritty of what works, when, how and what doesn't in clinical practice. Although we can probably safely assume that the therapeutic relationship and appropriate selection of group members is crucial.

With CBT no longer being king of psychotherapy, but as hesitant as the Queen to abdicate, research studies in Germany, Scandinavia and the UK inform us that Group Analysis can claim its rightful place in the world of psychotherapy. This is marvellous, because our psychotherapy research has much to offer contemporary society. But how do we encourage more group analysts to engage in research and adopt mixed-methods? How do we convince the sceptic, the phobic and reluctant converter to do research?

When I started this column two years ago, I thought that factual information about methodology, methods and statistics would encourage colleagues to become interested in research. Hence, I have written about these topics. However, there is another, perhaps more important aspect, which might stop group analysts from engaging in research, which I haven't covered. And that is to do with attitude, attitude towards psychotherapy research to be precise. We don't know anything about our colleagues' attitude.

I was positively surprised reading Taubner et al's findings, which reveal an encouraging new trend: more German individual psychoanalysts, psychodynamic and CBT therapists are prepared to

participate in research, particularly younger ones. It seems that the times, they A-changin' and psychotherapists' attitudes towards psychotherapy research are shifting.

How come? Hard to say because the study doesn't allow us to reach definite conclusions, but high-quality designs, financial compensation and personal gains were identified as positive influencing factors. So, it isn't just about not understanding quantitative research methodologies that stops therapists from getting involved in research! It's a dismissive attitude as well. Do you know what yours is?

Seasonal greetings to all of you. Happy Easter.

References

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